



INIA director Dr Marvin Formosa (centre) signing the agreement with Prof. Vladimir Khavinson (right) and Dr Vladimir Serpov.



## Agreement on setting up of satellite centre in Eastern Europe

On February 16 and 17, INIA's director Dr Marvin Formosa visited the St Petersburg Institute of Bioregulation and Gerontology and participated in policy meetings with Prof. Vladimir Khavinson, director of the institute, vice-president of the Russian Academy of Sciences and president of the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics (European region).

Dr Formosa signed an agreement with the St Petersburg Institute of Bioregulation and Gerontology, the St Petersburg City Geriatric Medical and Social Centre directed by Dr Vladimir Serpov, and the Gerontological Society of the Russian Academy of Sciences to establish a satellite centre for East European countries.

### EDITORIAL

## A forum for news and views on ageing issues

Welcome to the first issue of *INIAnet*, the newsletter of the International Institute on Ageing (United Nations – Malta), or INIA for short. It will be published three times a year and distributed worldwide.

INIAnet was actually the name of a collaborating network started by INIA to facilitate the exchange of information, thus fulfilling its role as a bridge between developed and developing countries on ageing issues.

This newsletter's aims are varied, among them to inform past participants of news about INIA and its activities, to enhance networking among past participants and to highlight ageing issues, particularly in developing countries.

One such issue is changing demographics brought about by rapid population ageing which does not only affect developed countries, as some may think, but also a growing number of developing countries.

Population ageing poses many challenges to governments the world over: allocation of more resources for the care for the elderly, hospitalisation and medical treatment, sustainability of old age and retirement pensions as the contributory base shrinks and the number of beneficiaries increases, ensuring acceptable standards in nursing homes, safeguarding the elderly population from various kinds of abuse and neglect, adult education and promotion of active ageing.

The exchange of views on these and other aspects of growing old should find a forum in *INIAnet*, which will naturally also highlight INIA's role by reporting on its international training programmes held in Malta, *in situ* training programmes, of which it has organised scores in over 30 countries, and the setting up of satellite training centre, the latest of which – in St Petersburg, Russia, for Eastern Europe – is reported above.

*INIAnet* also serves to keep readers in touch with initiatives and activities organised by past participants in its training programmes. This issue, for example, focuses on two former participants who have successfully undertaken various initiatives in their own countries designed to improve the care and well-being of the elderly.

Naturally, *INIAnet* will be reporting on the programmes it organises. This first number contains a comprehensive report on the programme on "Policy Formulation, Planning, Implementation and Monitoring of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing", held between November 23 and December 4, 2014; another programme, this time on "Health Promotion, Quality of Life and Well-being", will be held between May 4 and 15 this year and will be reported in the next issue. Two very successful *in situ* programmes held in China are also recorded, as are other activities concerning INIA.

*INIAnet* will also keep readers abreast with upcoming international conferences on aspects of gerontology and geriatrics and with prestigious new publications in this field, two of which are reviewed by INIA's director, Dr Marvin Formosa, in this first issue.

Readers are encouraged to contribute to *INIAnet* by sending in reports of activities and initiatives in their own countries which they deem of sufficient interest to be shared with an international readership, with an emphasis on developing countries.

**Laurence Grech**

# INIA holds international training programme on 'Policy formulation, planning implementation and monitoring of the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing'

The International Institute on Ageing, United Nations – Malta (INIA), in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), held a very successful international training programme at the Imperial Hotel, Sliema, Malta between November 17 and 28, 2014.

The programme dealt with "Policy formulation, planning implementation and monitoring of the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing" and participants came from Nigeria, Bangladesh, Georgia, Egypt, India, Nepal, Uzbekistan and Malta.

The 13 delegates were welcomed by Dr Marvin Formosa, director of INIA, who said the world's population was ageing so rapidly that while today one in every nine people is aged over 60, this proportion is likely to be one in five by 2050.

This development presented major challenges to society, an important one being that of adding life to years, not only years to life. The aim should be to ensure an adequate income, social and health care for the elderly and a better environment in an "age-friendly" society.


