

# CHECK MARKS FOR THE KNOWLEDGE OF AGEING – WORKING TOGETHER FOR CHANGE IN NORTH KARELIA!



# **CHECK MARKS FOR THE KNOWLEDGE OF AGEING – WORKING TOGETHER FOR CHANGE IN NORTH KARELIA!**

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NORTH KARELIA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES  
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## CONTENTS

FOREWORD .....	5
JOINING IN THE WORK TO SHAPE THE CONCEPT OF AGEING .....	6
KNOWLEDGE OF AGEING – WHAT IS IT? .....	9
KNOWLEDGE OF AGING IS GUIDED BY AGE POLICY.....	11
Age policy in the European Union .....	11
Finnish age policy stresses active participation.....	12
Senior citizens are a growing resource in North Karelia .....	15
NORTH KARELIAN MUNICIPALITIES ENHANCING THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF AGEING .....	17
Housing alternatives for senior citizens.....	18
Knowledge of ageing comes together in networks .....	19
Development in municipalities and projects .....	19
WELLBEING ENTERPRISES ARE LOOKING TO THE FUTURE .....	21
ACTIVE NGOs GIVE SENIOR CITIZENS SUPPORT AND SOMETHING TO DO .....	22
NGOs work on a voluntary basis .....	22
The strength of NGOs is in networks.....	23
SENIOR CITIZENS CAN AND WILL .....	25
Senior citizens exert influence and participate in development .....	26
Senior citizens have needs for information and education .....	27
Information is plentiful but fragmented .....	28
The picture of ageing is not black and white .....	28
TRAINING EXPERTS IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF AGEING IN NORTH KARELIA .....	30
A region of diverse education .....	30
Liberal adult education .....	31
Upper secondary vocational education and training.....	32
Universities of Applied Sciences .....	33
University of Eastern Finland .....	34
NORTH KARELIA AS A PIONEER OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF AGEING .....	36
In the middle ground between east and west .....	36
Ageing to be expected .....	37
LOOKING TO THE FUTURE .....	39
Outdated images of work with the elderly .....	40

The work is cut out for us .....	41
Glossary .....	42
References and online materials of the publication .....	45
Appendices	
Appendix 1 Population dependency ratio till 2020 (Children and elderly people per 100 working-age people) .....	48
Appendix 2 Population dependency ratio by municipality in 2010, 2020 and 2030 .....	49

## FOREWORD

The report "North Karelia into a Region of Knowledge of Ageing" (Jämsén & Koivumäki 2009) put the knowledge of ageing into the limelight as a concept and a phenomenon. There was a wide-spread awareness of the challenges posed by an ageing society, while a clear opening also existed for a discourse emphasising new opportunities and resources. Now, two years later, the knowledge of ageing comes up in a number of different contexts: strategies, development objectives and curricula. The knowledge of ageing inspires.

North Karelia University of Applied Sciences Centre for Social Services and Health Care has in recent years been strongly focusing on developing the knowledge of ageing. North Karelia University of Applied Sciences and Savonia University of Applied Sciences are strategic partners working together in jointly agreed focus areas. One of these focus areas is "developing welfare services for sparsely populated areas", in which the knowledge of ageing plays a special role. In line with our objective, we join forces with the public, the private and the third sector in developing solutions that support the health and welfare of senior citizens.

The knowledge of ageing needs to be defined and pinned down. The concept of knowledge of ageing will be defined and specified through development and research taking place in course of projects and other development efforts. The knowledge of ageing must be written about, and more and more people must be made aware of it.

This publication is an important introduction to the new concept. It notes that the knowledge of ageing is "understood as the know-how of professionals in the social and health care field concerning phenomena associated with age and ageing". From core competence of the social and health care sector, the knowledge of ageing is extending to all key areas of civic life. The knowledge of ageing is becoming visible. This publication continues the discussion on the knowledge of ageing and takes it to a new level. It is suitable for all those interested in the subject, and I particularly hope that it will be embraced by students.

The publication Check Marks for the Knowledge of Ageing – Working Together for Change in North Karelia! has in its background the funding provided by the Regional Council of North Karelia for the "North Karelia Regional Action Plan on Knowledge of Ageing 2011–2014" project in early 2011. I would like to thank the funding provider and the authors, or Teija Nuutinen and Arja Jämsén, for their groundbreaking work.

What we need today is an ability to question conventional truths and to look at issues from fresh perspectives. Let us be guided by the folk wisdom from Savo: "*The important thing is not doing it the way we are used to doing it, but in a way that will work!*" (Positiivisuutta savolaesittain 2).

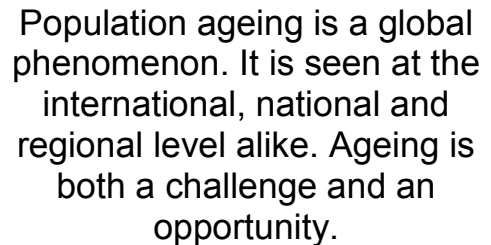
Joensuu 13 September 2011  
Tuomas Lappalainen



## JOINING IN THE WORK TO SHAPE THE CONCEPT OF AGEING

One of the hottest topics today, both globally and regionally, is the changing population age structure. The United Nations refers to people over 60 as aged. In this publication, we will refer to the aged as senior citizens.

The number of senior citizens is expected to increase nearly four-fold by 2030, or from approx. 600 million to 2.5 billion. In a global examination of this phenomenon, the rate of ageing is the fastest in Japan. Finland comes second, with Eastern Finland and its fringes, and the sub-region of Pielinen Karelia in particular, as areas experiencing the fastest rate of ageing due to an exodus of young people.



Population ageing is a global phenomenon. It is seen at the international, national and regional level alike. Ageing is both a challenge and an opportunity.

This publication is based on the project Operating Concept for Regional Knowledge of Ageing in North Karelia 2011–2014 (Nuutinen 2011), which was funded by North Karelia University of Applied Sciences and the Regional Council of North Karelia in the period 1 February – 31 May 2011. Its aim was to put together cooperation networks involving senior citizens, municipalities, NGOs, welfare sector enterprises and educational institutions. This publication offers a compilation and an analysis of both existing and future reflections on the knowledge of ageing and practical joint activities in this area in the “merrily ageing” North Karelia.

Our publication is a follow-up on previous working papers on the knowledge of ageing in the region. The report “North Karelia into a Region of Knowledge of Ageing” put together development efforts and future development needs relevant to the knowledge of ageing (Jämsén & Koivumäki 2009). The concept of knowledge of ageing was explained in the article “The Knowledge of Ageing Inspires” (Jämsén & Kukkonen 2010). At that time, it was stated that plenty of competence relevant to ageing already exists in our region, while there also is a need to generate new knowledge.

The term knowledge of ageing has been reflected upon and its contents have been shaped in workshops on this subject organised by North Karelia University of Applied Sciences since 2010. Workshop participants have included partners not only from North Karelia but also from Savonia University of Applied Sciences in North Savo. Ageing is a phenomenon particularly typical of Eastern and Northern Finland.

In the workshops, such aspects as the new roles, tasks and skills of professionals working with senior citizens, new communities in which senior citizens themselves play an active role, and learning new values and attitudes relevant to popula-

tion ageing emerged as new content of the knowledge of ageing. Senior citizens' meaningful everyday life that is worth living as well as values and attitudes associated with ageing are emphasised particularly.

It is time to let go of negative ideas and to aim for a positive understanding of ageing that focuses on skills and possibilities of being active.

We would like to thank all those who, in their different ways, contributed to this publication. Our particular thanks go to Päivi Muranen, B. Soc. Sc. and ISO trainee, for her involvement in compiling the glossary.

Joensuu 18 October 2011

Teija Nuutinen & Arja Jämsén







Photo: Teija Nuutinen

# KNOWLEDGE OF AGEING – WHAT IS IT?

The term knowledge of ageing is multi-dimensional and thus needs to be clarified and analysed.

In the area of knowledge of ageing, the social and health care sector has extensive competence related to ageing and the concept of man. However, we must expand the content of knowledge of ageing and extend it to all areas and levels of civic life. Knowledge of ageing, or taking the needs of an ageing population into account, is needed in working life, planning of housing and the living environment, various sectors of education and training, cultural life, and wherever people of different ages are leading their everyday lives.

