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Active Ageing Index 2012: A toolkit for policymakers and practitioners

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Outline – three parts



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The context for the active ageing strategy

1.1 Active and healthy ageing as a policy approach

- If ageing is to be a positive experience, for individuals concerned and for societies, then life expectancy gains must be accompanied by **active and healthy years added to life**.
- The underlying grand idea is that older people when **participating more actively as they age** contribute to their own wellbeing as well as promote sustainability of public welfare systems.

1.2 Emphasis on active ageing in international policy frameworks

- I. **Designation of 2012 as the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations** has intended to..... “highlight the valuable **contributions older people make** ¹⁾to society and the economy; ²⁾to identify and disseminate good practices; and ³⁾to encourage policy initiatives”.
- II. **‘Europe 2020 – A Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth’** for EU countries, which stresses the importance of: “the challenge of promoting a healthy and active ageing population to allow for social cohesion and higher productivity”
- III. **2012 Vienna Ministerial Declaration:** Ensuring a society for all ages: Promoting quality of life and active ageing.

1.3a Active ageing as a multidimensional and measurable concept – a definition arising from EU’s AAI 2012 project

“Active ageing refers to the phenomenon in which, with rising life expectancy, people are expected and enabled to continue to be ¹⁾employed as well as engaged in other ²⁾productive activities and ³⁾live healthy, independent and secure lives as they age.”

One additional novelty is to assess not just how countries fare in terms of the actual experiences of active ageing in older ages but also measure the capacity of older people and the enabling environment around them that can be tapped to improve their quality of life.

Source: Zaidi et al. (2013)

1.3b Measurement blocks of the active ageing concept

Following the AAI definition, there will be four domains of active ageing:

1. Employment of older workers /
2. Social activity and participation of older people /
3. Independent and secure living of older persons /
4. Capacity for active and healthy ageing and enabling environment

And, the focus is on **the current generation of 'older' population**; thus using a snapshot of their ageing experiences, on the basis of the most recent evidence (no life course perspective!).

The **gender disaggregation** is essential in understanding fully the active ageing and its determinants in EU countries

European Year for **Active Ageing**
and **Solidarity between Generations** 2012



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Evidence of active ageing outcomes across EU countries and the US

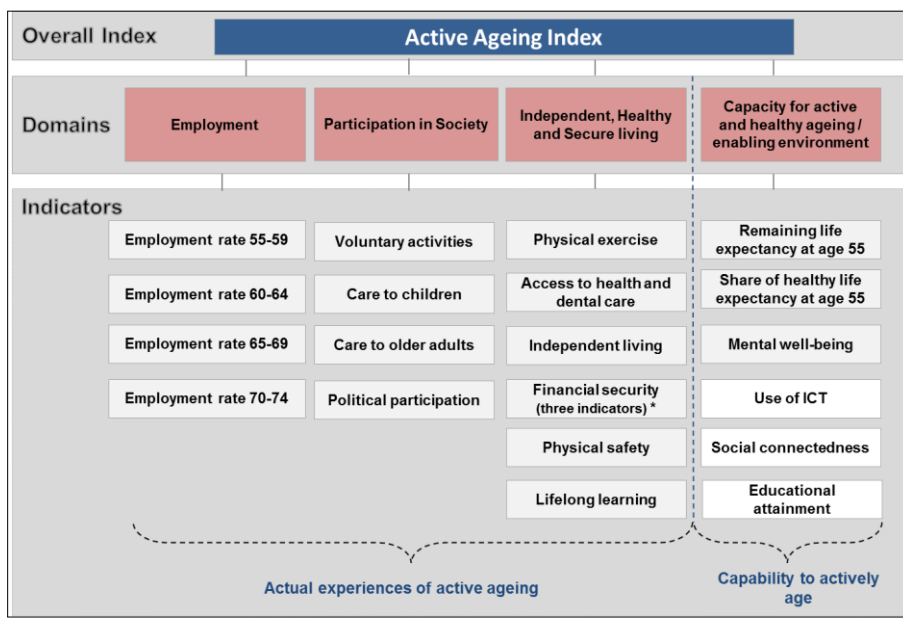
2.1 Background of the active ageing index (AAI) project

The AAI project is a jointly-managed research project between the European Commission and UNECE; undertaken by European Centre researchers, in consultation with the large UNECE Expert Group, within the framework of activities of the European Year 2012.

