



Third International Conference of the journal “Scuola Democratica”
Education and/or Social Justice
June 3-4-5-6, 2024 · University of Cagliari (Italy)

G.15. Social justice and ageing: older learners as active citizens in a complex system
Panel G.15 — Social justice and ageing: older learners as active citizens in a complex system

Convenors Vanna Boffo (University of Florence, Italy); Laura Formenti (Milano Bicocca University, Italy)

Keywords active ageing, well-being, lifelong learning, life-skills, complexity

The paradigm of *active ageing* (WHO, 2001, 2002) should inform policies and accompany our society towards a new balance between generations; in fact, longevity is a very influent factor at a micro, meso and macrolevel, that will have an increasing impact on individual and family lives, the economy and organization of health policies, housing, job market, and of course the welfare system. At a microlevel, becoming older means to live a transformation that requires the capacitation of life-skills that are undervalued by our society (Boffo, 2022). At a meso level, a society of older citizens requires adaptation and calibration of many aspects of community life, new services and practices, the development of a culture of care that avoids dispossession and marginalization of citizens who still have much to give. At a macro level, we need new policies but also awareness of discourses and narratives in the larger system (Formenti, 2022).

The WHO defined the determinants, challenges and policy answers of an *active ageing model* based on four key pillars – health, lifelong learning, participation, and security – that would sustain older people’s potential for well-being. In Italy, we are late in developing policies (Lucantoni et al. 2022) to implement this model, especially lifelong learning as a leverage for well-being. Besides, the interpretation of health is very individualistic and medically-oriented, while well-being emerges from a complex system of interdependent variables: health, sure, but also self-care, self-determination, informed decision making, access to services, and *ageing in place*, in contact with one’s own community, proximal system, and affective circles.

Age-it is an interdisciplinary national program (2023-2026) aimed at mainstreaming ageing in the Italian system. The convenors of this panel are part of it, more specifically of the Board LEAA that will tackle cross-cutting aspects related to education and learning.

The panel answers to the conference question: how can we develop a more democratic society through learning? Being an older citizen means risking being “othered”, i.e. labeled as vulnerable and marginalized. This is truer for certain categories, more likely subjected to stigma and unseen by the policy makers: women, not least as family caregivers, disabled older people, poor citizens, or with a background of immigration, and with low levels of education, technological competence, and health literacy. Yet, there is a narrative of older adults as privileged, richer than the younger generations. The panel wants to interrogate this complexity and the emerging learning needs for older citizens, informal caregivers, professionals in communities and agencies, where formal, informal and non-formal ways of knowing are developed.

Is active ageing a normative framework of the neoliberal society, shaped by health policies that narrowly define older adults as patients, or a challenge to revise our idea of lifelong learning as a possibility to transform the dominant paradigm towards more freedom, equality, meaning, and wisdom? We will welcome interdisciplinary contributes that focus on the many aspects involved.

Conference Program

Session 1

G.15.a: Social justice and ageing: Older learners as active citizens in a complex system (A)

Time: Wednesday, 05/June/2024: 9:00am - 10:45am Location: Room 6

Building A Viale Sant'Ignazio 70-74-76

Convenors: Vanna Boffo (University of Florence, Italy); Laura Formenti (Milano Bicocca University, Italy)

Presentations

Social Participation, Education and Healthy Ageing in Italy

Paolo Pasetti¹, Loris Vergolini²

University of Bologna, Italy;

Promoting Active Aging through Lifelong Learning. Insights from an Exploratory Research in Italy

Michele Bertani¹, Donatella Bramanti², Sara Nanetti²

¹Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy; ²Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore of Milan, Italy

Learning in Longevity: a Critical Ecosystemic Approach to Research and Intervention

Laura Formenti, Davide Cino, Francesca Romana Loberto

Milano Bicocca University, Italy

Empowering Active Aging With Limited Autonomy: A Training Proposal To Enhance The Skills Of Home Caregivers For Frail Older People

Elisa Bruni, Elena Luppi, Aurora Ricci

University of Bologna, Italy

Active Ageing for cultural Services: focus on elder Population in inland Areas

Giovanna Del Gobbo, Cristina Banchi, Francesco De Maria, Giulia Biagi, Sofia Marconi

University of Florence, Italy

Elder active citizens and Community engagement

Giulia Biagi, Giovanna Del Gobbo, Francesco De Maria, Cristina Banchi, Sofia Marconi

University of Florence, Italy

Conference Program

Session 2

G.15.b: Social justice and ageing: Older learners as active citizens in a complex system (B)

Time: Wednesday, 05/June/2024: 11:15am - 1:00pm Location: Room 6

Building A Viale Sant'Ignazio 70-74-76

Convenors: Vanna Boffo (University of Florence, Italy); Laura Formenti (Milano Bicocca University, Italy)

Presentations

Autobiography and Quality Longevity

Fabio Togni, Vanna Boffo

University of Florence, Italy

Enhancing Well-being and Autonomy in Active Aging from a Montessori Perspective

Patrizia Adina Fedora Palmieri

Unifg, Italy

Active Ageing and the Challenges of Digitalisation: Experiences from the Social Research Active.IT

Giulia Melis¹, Dario Pizzul²

¹University of Milan-Bicocca, Italy; ²University of Pavia

"Università dell'Età Libera" for Active Ageing

Inmaculada Solís, Valentina Pipicella, Davide Bonaiuti

Università di Firenze, Italy

Education, Learning and Skills for Active Ageing: an Italian Research on Good Practices

Vanna Boffo¹, Debora Daddi², Christel Schachter³

University of Florence, Italy

Developing Age-Friendly Cities for Promoting Active Ageing: State of the Art in Europe

Maria Grazia Proli

University of Florence, Italy