The course, Dr Formosa said, was intended for participants to learn to identify the gap. The Madrid International Plan of Action, drawn up in 2002, put forward the idea of a society for all ages. INIA is a bridge between the more established and emerging economies and its role is to act as a platform for discussion and to learn from each other's experience.

Dr Formosa noted that by 2040, 71 per cent of persons with dementia will be from developing countries. Already, in India, there are 1.5 million of them and their number is expected to treble in the coming decade.

"We are here," Dr Formosa told the delegates, "because INIA believes that we have to join forces to push forward a better quality of life for the elderly in developing countries. So the course acknowledges the

**Participants and tutors at the opening of the INIA's training programme on 'Policy formulation, planning implementation and monitoring of the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing' (November 2014) with Dr Justyne Caruana, Dr Marvin Formosa, and other INIA officials.**





problem of population ageing and the challenges it presents. We have to ensure that older persons live with dignity. We should support the community and the family which supports older people. We have to support research on ageing population.”

Dr Formosa then introduced Dr Justyne Caruana, Malta’s Parliamentary Secretary for Rights of Persons with Disability and Active Ageing, who officially opened the training programme.

## Three priority areas

Dr Caruana said that the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the Political Declaration adopted at the Second World Assembly on Ageing in April 2002 marked a turning point in how the world addresses the key challenge of ‘building a society for all ages’.

It focuses on three priority areas: older persons and development; advancing health and well-being into old age; and ensuring enabling and supportive environments. It is a resource for policymaking, suggesting how to re-orient the ways in which their societies perceive, interact with, and care for their older persons.

Turning to the situation in Malta, Dr Caruana said that older persons are, in general, well supported, and social security and welfare services are highly developed and progressive. The Maltese government’s policy is one of social inclusion of its older citizens in all spheres of society and the creation of a society for all ages, as well as the principle of ‘active ageing’, and ‘ageing in place’, are the accepted perspective of the country’s social policy.

The Maltese government, she continued, considers the ageing population as a challenge and an opportunity. The challenge is to help formulate a

positive perception about old age, while stimulating innovative ideas and technologies to improve the quality of life for older persons. “The ideal would be for older people to play a full and active role in society, keeping control over their lives, even if constrained by health problems, whichever way one looks at it. There is no doubt that long lives are worth celebrating, as they are a testament to the achievements of the life sciences on the natural process of ageing,” she said.

Dr Caruana explained that the new government elected in March 2013 put the responsibility for ageing policy under a Parliamentary Secretariat for Rights of Persons with Disability and Active Ageing within the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity. The same year witnessed the launch of the National Strategic Policy for Active Ageing: Malta 2014–2020. The Strategic Policy is premised upon three major themes: active participation in the labour market, social participation in the community, and independent living.

She announced that her Secretariat is also in the final stages of launching a National Strategy on Dementia and National Minimum Standards for Care Homes for Older Persons. Recently launched policy directions include:

“There is no doubt that long lives are worth celebrating”



Dr Justyne Caruana, Parliamentary Secretary for Rights of Persons with Disability and Active Ageing, speaking at the opening of the INIA training programme. On the left is INIA director Dr Marvin Formosa.

- \* Laws to counter elder abuse;
- \* Opening further branches of day centres for older persons and strengthening their ethos by transforming them into lifelong learning hubs;
- \* Coordinating outreach social work posts targeting exclusively older persons
- \* Sponsoring a new centre for the University of the Third Age and opening a Third Age Learning Centre;
- \* Coordinating in-service training courses in dementia care and active ageing for government personnel working in the public sector
- \* Providing older persons residing in care homes with the opportunity to exercise their citizenship rights as well as strengthening the social and health care services in such homes.

Dr Caruana ended by urging those present to actively participate in the programme and any follow-up initiatives. She was sure the training programme would help to enhance knowledge and to set the right environment for discussion and networking.

## Subjects covered

Dr Tomas Kucera, assistant professor of Demography at Charles University in Prague and one of the main tutors in the programme, explained the demographics content of the course, saying they would be talking about the quality behind the numbers and the need of evidence-based research. He promised participants that lecturers would be doing their best to provide information.