We must remember that in addition to professional competence, the knowledge of ageing includes the specific competence of senior citizens, individuals and groups. For example, it means social and civic participation, life experience and sometimes even tacit abilities, willingness, knowledge and practical skills. It may easily pass unnoticed and unused, overshadowed by the knowledge of professionals and the authorities.

The knowledge of ageing is knowledge and skills through which the global phenomenon of ageing can be seen as an opportunity for learning and leading a full life of a new type in all sectors and branches of society.

The knowledge of ageing is based on the idea of senior citizens playing an active role in society. They also influence and take part in decision-making that affects them. Ageing is a valuable and positive phenomenon, an inviolable human right of every citizen. This right belongs to everyone, regardless of their gender, nationality and financial position, or functional ability or lack of it. Ageing does not only mean receiving services. It means comprehensive participation in building our shared world.

***For consideration:***

What is changing in society with the ageing of the population?

In what type of an environment will senior citizens be living in 2030?

What type of knowledge of ageing will be needed in the field of commerce or, for example, the building and transport sectors?

"Us senior citizens are the resource that will increase most certainly and at the fastest rate" – Heimo Hassinen, Chair of Joensuu Senior Citizens 'Council, 2011

# KNOWLEDGE OF AGING IS GUIDED BY AGE POLICY

## *Age policy in the European Union*

Age policy and programmes refer to the various targets, strategies and actions, management systems and legislation relevant to the position and living conditions of the aged. These both maintain and modify the possibilities for an independent and autonomous life for the aged. From the age policy perspective, the needs of an increasingly elderly population must be taken into account in all areas of society.

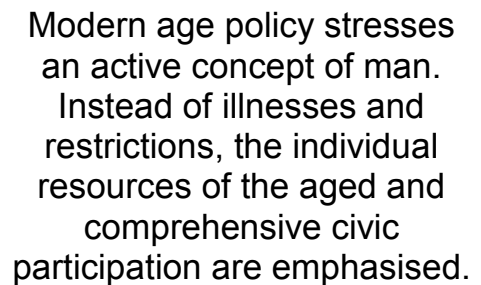
In European Union level age policy, the global change is seen as an important issue of the future. The United Nations (UN) World Assembly on Ageing issued a declaration on the aged and ethical principles as early as in 1982. This declaration remains in use as a guideline for international, regional and national age policy.

Twenty years later in 2002, the second UN World Assembly on Ageing in Madrid highlighted not only the problems and challenges ensuing from global ageing but also the great opportunities offered by an aged population.

The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing aims to create a Society for All Ages. In this society, the aged have equal human rights to other members of society. Comprehensive civic, political, financial and cultural participation of the aged is considered vital. The plan also stresses various needs for services and continuous, moderately priced and high-quality social and health care services. Lifelong good health belongs to all.

The Madrid International Plan of Action also stresses education and lifelong learning. Age-related competence and learning is often exclusively associated with professionals who work with the elderly. However, the knowledge of ageing also comprises the lifelong learning of the aged themselves, promoting their status in society and leading their lives as independently as possible.

International age policy also pays attention on the position of ageing workers in the labour market. Aged workers are seen as a financial, human and social resource for society that possesses invaluable knowledge and experience. The extension of human life must thus primarily be considered a sign of positive development. Flexible, gradual and voluntary retirement must be made possible. By improving the position of ageing workers, we can thus make a positive impact not only on individuals but on the state of the entire national economy.



Modern age policy stresses an active concept of man. Instead of illnesses and restrictions, the individual resources of the aged and comprehensive civic participation are emphasised.

By decision of the European Parliament and the Council, year 2012 has been designated the European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations. The general aim of this theme year is to encourage and support the efforts of EU Member States, their regional and local authorities, social partners and the civic society to promote active ageing.

The aims of the theme year include raising general awareness of the importance of active ageing in society, promoting active ageing and striving to make a better use of senior citizens' resources. Other aims include raising debate and developing mutual learning between Member States and stakeholders. The theme year also wishes to offer a framework for commitments and practical measures to achieve the goals related to ageing at the practical level.

### ***Finnish age policy stresses active participation***

In line with international plans of action, the Finnish age policy stresses a modern and active concept of ageing. In addition to illnesses and restrictions of functional ability, the scope of action and individual resources of the aged are emphasised. Equality, the right of self-determination, financial independence and social integration belong to all citizens regardless of their age. The Finnish age policy highlights the principle of lifelong learning. Promoting the wellbeing of the aged, coping as independently as possible and good care are also stressed.

The national age policy in Finland is based on the welfare state model. Social and health care services are funded by tax revenue, provided by the municipalities and accessible to all regardless of the individual's social and financial standing. Private social and health care services and the third sector (organisations and associations) complement municipal services and offer alternatives to them.

Similarly to the knowledge of ageing, age policy must be extended to all key areas of civic life, or working life, housing and the living environment, education, training and culture, social and health care as well as social communication and civic participation. Pension and housing policies, urban planning and social and health care services play a key role. In addition to the central government and municipalities, the significance of NGOs and the private sector is highlighted.

In connection with ageing, we often talk about accessibility. An accessible operating policy wishes to contribute to ensuring that citizens of all ages have access to a living environment, infrastructure, communication, interaction and services. When talking about the information society, it is vital to ensure access to developing the relevant skills in line with the principle of lifelong learning. Accessibility in housing policy means a safe living environment without restrictions of access, in which aids and new technologies facilitating independent living, rehabilitation and care are used.

The Welfare 2015 and Health 2015 policies as well as the Strategy for Social and Health Policy, a Socially Sustainable Finland 2020 stress the health and social

welfare of the aged. Such aspects as improving the functional ability of the aged, own-initiative exercise and exercise-centred rehabilitation, healthy nutrition and social networks are significant.

In the home and its immediate surroundings, the role of social activities is emphasized. The participation of the aged in ensuring their own wellbeing is considered important. Attention is also focused on the accessibility, functionality and safety of the home and its immediate surroundings as the senior citizen's functional ability declines. The long-term goal for the 2010s is to reduce welfare and health gaps, introduce customer-centeredness as the foundation of services, renew service structures and operating models and reinforce social cohesion.

The Government Programme states that the health and independent living of older people will be aided by means of services promoting wellbeing and health as well as home-based services. An act to ensure the right of older people to care is being drafted, and a housing development plan for the elderly is being prepared. The National Development Programme for Social Welfare and Health Care (Kaste) will be extended by the Kaste II programme to be confirmed at the end of 2011. This will be the main programme for the social and health care steering system.

The Quality Recommendation for Health Promotion of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health follows the same priorities. The health and functional ability of the aged is understood in a wide sense. It comprises the balanced whole of a senior citizen's physical, knowledge-related, mental and social functional ability. For example, possibilities must be secured for the aged to exercise, study, take part in NGO activities and attend cultural events regardless of their municipality of residence. This type of participation increases social interaction and alleviates the loneliness experienced by senior citizens.

The quality recommendations also stress the possibilities of living at home for as long as possible, accessibility and the availability of services. By 2012, no more than 3 per cent of those aged 75 or over should be in long-term institutional care. In practice, this means developing "intermediate" housing solutions for the elderly, or group homes and small nursing homes, and supported housing with better services instead of institutional care.

In order for these goals to be achieved, we need a new work approach, cooperation between various municipal actors and flexible basic, further and continuing education and training.

High-quality services are based on a skilled and adequate labour force. In addition to general and specialist knowledge, we need development skills and an understanding of the complex problems of aged customers and challenges posed by multiculturalism. The continuously advancing technology and work practices also require skills in impact assessment. Education and training must be up-to-date and of a high quality.

Issues of sparsely populated rural areas and long distances, in particular in Eastern and Northern Finland, lend their unique character to the Finnish ageing policy. The sparsely populated countryside is at risk of a vicious circle of negative development. Young people move elsewhere, services no longer are available and the number of farming jobs goes down. There are not enough new jobs to make up for the loss of traditional ones. The number of elderly people goes up, and the financial resources of municipalities are stretched.

***For consideration:***

How and where can senior citizens take part in civic decision-making?

What obstacles are there for participation? And what kind of possibilities are needed?

What would it take to implement the quality recommendations, programmes and strategies on the aged and their services in practice?



## Senior citizens are a growing resource in North Karelia

The various strategies, Regional Plan and Welfare Programme point the direction for the region's development over the next few decades. Various policies target such areas as internationally competitive enterprising, welfare and safety, enhancing skills and employment, a sustainable regional structure and accessibility.