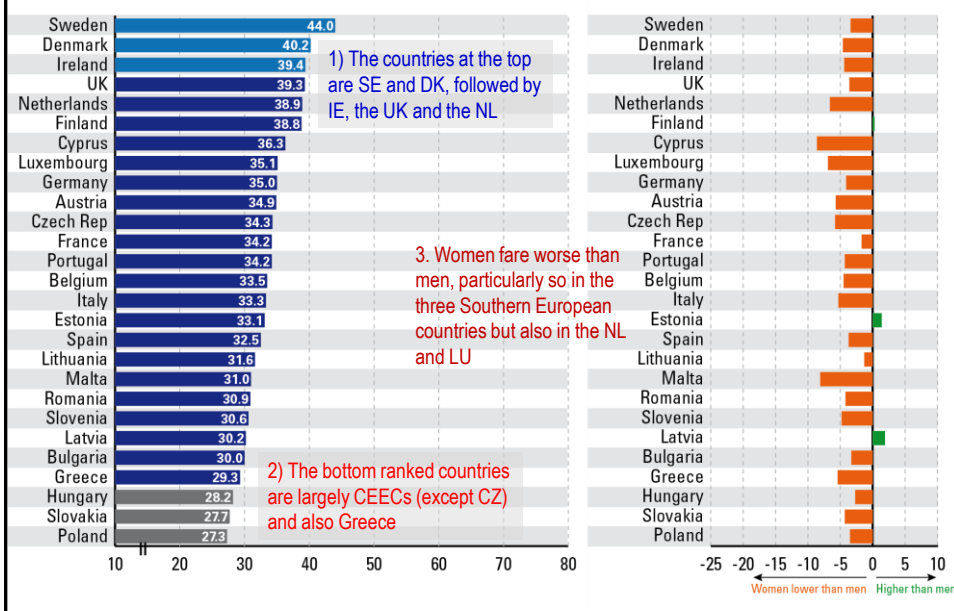
Its aims have been:

- to develop and launch the **Active Ageing Index (AAI)**, using the latest data available on the current generation of older people,
- the AAI is expected to serve as a tool to monitor active ageing outcomes and potential at the national level, for men and women, for mutual learning and advocacy of most appropriate policy reforms.