The population in North Karelia is ageing faster than elsewhere in Finland and Europe. Ageing is seen as a regional resource.

The ageing population is considered a regional resource. Key success factors for the region also include skills and employment. The policies aim at developing North Karelia as a region of competence. Another aim is enhancing competence of an international standard and productisation of competence.

It is also important to secure the availability of skilled labour and a match between jobs and education. Retirements of the large age classes mean that the working age population in the region will decline by some 1,150–1,500 people every year in the 2010's. In these circumstances, ensuring the availability of skilled labour and job-skills-matching as well as holding on to the 15-20 age group will be crucial for the region's future. Education must be targeted proactively and appropriately, not forgetting flexible adult education and lifelong learning.

The Regional Plan 2030 for North Karelia creates a vision of a viable and safe region where the residents have good basic requisites for welfare, a healthy life, exerting influence and participation. To make this possible, cooperation across administrative and sectoral boundaries and more efficient provision of services will be needed.

In North Karelia, the knowledge of ageing is being enhanced, new product and service innovations are being developed, and prerequisites are being created for diverse welfare sector enterprising.

Availability of people with expert skills in the welfare sector must be safeguarded. It is also vital to invest in proactive work to prevent illnesses and exclusion and in services for the ageing. Supporting the self-motivated activity and welfare of the aged and coping at home will be emphasized.

The Regional Council of North Karelia's Welfare Programme 2015 stresses safeguarding welfare and functional ability in various life stages. The health, functional ability and independent coping of the aged will be promoted through new service models and solutions. The "High quality and networking competence" theme of this programme pinpoints welfare competence associated with ageing as a

priority. It is seen as a regional resource which we wish to enhance and disseminate nationally and internationally.

Measures to correct the balance of the age structure and to attract young people to substitute industries, improving the opportunities for enterprising, creating new jobs and safeguarding the availability of services are topical issues in North Karelia. The competitiveness and attractiveness of the region as an operating environment for companies and a living environment for people also need to be promoted in the sparsely populated rural areas of North Karelia.

***For consideration:***

Which actors should be involved in multi-sectoral cooperation networks in order to improve the welfare of senior citizens or to make services more efficient?

What opportunities does cooperation offer?

What are the problems that the cooperation may bring?



**Elderly  
people**

Photo: Arja Jämsén

**NORTH KARELIAN  
MUNICIPALITIES ENHANCING  
THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF AGEING**

## ***Housing alternatives for senior citizens***

A wide-ranging structural change is underway in municipal services for the elderly. Municipalities in North Karelia are taking part in ageing projects implemented in Eastern and Central Finland. The Vanhus-Kaste I project funded by the Kaste programme developed new housing solutions for the elderly and forms of early-phase housing support in 2008–2010. Vanhus-Kaste II focuses on active ageing and reforming the structure of services for the elderly in 2011–2013.

New operating methods of housing and services are being developed around the so-called local service areas (service campuses). The aim is to provide different types of housing, for example rented accommodation, senior citizens' housing and supported housing in the local service area and its vicinity. The area also offers different types of services from proactive measures that promote welfare and health to home care and round-the-clock care.

The objective of the current development efforts is developing housing and living environments and diversifying services and support forms (Ageing in Place). This will also reduce the need to provide institutional care and move senior citizens from one form of services and location to another. The idea is that the services will move around, not the senior citizen. Proactive work, help in everyday life and meaningful activities as well as home care will be seamlessly linked. It should be noted that the needs of senior citizens may be different in sparsely populated and urban areas.

The municipalities seek to renew the service practices of home care for the elderly through the methods of proactive home visits and early-phase intervention. In addition, assistant and support person activities have been developed, for example in cooperation with NGOs. The main emphasis is on promoting welfare and health and supporting independent ageing.

In the small home model of Lieksa, three to four senior citizens live together, supported by home and night care. This way of living supports solidarity, inclusion and activity, and as a model of intermediate housing it is cost-effective for the municipality.

Senior citizens' advisory clinic Ruori in Joensuu is developing a new operating model for promoting the health and welfare of the aged. The themes it deals with include meaningful everyday life, human relationships, exercise, sexuality, alcohol, sleep and rest and nutrition. Services are also taken out to sparsely populated rural areas.

## ***Knowledge of ageing comes together in networks***

Actors in Eastern Finland engage in long-term cooperation in order to enhance the knowledge of ageing. Key partners for the municipalities in development efforts include the Regional Council of North Karelia, North Karelia University of Applied Sciences (Centre for Social Services and Health Care and Centre for Design and International Trade) as well as Eastern Finland Centre of Excellence on Social Welfare ISO.

The ISO works to safeguard a high quality of work with the elderly and to secure skills and availability of labour in this field. Key aims include enhancing the individual resources and participation of senior citizens themselves. Reaching these aims is supported for example by the gerontological skills and socio-cultural work approach of employees.

The regional expert networks of work with the elderly in the ISO's area regularly bring together actors in this field to reinforce their joint development activities, learning and peer support. The networks influence development in the field, disseminate up-to-date information across regional boundaries and, in particular, promote social expertise in work with the elderly.

## ***Development in municipalities and projects***

In addition to service networks and areas, the age policy strategies of municipalities in North Karelia have diverse development targets:

- Service guides and information
- Senior citizens' advisory clinics and day centres providing rehabilitation
- Physical exercise, meeting places, transport services and social activities
- Supporting self-care, timely acute care and home help
- Safety in the home and its surroundings, renovations, alterations in residences and aids
- Age management and staff training
- Improving the associations and image of work with the elderly
- Voluntary work

Ageing-related development projects in North Karelia focus on such as the following:

- Supporting the functional ability and independent coping of the elderly
- Facilitating living at home, for example by making use of technology (virtual welfare services and the social media)
- Developing day centre activities for the elderly
- Creating new housing models for the aged
- Increasing the attraction of working with the elderly, for example by developing virtual learning environments

- Extending careers
- Enhancing competence management and training
- Improving the life control and satisfaction of senior citizens
- Developing stimulating activities and peer support for the elderly
- Developing accessible tourism
- Supporting rehabilitation services for those with physical disabilities
- Supporting musical activities for citizens of various ages
- Developing local service areas
- Developing a geographical information system: events, shops, people in one's own area
- Improving the usability of public transport, developing service transport and public transport in sparsely populated areas
- Developing the prevention and treatment of national diseases

***For consideration:***

What forms of work with the elderly are being used in municipalities?  
What should these be like?

How could the accessibility of services for senior citizens be improved?

How do the lifestyles and consumer habits of current and future senior citizens differ? Why?

## WELLBEING ENTERPRISES ARE LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The welfare field is the largest sector in Finland. In North Karelia, it is the largest provider of employment. There are more than 10,000 people working in the welfare sector, of whom some 2,400 in enterprises and NGOs.

The number of private enterprises providing care has nearly doubled in the 2000s. The private social and health care services sector plays an important role in boosting viability and employment in the region.

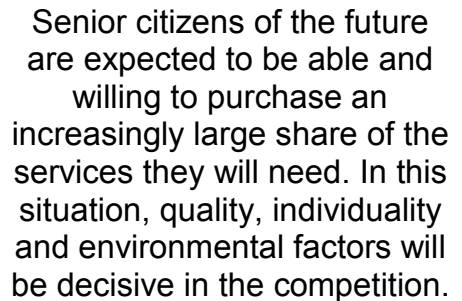
Competence, flexible services, person centeredness, familiarity and communality are considered the strengths of private sector care providers. Care providers located in rural areas offer both a peaceful and natural environment and good basic services and leisure activities.

The outlook for private sector welfare services is good. In the future, an increasingly large share of senior citizens will themselves pay for the services they need. In this situation, quality, individuality and environmental factors will be decisive in the competition. The expectations of the ageing population are also undergoing a change, and their willingness and ability to spend their own money on purchasing services are increasing continuously.

The care services market is growing rapidly, and in addition to Finnish companies, it also attracts foreign chains of enterprises, major corporations and capital investors looking for lucrative business. This is a threat to local service providers, for whom municipal service procurements are invaluable in terms of their entire business operations.

Cooperation between welfare sector enterprises and local authorities in providing services for senior citizens is in its early stages in many municipalities. As yet, not enough established operating models are in place between the municipalities and enterprises. Long-term contracts tied to municipal service strategies and based on commitment and trust are vital for welfare sector entrepreneurs.

The use of service vouchers will give senior citizens more options for individual selections while making it possible to realise a more diverse, appropriate and effective service package in which the private sector complements municipal service provision. The service voucher is being developed in Josek Oy's HYMY project (Development of multi-actor cooperation practices in the welfare sector in North Karelia 2011–2013).



Senior citizens of the future are expected to be able and willing to purchase an increasingly large share of the services they will need. In this situation, quality, individuality and environmental factors will be decisive in the competition.

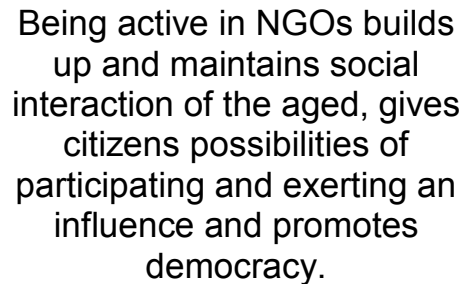


# ACTIVE NGO'S GIVE SENIOR CITIZENS SUPPORT AND SOMETHING TO DO

## *NGOs work on a voluntary basis*

NGO activities based on voluntary work have multiple impacts on citizens of all ages that cannot always be measured in figures or translated into monetary terms.

NGOs and their activities play a significant role in creating a local identity and generating social capitals in communities. Being active in organisations builds up and maintains social interaction of the aged, gives citizens possibilities of participating and exerting an influence and promotes democracy.



Being active in NGOs builds up and maintains social interaction of the aged, gives citizens possibilities of participating and exerting an influence and promotes democracy.

NGOs enhance the social and physical welfare of citizens, promote preventive work and reduce the need for corrective social and health care services. Voluntary work in NGOs increases the possibilities of participating and exerting an influence, independence and self-actualisation of citizens of all ages.

NGOs play an important role in promoting learning and skills, also responding to the needs of aged citizens.

NGO activities that promote welfare and proactively help prevent social and health problems provide support and something to do for citizens of all ages. A few examples of welfare-related NGO activities include:

- befriending service
- peer and support person activities
- hobbies and recreational activities
- meeting places, village centres, resident's meeting points and family support groups
- lobbying and exerting influence
- working as experts, involvement in development

Pensioners' association usually operate on small resources and are run by volunteers as a rule. They mainly organise hobbies and recreational activities for their members, including excursions, events and physical exercise.

The most versatile NGO activities are found in Joensuu area, where a number of district organisations and regional and local associations operate. In other areas of the region, the number of NGOs is lower, and they mainly are local ones operating within a single municipality.

Depopulation in remote areas of the outermost regions, population ageing and long distances are also reflected in the NGO sector in North Karelia. In remote, sparsely populated areas, the great challenge for NGO activities is long distances and poor connections. These factors make it more difficult for citizens to take part in NGO activities and to target NGO driven aid work to areas where it is particularly needed.

The public sector places great expectations on NGOs, in particular regarding the implementation of preventive work and producing those services for the provision of which the municipalities do not have the requisite resources or expertise. In addition, many other changes have taken place in the operating environment and conditions of the NGOs. For example, the more stringent policies of EU competition and procurement legislation, the tax authorities and Finland's Slot Machine Association RAY have made it more difficult to produce NGO-based services and to implement NGO-driven aid. The risk is that the NGOs will discontinue providing their services and that service provision will be transferred to private enterprises. This will make it more difficult to obtain support and services, in particular for residents in remote areas.

### ***The strength of NGOs is in networks***

An examination of the registers of Jelli, the North Karelian NGO portal, shows that the region has a comprehensive network of 34 organisations for pensioners and senior citizens and their local associations. Extensive networking is an important resource for NGOs in the region. In addition to other organisations, their partners may include municipalities, parishes, the hospital district and government units. It appears that plenty of scope for improvement remains in NGO cooperation and in cooperation between NGOs and public sector actors (in particular, the municipalities).

Established and long-term partnership structures in the region's NGO sector include Kotikartanoyhdistys Association, Joensuun Kansalaistalo Community Resource Centre, Itäinen tiimi mental health association, Kansanterveyden keskus national health organisation, council of organisations for the disabled Vammaisjärjestöjen neuvottelukunta and regional cooperation groups of the unemployed and pensioners. Pohjois-Karjalan Kylät Association acts as the umbrella organisation for village associations and residents' cooperation in the region.

Pohjois-Karjalan Sosiaaliturvayhdistys Association is a strong regional developer, the aims of which include developing regional social and health policy and competence in this field. The association also creates communal forums and multi-actor service and support forms, and supports the preconditions for operating and providing jobs of NGOs and the citizens' opportunities for participating and exerting an influence.

Pohjois-Karjalan Järjestöasiain neuvottelukunta (JANE, Advisory body of NGOs in North Karelia) is a cooperation organ with a mission to reinforce the NGOs' role in regional development, to improve the citizens' possibilities to participate and to promote dialogue between NGOs on one hand and NGOs and the public sector on the other. From the beginning of 2011, JANE has been one of the strategic thematic groups of the Regional Council of North Karelia. Pensioners' and senior citizens' organisations have a strong representation in the advisory body.

***For consideration:***

What does the civic participation of senior citizens mean?

Is civic participation important for people of all ages? Why?

How can the participation of senior citizens be promoted?

What happens if the NGOs' operating possibilities are undermined or lost?



**SENIOR CITIZENS  
CAN AND WILL**

## ***Senior citizens exert influence and participate in development***

The Sociobarometre of the Finnish Federation for Social Welfare and Health 2011 indicates that fewer than one out of three of municipal social and health care services listen to their customers. Service, job search and care plans continue to be made without any involvement of the customer.

Reasons for passing over the customers in managing their own affairs are presumed to include both work pressures and old ways of thinking; professionals are expected to know better than the customers themselves. The Social Welfare Act, however, laid down the duty to draw up service and care plans together with the customer as early as in 2001. The customers' knowledge and expertise are also ignored in efforts to develop the services. It is thus vital to make visible and reinforce senior citizens' skills and participation.

Twelve senior citizens' councils or pensioner cooperation groups are active in the region. The senior citizens' councils are expert organs of the aged in municipalities and cooperation forums for senior citizens, officials and decision-makers. The councils express their opinions and issue instructions for example on the planning and implementation of communications, housing, building and transport as well as social and health care services. The council also organises joint activities for various parties, arranges training and events and disseminates information on services and other issues.

Senior citizens are also very active in other associations than those of pensioners and senior citizens. They are seen as peer support persons and instructors in IT and leisure activities, friends and support persons, volunteer grannies and granddads, participants in working parties and various positions of trust in organisations. An increasing share of active participants in village associations, for example, are aged over 65.

We must remember that the majority of senior citizens are not members of any organisations or associations. The aged are also involved in many things outside the NGO sector, including providing care and support for their families (grandchildren and the elderly) and passing on cultural heritage to younger generations.

”Senior citizens themselves are experts of ageing, if only they got a chance. Not all knowledge rests with the professionals” (Text message column of newspaper Karjalainen, September 2011)

As new aspirations in voluntary work have emerged senior citizens as providers of support for one-parent families and children who have been taken into care, and their involvement in the activities of educational institutions. They could also have a greater involvement in various assisting tasks, for example recreational activities for elderly people living in institutions. They see their own role in providing peer support as an important one in encouraging other senior citizens and getting them

involved in hobbies and social networks.

### ***Senior citizens have needs for information and education***

Issues of education, training and learning are not often associated with senior citizens. Educational and learning needs are, however, a key part of active ageing. Lifelong learning does not end with retirement.

There is a particular need for computer skills training that targets senior citizens, for example in using online banking, e-mail and social media. The instruction should take the different learning style of senior citizens into account and progress individually, "leading by the hand". The IT skills groups run by adult education centres in North Karelia and Joen Severi Association in Joensuu are highly popular.

Retirement is a new life stage in which people often wish for encouragement and support from others having gone through it. They would like to avail themselves of peer support groups, peer instructors and training, for example. They would also like information on practical issues of retirement, including changing income levels, applying for various aids and benefits as well as insurance and taxation questions.

Needs for information and training also emerge in issues relevant to maintaining health and functional ability. Once senior citizens no longer have access to occupational health care services, it is not always clear where and how health care services and any necessary aids are available. They would also like more proactive training and activities, for example aiming to prevent depression and loneliness. There are great many pensioners who would themselves like to lead various peer and activity groups that support other people's welfare, but who would require instruction and training to do so.