2.2 Measurement framework of the AAI: The FOUR domains and their 18 indicators



2.3 Key findings: Overall AAI (for all domains and men & women) and Gender differences (for all domains together)



2.3 Key findings: EU countries and United States, across four domains, for men/women together

Overall			1. Employment			2. Participation in society			3. Independent, healthy and secure living			4. Capacity for active aging		
Rank	Country	Value	Rank	Country	Value	Rank	Country	Value	Rank	Country	Value	Rank	Country	Value
	United States	44.0		United States	41.4	1	Ireland	25.2	1	Denmark	79.0		United States	70.0
1	Sweden	44.0	1	Sweden	41.0	2	Italy	24.1	2	Sweden	78.7	1	Sweden	69.5
2	Denmark	40.2	2	Cyprus	36.1	3	United States	23.0	3	Netherlands	77.7	2	Denmark	66.7
3	Ireland	39.4	3	UK	35.5	4	Luxembourg	22.6	4	Finland	76.6	3	Netherlands	61.6
4	UK	39.3	4	Portugal	35.3	5	Sweden	22.6	5	Germany	75.8	4	Luxembourg	61.6
5	Netherlands	38.9	5	Estonia	34.4	6	France	22.4	6	UK	75.7	5	UK	61.4
6	Finland	38.8	6	Denmark	34.0	7	Netherlands	22.4	7	Ireland	75.7	6	Ireland	60.8
7	Cyprus	36.3	7	Finland	32.0	8	Finland	22.4	8	Luxembourg	74.7	7	Finland	60.7
8	Luxembourg	35.1	8	Romania	31.4	9	Austria	21.4	9	United States	74.8	8	Belgium	60.3
9	Germany	35.0	9	Netherlands	31.4	10	Belgium	20.4	10	France	74.6	9	France	57.8
10	Austria	34.9	10	Germany	31.2	11	Denmark	20.1	11	Slovenia	74.4	10	Austria	57.5
11	Czech Rep	34.3	11	Ireland	31.0	12	UK	20.0	12	Czech Rep	73.8	11	Germany	56.2
12	France	34.2	12	Latvia	28.3	13	Czech Rep	19.4	13	Belgium	73.4	12	Spain	56.1
13	Portugal	34.2	13	Lithuania	27.4	14	Cyprus	18.7	14	Austria	73.0	13	Malta	56.1
14	Belgium	33.5	14	Czech Rep	26.4	15	Spain	18.3	15	Hungary	71.9	14	Czech Rep	54.4
15	Italy	33.3	15	Austria	24.6	16	Malta	18.2	16	Lithuania	70.6	15	Italy	52.8
16	Estonia	33.1	16	Bulgaria	24.6	17	Slovenia	16.7	17	Romania	70.1	16	Bulgaria	51.7
17	Spain	32.5	17	Greece	24.4	18	Hungary	16.1	18	Malta	70.0	17	Cyprus	51.1
18	Lithuania	31.6	18	Spain	23.3	19	Lithuania	15.3	19	Estonia	69.9	18	Portugal	50.8
19	Malta	31.0	19	Slovenia	24.6	20	Germany	14.9	20	Italy	69.1	19	Slovenia	48.8
20	Romania	30.9	20	Luxembourg	21.1	21	Portugal	14.3	21	Cyprus	69.1	20	Lithuania	47.9
21	Slovenia	30.6	21	France	21.0	22	Greece	14.2	22	Poland	67.5	21	Estonia	47.1
22	Latvia	30.2	22	Italy	20.9	23	Latvia	13.9	23	Spain	67.3	22	Poland	46.7
23	Bulgaria	30.0	23	Slovakia	20.1	24	Slovakia	13.7	24	Slovakia	67.0	23	Greece	46.7
24	Greece	29.3	24	Poland	19.8	25	Estonia	13.3	25	Portugal	66.7	24	Slovakia	45.9
25	Hungary	28.2	25	Belgium	19.8	26	Romania	12.9	26	Greece	65.2	25	Hungary	45.9
26	Slovakia	27.7	26	Malta	18.3	27	Bulgaria	12.9	27	Bulgaria	65.2	26	Latvia	45.4
27	Poland	27.3	27	Hungary	17.8	28	Poland	12.2	28	Latvia	63.2	27	Romania	42.0



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Conclusions and future research

Conclusions

1. The Active Ageing Index provides strong policy insights, due principally to [cross national comparison](#) and [multidimensionality](#).
2. Nordic countries do very well in the active ageing indices, and CEECs in general are ranked low. This is partly linked to differential capacities and enabling environments across these countries – also due to the [impact of institutional differences](#) (e.g. labour market institutions; social and health care systems) and [differential behavioural responses](#) of older people concerned.
3. Interesting aspect is to capture the heterogeneity in AA outcomes across subgroups (e.g. more educated vs. less educated) – also worth exploring further [in pair-wise comparisons](#) what countries can learn from each other!

Essential future research

- Contextual analysis towards identifying sources of cross-national differences in active ageing is an essential future work in this area – **what policies and institutions distinguish some countries?**
- It is important to link active ageing experiences to positive outcomes for individuals (QOL) and societies (welfare state sustainability):
 - How and what forms of active ageing raise QOL of individuals concerned?
 - What impact of active ageing discourse on the financial sustainability of public welfare systems?

For more details on the active ageing index project, please

<http://www1.unece.org/stat/platform/display/AAL/Active+Ageing+Index+Home>

If you use the AAI toolkit, please acknowledge its source as:

Zaidi, A., K. Gasior, M.M. Hofmarcher, O. Lelkes, B. Marin, R. Rodrigues, A. Schmidt, P. Vanhuysse and E. Zolyomi (2013), 'Active Ageing Index 2012: Concept, Methodology and Final Results ', Methodology Report Submitted to European Commission's DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, and to UNECE, for the project: 'Active Ageing Index (AAI)', European Centre Vienna, UNECE Grant No: ECE/GC/2012/003, Geneva.