Information is also required on leisure time and recreational activities organised by others than pensioners' and senior citizens' associations, and on possibilities of taking part in voluntary work. Taking part in drama, music and visual arts teaching and activities, for example, enriches lives and makes it easier to adjust to a new life situation.

In training and skills needs, first aid, hygiene passports and security training emerge, the offer of which is scarce especially in remote areas. In rural areas, training opportunities or activity groups in general are too few. Long distances and poor connections may make them difficult to reach.

The ageing would also like information on extending their careers. Many of those who are about to retire are considering their possibilities of continuing to work at their own workplace or, indeed, in a completely new job. In addition, they would like to have channels for exerting influence on municipal services, housing and transport issues among others. They would like to attend various lectures and one-day courses that are "on the pulse of times" and would help them to stay up to date in civic life and develop themselves, even after retirement.



## ***Information is plentiful but fragmented***

Plenty of different types of information, education and training and coaching is available for senior citizens from pensioners' organisations. Many other organisations also disseminate information, including the Finnish Red Cross, the Martha Organization, various patients' associations, the NGO portal Jelli, pension insurance companies, trade unions and organisations, parishes, the Social Insurance Institution, banks, health centres and the University of the Third Age.

Senior citizens use newspapers, television, radio and the Internet to keep up to date and also to look for information relevant to their lives. Other people in the same life situation as well as networks of friends and family are particularly important in obtaining and sharing information.

It appears that plenty of information, education and training and coaching needed by the aged is available. What is experienced as a problem is the fragmented nature of this information. Information on on-going training, activity groups and activities is increasingly moving to the online environment. This excludes a large share of senior citizens, for whom purchasing or using a computer is not an option. Those senior citizens who are excluded from civic life and activities because of an illness, loneliness, depression or poor connections gives rise to concern.

## ***The picture of ageing is not black and white***

The senior citizen of the future is commonly cast as someone who is wealthy and active and enjoys good health and wellbeing. However, we must not overlook those senior citizens who are ill and need various types of assistance. In connection with ageing, we must also remember those who are excluded, or at risk of being excluded; the poor, the vulnerable, unequal and underprivileged senior citizens. These groups will increase in number as the population ages. For example, the aged in sparsely populated rural areas, lonely senior citizens in urban housing estates and supported housing and those afflicted by memory disorders and mental health problems are at risk of exclusion.

Demographic studies indicate that the number of people suffering from moderate or serious dementia in Finland is estimated at 85,000, and the number of those suffering from mild dementia at 35,000. As the population ages, dementia will become more prevalent. Every year, more than 13,000 people will develop some type of a dementing disorder. The direct costs of caring for one dementia patient are estimated at some EUR 24,000 annually. The national costs of dementia care amount to more than EUR 3 billion a year. Caring for memory disorder sufferers is indeed one of the greatest challenges in work with the elderly.

In addition to memory disorders, senior citizens are also increasingly affected by mental health and intoxicant abuse problems. The home care personnel in municipalities in particular encounters increasing numbers of senior citizens who suffer from drink problems and depression. In those aged 65 or over, drinking regularly has steadily become more prevalent since 2005, while being a non-drinker is



becoming more rare.

Particular attention should be paid on the drinking habits of the so-called large age classes due to retire in the next few years. As senior citizens drink more, the negative effects of alcohol will also increase at an alarming rate. The service system for the elderly and working methods must be updated. In particular, employee training and operating methods that take the aged into account in work with intoxicant abusers are needed.

***For consideration:***

Where and when can senior citizens take part in development efforts and exert influence?

When and how is senior citizens' participation in development efforts realised?

How can we get senior citizens who are excluded in various ways to take part in civic life, or how can they gain access?

# TRAINING EXPERTS IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF AGEING IN NORTH KARELIA

## *A region of diverse education*

North Karelia is known for its strong and diverse research, development and educational organisations: the University of Eastern Finland, North Karelia University of Applied Sciences, North Karelia Municipal Education and Training Consortium, HUMAK University of Applied Sciences, Joensuu Science Park, the Finnish Forest Research Institute, the European Forest Institute, Geological Survey of Finland, Eastern Finland Centre of Excellence on Social Welfare, the Finnish Environment Centre and the Finnish Game and Fisheries Research Institute.

The foundation for innovation activities in the region is laid by the University of Eastern Finland and North Karelia University of Applied Sciences together with companies and research institutes. In addition to these, versatile upper secondary vocational education and training following basic education, general upper secondary schools, the Regional Higher Education Network in North Karelia, vocational adult education and liberal adult education each lend their own colour to the knowledge of ageing in the region.

North Karelia draws students from around Finland and, increasingly, also international exchange students and degree students. It is necessary to provide interesting and flexible possibilities for making the transition from studies to working life and the employment of graduating students in North Karelia with the aim of attracting the students to stay in the region once they have completed their studies.

Many types of experts and expertise of many levels are also needed in work with senior citizens. Among others, we will need experts of research and development, experts of gerontology and geriatrics, teachers, nurses and instructors as well as volunteers.

In order to enhance the knowledge of ageing and share knowhow, we need to develop and organise cooperation between upper secondary vocational education and training, vocational adult education, liberal adult education, universities of applied sciences, the Regional Higher Education Network and the University of Eastern Finland. Educational cooperation will promote the use of existing resources and a wider offer of education as well as help to avoid overlaps in education.

The following section contains a review of education related to the knowledge of ageing provided by liberal adult education actors, secondary education, vocational adult education, universities of applied sciences, the Regional Higher Education Network and the University of Eastern Finland in North Karelia. There are many actors and plenty of expertise, while there also are many needs and opportunities for cooperation.

## ***Liberal adult education***

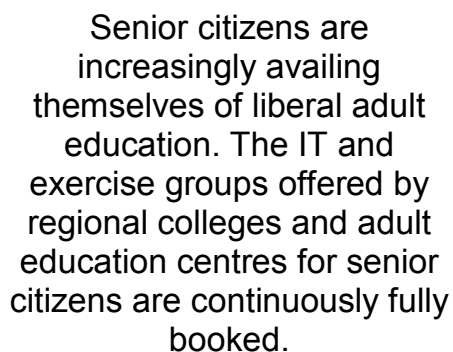
In Finnish society, liberal adult education refers to education and training provided by such institutions as adult education centres, regional colleges and music and sports institutes. Liberal adult education supports a tradition of studying that covers the entire life span of an individual. It is understood as part of culture, education, spiritual advancement, tolerance and maturity.

There are several adult education centres operating in North Karelia, or those of Joensuu area, Juuka, Central Karelia, Lieksa, Tohmajärvi, Ilomantsi and Ylä-Karjala. The two folk high schools in the province, Lieksan kristillinen opisto and Kiteen evankelinen kansanopisto, provide teaching organised around subjects and modules. In addition, there are three regional offices that come under the umbrella of liberal adult education, or the Union for Rural Education and Culture, Workers' Educational Association and the Association for Educational Activity. These organise adult education and cultural activities and are involved in many types of projects.

The three music institutes in the region, or those of Joensuu, Central Karelia and Pielinen Karelia, mainly provide instruction in music for children and young people. As recreational activities, basic teaching in the fields of visual arts, crafts, music, writing, dancing and drama is organised in the region.

Eastern Finland Sports Institute (ISLO) is a regional institute of sports and fitness education that provides vocational further adult education preparing students for competence-based examinations leading to a vocational qualification in the field of sports and fitness and other vocational further training for adults. Eastern Finland Sports Institute organises short training courses in the areas of sports and fitness, physical education and coaching. It also organises coaching and camp activities in various sports

Senior citizens from the recently retired to those aged over 80 are an active and growing student group of adult education centres. Instructors of IT skills, music and exercise groups for senior citizens must take into account age-related changes in their students, for example in the areas of hearing, eyesight, cognitive functions and social and emotional functions.



Senior citizens are increasingly availing themselves of liberal adult education. The IT and exercise groups offered by regional colleges and adult education centres for senior citizens are continuously fully booked.

In the learning and instruction of senior citizens, the comprehensive nature of learning is emphasised, including the significance of earlier experiences and knowledge, flexible teaching and instruction techniques, the active role of students, interaction and peer support as well as the instructive role of the teacher.

## ***Upper secondary vocational education and training***

The North Karelia Municipal Education and Training Consortium organises upper secondary vocational education and training for young people and adults as well as vocational further education and training, labour policy education, liberal adult education, apprenticeship training, preparatory training and personnel training.

Educational institutions that are part of the Municipal Consortium include vocational colleges located in Valtimo, Nurmes, Lieksa, Kitee, Outokumpu and Joensuu, vocational college in Niittylahti and North Karelia Institute. In recent years, the North Karelia Municipal Education and Training Consortium has been among the elite of organisers of vocational education and training in Finland.

Practical nurse training in vocational colleges run by the North Karelia Municipal Education and Training Consortium imparts the students with qualifications in nursing, care and educational tasks in the social and health care sector in Joensuu, Outokumpu, Kitee and Lieksa. Practical nurses have a basic capacity for supporting and instructing the growth and development of people in different ages and life situations and with different backgrounds, nursing and caring for them and supporting their rehabilitation.

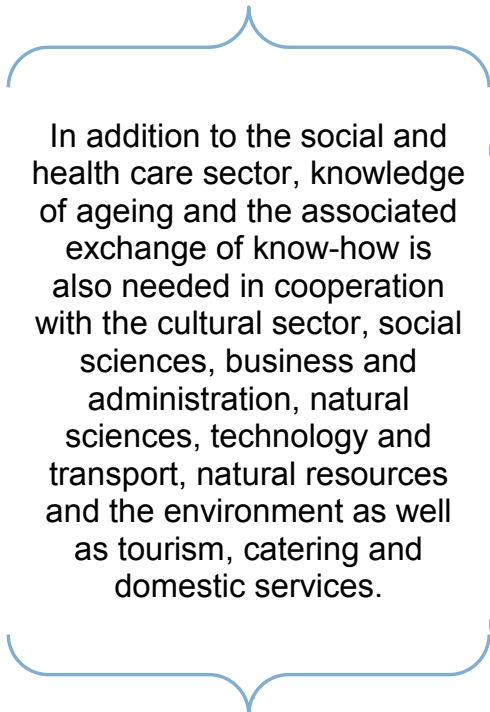
In the degree programmes of practical nursing, the students focus in a selected area. The degree programme in work with the elderly imparts comprehensive skills as well as specialist competence and qualifications to work in the care of the elderly in private homes, home services, institutions and organisations as well as housing service units for the elderly.

The North Karelia Municipal Education and Training Consortium comprises the North Karelia Adult Education Centre operating in Joensuu, Lieksa, Outokumpu and Kitee. This Centre is a regional, multi-disciplinary educational institution specialising in adult education and working life development that organises adult education and competence-based qualifications in the sectors of welfare, services and technology.

Working life development and services form another key part of its operations. Short training courses, competence tests, examinations and test are targeted at and tailored for companies and the personnel of work communities.

The educational offer of the North Karelia Adult Education Centre includes a programme leading to a specialist vocational qualification in work with the elderly.

Training Consortium comprises the



In addition to the social and health care sector, knowledge of ageing and the associated exchange of know-how is also needed in cooperation with the cultural sector, social sciences, business and administration, natural sciences, technology and transport, natural resources and the environment as well as tourism, catering and domestic services.

Students with this specialist vocational qualification have the capacity to take part in management and coordination tasks in work with the elderly, including working as the responsible officer and contact person of a team working with the elderly or an expert team and planning and assessing services, either independently or as a member of a multidisciplinary team.

### ***Universities of Applied Sciences***

HUMAK University of Applied Sciences is a national institution that focuses on networking, stressing interaction, learning and doing together. HUMAK operates in the fields of humanities, pedagogy and culture. HUMAK's Joensuu campus is part of the NGO and Youth Work unit. On the campus, students can take a degree programme in Civic Activities and Youth Work (field of humanities and pedagogy) and a Bachelor's degree in social pedagogy. In addition to Bachelor's degrees, the campus offers adult education in Joensuu and Kuopio, open university of applied sciences studies and vocational continuing education and training.

Population ageing is also reflected in Bachelor's studies in social pedagogy, the traditional orientation of which is youth work. The operating area of social pedagogy is increasingly expanding towards civic activities for citizens of various ages and preventive work with senior citizens.

North Karelia University of Applied Sciences offers degree studies in 20 degree programmes. The fields that are offered comprise culture, social sciences, business and administration, natural sciences, technology and transport, natural resources and the environment, the social, health and exercise sector as well as tourism, catering and domestic services.

Students may take an English degree in the International Business and Design programmes. They can also study for a Master's degree in the Degree Programmes for Technology Competence Management and Environmental Technology in the fields of technology and transport, and the Degree Programme in the Development and Management of Health Care and Social Services.

In specialisation studies, the students can build up their vocational skills and acquire in-depth competence. In 2010, 18 students completed specialisation studies in work with the elderly in the social and health care sector. In the Open University of Applied Sciences, students can take vocational higher education studies regardless of their age and educational background. Open University students can take modules that are part of university of applied science studies, excluding a final project and practical training. The University of Applied Sciences also organises continuing education, short training courses and various seminars.

The planning phase of the Regional Higher Education Network in North Karelia was launched in 2006, and the Network established itself from the beginning of 2010. It operates sub-regionally, responding to sub-regional skills, training and development needs. The sub-regional steering committees of the Regional Higher Education Network consist of representatives from municipalities, development

companies, Employment and Economic Development Offices and companies as well as third sector actors.

Coordinated by North Karelia University of Applied Sciences, the Regional Higher Education Network provides education in cooperation with ADUCATE (Centre for Training and Development at the University of Eastern Finland), HUMAK University of Applied Sciences Joensuu campus and North Karelia Summer University. Through ISAT cooperation, the operating model of the Regional Higher Education Network has been planned along the same lines in North Savo.

One of the shared focus areas for development of North Karelia University of Applied Sciences and Savonia University of Applied Sciences in North Savo in their ISAT partnership strategy for 2010–2012 is knowledge of ageing and online services as well as welfare services in sparsely populated areas and safeguarding their availability. Solutions for these questions are sought together by developing service structures and models as well as equipment that enhance welfare and safety. The key element in ISAT cooperation is developing solutions that support the health and welfare of senior citizens in public, private and third sector cooperation. At the core of the activities is the senior citizen as an actor and participant.

### ***University of Eastern Finland***

At the beginning of 2010, the Universities of Joensuu and Kuopio merged to form the University of Eastern Finland. The University of Eastern Finland is one of the largest science universities in Finland with campuses in Joensuu, Kuopio and Savonlinna.

This multi-disciplinary university offers teaching in 100 major subjects in the faculties of Philosophy, Science and Forestry, Health Sciences, and Social Sciences and Business Studies. The multi-disciplinary aspect is stressed in the activities of the university. As a result of the merger, new research areas are emerging on the interfaces between complementary branches of science.

In its most concrete form, education associated with an ageing population and the knowledge of ageing is offered at the School of Pharmacology, Department of Nursing Science and the School of Medicine in the Faculty of Health Sciences of the University of Eastern Finland, as well as at the Department of Health and Social Management and Department of Social Sciences in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Business Studies.

Focus areas in the partnership agreement between the University of Eastern Finland and the Universities of Applied Sciences in Eastern Finland for 2011–2012 include welfare services, the energy and natural resources sectors and knowhow related to Russia.

***For consideration:***

What types of tasks could senior citizens have in various educational institutions?

What can students and teachers learn from senior citizens?

Why are values and ethics important in work with the elderly?

What opportunities or problems are associated with actors in various professional fields, municipalities, NGOs, companies and institutes of learning acting together in work with the elderly?

How can work with the elderly be made an attractive alternative for those making decisions on their education and careers?



# NORTH KARELIA AS A PIONEER OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF AGEING

## *In the middle ground between east and west*

People in North Karelia have always lived close to the border, in the middle ground between east and west. At the same time, they have learnt to negotiate interfaces and to export and import learning and influences. International contacts are now a tradition in developing the knowledge of ageing. In the international networks of educational institutions, work with and services for the elderly have played a role; in cooperation with neighbouring areas, for example, Russia has been a partner in several development and assessment projects in work with the elderly.

In the field of knowledge of ageing in North Karelia, international actors have included municipalities in Pielinen Karelia and Lieksa in particular, North Karelia University of Applied Sciences and the Regional Council of North Karelia. Other towns in the region also have international contacts. The Eastern Finland Centre of Excellence on Social Welfare has been an active partner in many age-related projects of the municipalities.

So far, this cooperation has been poorly coordinated and fragmented. The actors engage in little regional or local cooperation in their international contacts. The international networks of educational institutions are not particularly visible in the field and thus fail to produce added value in developing practical work with the elderly.

Of recent projects, three significant ones should be highlighted: the Our Life as Elderly (OLE) project (2004–2006) was prepared in wide-based cooperation, the main responsibility for which was assumed by the town of Lieksa and the Eastern Finland Centre of Excellence on Social Welfare. The project was funded by the EU Northern Periphery programme and administrated by the town of Luleå in Sweden. In particular, this project aimed at preparing for ageing in rural areas. Age policy programmes based on a novel vision of positive and resourceful ageing were created in the regions. In drafting the strategy on age policy, the municipalities of Pielinen Karelia had a lot to contribute.

More or less the same partners continued the work by preparing a follow-up project titled Older People for Older People (O4O), which was also funded by the EU Northern Periphery Programme (2007–2010). The previous cooperation project was found rewarding and inspiring to the extent that Scotland as the administrator of the new project set the future involvement of Pielinen Karelia as a condition for going ahead. The administrator of the Finnish sub-project was a regional development company called Pielisen Karjalan kehittämissyhtiö Oy, PIKES. In this project, the ageing of population and building up the knowledge of ageing was seen as a great resource for society and the communities.

The on-going EU project DART (Declining, Ageing ja Regional Transformation) administrated by the Regional Council of North Karelia focuses on the regional



impacts of a declining and ageing population. Thirteen European regions from eleven countries are involved in this project, which was approved as part of the INTERREG IVC programme seeking to facilitate interregional cooperation in Europe.

### ***Ageing to be expected***

The changing population age structure is a common factor for the regions internationally. In sparsely populated areas in particular, new solutions are being sought for housing and services for the elderly. In this area, North Karelia and Eastern Finland in a wider sense have a lot to contribute. Steady and innovative development efforts have been carried out in the region, both in urban and rural areas.

We also have a lot to learn. Solutions adopted in the rugged countryside of Scotland and those based on a novel type of multi-actor welfare services system that relies heavily on voluntary work should be examined and their suitability for the conditions in Eastern Finland should be critically analysed.

One of the key learning areas is participation and inclusion of senior citizens. Participatory involvement of the citizens has not been one of the strongest points for the Finns. In this area, we should model ourselves on international experiences. Senior citizens should increasingly be involved in development efforts, for example as instructors, information officers and lobbyists. Due to the proximity of Russia, cooperation with neighbouring regions emerges as an important area also in the future: the growing Russian-speaking population and multi-cultural work with the elderly are part of the future for Eastern Finland. They pose a number of development challenges both for education and training targeting professionals and senior citizens and for work with and services for the elderly.

Up till now, international cooperation has already brought plenty of concrete benefits and new operating models for developing work with the elderly in the municipalities of North Karelia, for example in service management. On the other hand, North Karelia has been able to act as an example and the giving party. For example, international visitors have been interested in small group housing in Lieksa. "The shared digs for grannies" have received visitors from many countries.

The cooperation has resulted in new skills, innovations and a point of comparison for our own work. International work meetings – sometimes in Scotland and sometimes in Lieksa or Nurmes – have been important experiences for the participants. Making our own development work visible is motivating and empowering for the employees.

### ***For consideration:***

How could the international cooperation of municipalities, NGOs, educational institutions and development networks be exploited in the knowledge of ageing?

What types of possibilities of being active should senior citizens who have immigrated to Finland from other countries have?

What should operating models that are participatory for senior citizens be like?



Photo Arja Jämsén

# LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

## ***Outdated images of work with the elderly***

It has been generally noted that the images that those working with senior citizens have of care for the elderly today are not exclusively positive. The work may be considered heavy, underappreciated and poorly paid. Working with the elderly is seen as institutionalised serial work consisting of repetitive routines. In the images, rush and lack of resources prevent individuality, a rehabilitating work approach and working in a stimulating manner.

Such negative images of working with the elderly are not apt to attract new students to the field. Labour will be needed, however, as the share of ageing population increases and nursing staff retires. In the future, we will compete for workers in the social and health care sector, but also for attracting students into the education.

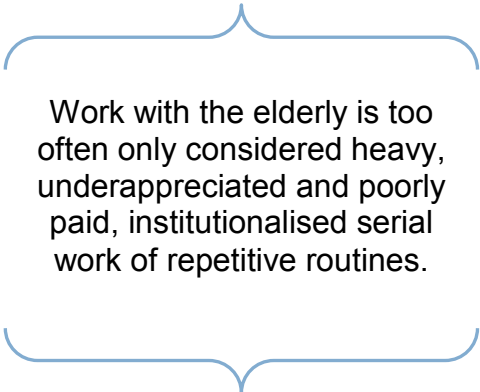
The outlook for work with the elderly in the future is more positive than the current situation, however. The municipalities are aware of the increasing number of elderly people, and they are preparing for this situation by hiring additional labour. In the future, work with the elderly will be done in multi-professional cooperation with well-organised division of labour.

Institutional work with the elderly will be replaced by individual home care. Professionals will be working with senior citizens who are in an increasingly good condition, although older. The role of social activities will be more prominent. Aids, medical care and technologies will develop in a more positive direction. Work with the elderly will be more equal and of a higher quality. The senior citizens of the future will also demand high-quality, individual services.

Those working with senior citizens are aware of the fact that care for the elderly will require multi-disciplinary and diverse skills and training, now and in the future.

Competence related to ethics and values, flexibility and multi-culturalism are an important part of the work with senior citizens. Equality, individuality, self-determination, independence and supporting independence as well as responsibility are key values informing the work.

To make work with senior citizens more attractive, working conditions that are of a higher quality and more permanent will be required. Permanent employment relationships, good salaries, and working conditions that promote wellbeing at work will ensure the attractiveness of the field. The various sectors and professional groups will also need to work together in the municipalities, NGOs, companies and educational institutions. We should also develop the



Work with the elderly is too often only considered heavy, underappreciated and poorly paid, institutionalised serial work of repetitive routines.

content of basic education and training, continuing education and cooperation between various educational institutions and organisations.

### ***The work is cut out for us***

The social and health care sector employs more than 360,000 people. This number is increasing, especially in the private sector. As the population structure changes, some 125,000 new employees and 40,000 new places in care will be needed in the social and health care sector by 2025. This will require investments amounting to at least EUR 4 billion. This will be a considerable financial effort and social policy challenge which cannot be shouldered by the public sector alone.

The need for unprejudiced cooperation of a new type and a functional division of labour between the public, the private and the third sector is a highly topical issue.

A survey of labour and training needs in North Karelia in 2010 indicated that as a consequence of the ageing of population and retirements of employees working with the elderly, a shortage of labour is already emerging, especially in the outlying areas of the region. More labour is needed, in particular for home care. There is also a shortage of instructors in the social field, social workers and doctors.

In home care, staff engaged in so-called assistant or practical work is also required, who do not necessarily need a qualification in the social and health care field or secondary education. We are talking about a need for such roles as care assistants, service assistants and practical or veteran assistants. A national trial of social assistant training is under way.

In the training needs of municipalities, skills needs associated with transfer of tasks (e.g. a doctor's tasks being transferred to nurses), new division of labour, changes in task structures and municipal age policy programmes and strategies are emerging.

Skills gaps are found in the areas of social and group pedagogy and sociocultural work with the elderly. The ever-increasing mental health and intoxicant abuse problems of senior citizens, memory disorders, alcohol-induced dementia and issues of terminal care bring particular training and skills needs for the social and health care sector professionals in municipalities.

Developing flexible and rapid working life oriented training is considered vital in municipalities. It will be necessary to clarify the division of tasks and to cut back on overlapping training between the educational organisations. Cooperation within and between universities of applied sciences, secondary education and adult education should also be intensified.

The knowledge of ageing is a future growth sector, nationally and internationally. Actors will be needed, as we have our work cut out for us in order if we wish to achieve a change!



## GLOSSARY

*Active ageing* = ageing seen as an active, positive phenomenon; senior citizens' resources and individual functional capacity are stressed instead of illnesses and loss of functional capacity

*Actor* = user or participant; for example the state, municipality, company, NGO or an individual

*Age management* = making use of the knowhow of senior employees and passing it on to the next generation

*Age policy* = policies related to age and ageing, or decisions, solutions and actions aiming to combat ageism, improve the status of people in a certain age, take into consideration changes caused by ageing and improve the health and welfare of the aged

*Age structure* = demographic structure based on age; often described as a pyramid showing the number of people in different ages

*Customer-supplier model* = a model for providing social or health care services where the party ordering the service and the party producing it are separate entities; for example, elderly care services are ordered by a municipality and provided by a private care institution

*Dependency ratio* = an index that shows how many employed people, or people who are at work, are needed to support those who are not working, or children, students, pensioners, those in military service, the sick etc.

*Educational organisation* = educational institution, educational structure

*Ethics* = moral philosophy that deals with moral issues, such as the nature of good and evil

*Gerogogy* = emphasising the special features of a senior citizens' learning, instruction that supports the different learning styles of senior citizens, "leading by the hand"

*Global* = concerning the entire world

*Housing services unit* = a unit that offers a possibility for independent living by means of various support services

*Industrial policy programme* = a programme drawn up in a municipality for a certain period that outlines policies for developing the industries over the next few years

*Innovation* = new invention

*ISAT cooperation* = Cooperation between the universities of applied sciences in Eastern Finland, or North Karelia University of Applied Science and Savonia University of Applied Sciences

*ISAT partnership strategy 2010-2012* = Cooperation model for universities of applied sciences in Eastern Finland

*IT* = information technology

*JANE* = Advisory body of NGOs in North Karelia, which aims to encourage all parties in work for the common good and unprejudiced participation

*Job-skills matching* = training adequate numbers of new professionals in the fields that show the greatest need for labour. A precondition for job-skills matching is national and regional anticipation of education and labour needs.

*Knowledge of ageing* = understanding ageing as an extensive and complex individual, communal and societal phenomenon; includes knowledge, skills, attitudes and ethics related to ageing, taking the ageing population in consideration at all levels of society, senior citizens' own skills and participation, competence in cooperation between various administrative branches and actors in issues related to ageing.

*Lifelong learning* = learning and skills development that continues throughout an individual's life

*Multiprofessional* = cooperation and sharing of knowledge, skills and competence between representatives of several professional fields aiming to solve a shared problem or to achieve a joint goal

*Multi-sectoral* = cooperation between and within various areas of competence or branches of administration aiming at wide-based competence or improved cooperation

*Networking* =

- 1) cooperation between experts in the same field with exchange of skills and peer support in the work
- 2) multiprofessional customer work of various parties to support and assist a customer or a family in various life situations
- 3) inter-administrative cooperation, for example aiming to increase welfare or skills in the region or solve a common problem.

*Polarisation* = a chain of events or a phenomenon that results in an extreme division; for example, polarisation of society = inequality

*Sector* = the public sector (state, municipalities, municipal consortiums); the private sector (private companies and the marketplace); the third sector (NGOs, voluntary work)

*Social capital* = Social capital refers to either community members' ability to work together and trust each other, or social relationships that encourage a person to be active in the community. Social capital is seen to promote an individual's or a community's operating capacity similarly to financial capital in other contexts.

*Social exclusion* = exclusion from civic activities or services maintained by society; feeling of exclusion; not feeling part of society

*Social integration* = adaptation to society and the community; supporting the social interaction and social functional capacity of excluded persons

*Specialisation studies* = extra vocational studies taken in addition to basic studies

*STM* = Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

*Strategy* = a plan of action aiming for a certain objective

*THL* = National Institute for Health and Welfare

*Tutor-mentor activities* = a system of peer instructors – advisors – instructors, where a more experienced individual instructs a beginner; can be used in education and training or in working life



*Vanhus KASTE project* = Active ageing in Eastern and Central Finland project aiming to support municipalities in developing services for senior citizens

*Welfare sector* = services and products, research, education and training associated with the social and health care sector produced by the public sector, companies and NGOs

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## APPENDIX 1

*Population dependency ratio up till 2020 (Children and elderly people per 100 working-age people)*

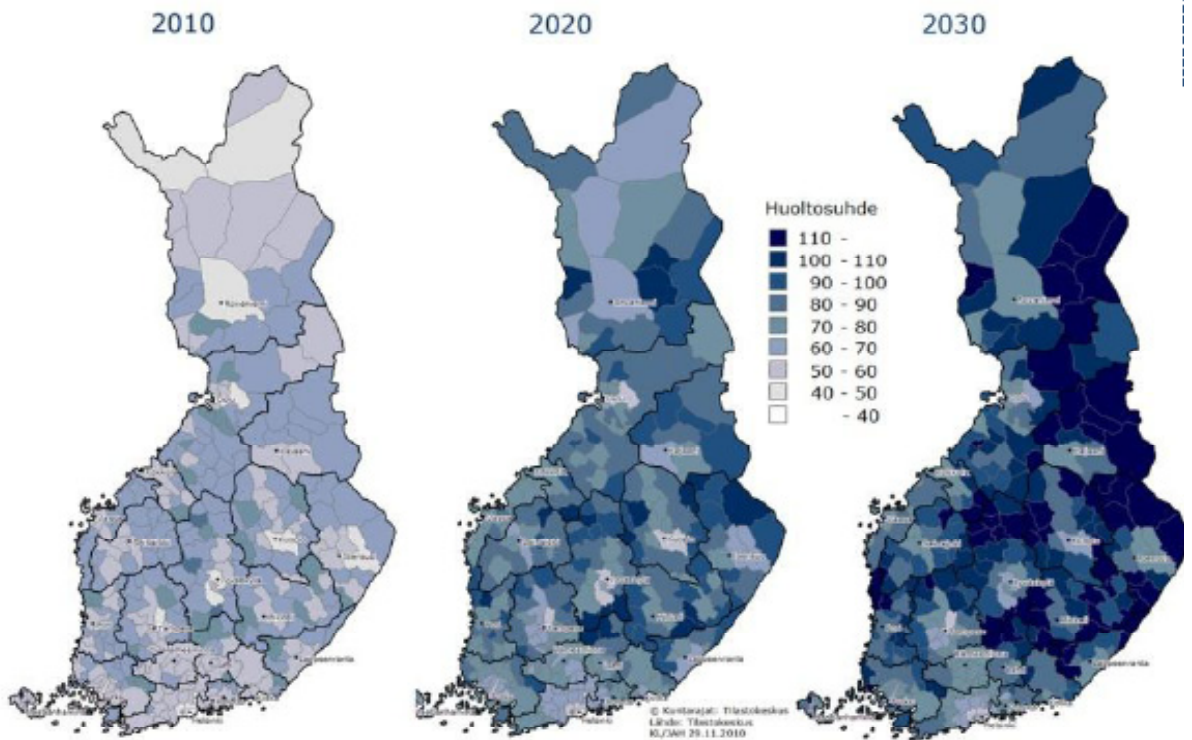
	2009	2015	2020
Joensuun area	50,2	59,4	68,8
Pielinen Karelia	60,7	78,7	97,5
Central Karelia	59,9	73,6	88,5
North Karelia	52,6	63,2	73,9
National ratio	50,6	59,1	65,4

Source: Regional Council of North Karelia working group on municipal finance

## APPENDIX 2

### *Population dependency ratio by municipality in 2010, 2020 and 2030*

Source: Population projection of Statistics Finland. Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities.









The publication *Check Marks for the Knowledge of Ageing – Working for a Change in North Karelia!* analyses the topical concept of knowledge of ageing and invests the phenomenon with concrete content.

The knowledge of ageing is a strong term that communicates positive opportunities. In North Karelia, the knowledge of ageing is highlighted in development targets for work with the elderly, curricula and strategies.

The Centre for Social Services and Health Care in North Karelia University of Applied Sciences and the Eastern Finland Centre of Excellence on Social Welfare together with their partners have focused on building up the knowledge of ageing. The knowledge of ageing is understood as knowhow of social and health care field professionals concerning phenomena associated with age and ageing. However, the need for knowledge of ageing extends to all areas in society.

This publication collects and analyses the knowledge of ageing in the "merrily ageing" North Karelia. Dozens of workshop participants have been involved in shaping the concept and content of knowledge of ageing for several years. In this, the new roles and competences of professionals, senior citizens who are themselves active and participants in various communities, and a meaningful everyday life that is worth living are particularly prominent.

The publication wishes to raise debate on the kind of ageing society we wish to build. The reader is also offered an opportunity to consider how and in what type of an environment he or she would personally like to grow old.

The publication is suitable for professionals and students of various fields and all those interested in an ageing society and the knowledge of ageing.

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