Country reports also featured in the programme besides pensions, ageing policy, standards in care homes, financing of health care for the aged, and economic effects of ageing on development.

Other tutors included Rosette Farrugia-Bonello, research and programme manager at INIA; Cynthia Formosa, senior manager of the Active Ageing Unit of the Department of the Elderly and Community Care; Dr Alexandre Sidorenko, former chief of the United Nations' Focal Point on Ageing; Joseph Camilleri, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties; Prof. David Mamo, a consultant geriatric psychiatrist; Godwin Mifsud, director responsible for structural economic research of the Finance Ministry's Economic Policy Department; Dr Ray Xerri, director of health policy and planning within the Maltese Ministry of Health, and Dr Formosa himself.

Participants were also addressed by Anthony Agius Decelis, chairman of the Maltese Parliament's Family Affairs Committee.

The programme included visits to old people's homes, both privately- and state-run.

At the end of the ten-day programme, certificates were awarded to the participants at the INIA premises in Valletta. Dr Formosa thanked Rosette Farrugia-Bonello and Christian Vella, also from INIA, to whom he presented tokens of appreciation, for organising the programme so efficiently, and welcomed the 13 participants to INIA. He said it was his intention to invest in the library at INIA and he invited them to make use of its facilities.

Dr Formosa announced the publication of a four-monthly INIA newsletter and invited the course participants to share their feedback with its readers.

The course participants were Natia Pirashvili (Georgia), Mohammed Shahjahan and Mohammed Enamul Haque (Bangladesh), Fouad Ibrahim (Egypt), Suchandrima Chakaborty (India), Basantha Prasad Adhikari (Nepal), Grace Obi-Ukpabi (Nigeria), Otabek Babamuratov (Uzbekistan), and Rose-Ann Debono, Roberta Farrugia, Carl Grech and Aldo Livori (Malta).

**Some of the participants at the programme's closing ceremony with Dr Marvin Formosa (fourth from right) and Ms Rosette Bonello of INIA (first from left).**





## INIA-China cooperation on ageing

The Chinese Ambassador to Malta, H.E. Cai Jinbiao, on February 4 had a meeting with Dr Marvin Formosa, director of the International Institute on Ageing, United Nations – Malta (INIA) at the embassy and discussed ways of strengthening co-operation on ageing issues.

Dr Formosa explained the role and work of INIA, a subordinate body of the United Nations, and expressed the hope that it would continue to enhance exchange and cooperation with China on ageing.

Ambassador Cai highly commended INIA for its positive work and said China would like to share with INIA and also Malta views on how to meet the challenge of ageing, which is a global issue.

## Gerontology programme for Hainan officials

The International Institute on Ageing, United Nations – Malta, in collaboration with the Support and Nursing Committee for the Elderly of China (SBCE) and the city government of Wanning in Hainan province, organised an *in situ* programme on Gerontology between December 7 and 14, 2014.

Thirty-two Chinese officials working in the field of ageing in Hainan province participated in the programme. Lectures were translated into Mandarin and published in a monograph. This proved to be of great benefit to ensure greater participation and involvement of all those who attended. The programme lecturers were INIA's director, Dr Marvin Formosa and deputy director, Dr Peter Ferry, and Professors Yuan Ye and Xuiao Zhenyu.



## In situ programme in Nanjing

Another *in situ* programme on Gerontology was organised by INIA in China, this time in Nanjing, in the province of Jiangsu, between January 5 and 9. This was held in collaboration with Zhongshan College in Nanjing.

Participating in the programme were 40 social and health care professionals working in the field of ageing in various provinces in China. Lecturers included INIA's director, Dr Marvin Formosa, Prof. Gerald Koh, Associate Professor and Director of Medical Undergraduate Education, National University of Singapore/National University Health System, and Prof. Du Peng of Remnin University and a member of INIA's International Board.



## Filipino participant honoured for his achievements



**A** past participant in one of INIA's short training programmes has achieved considerable success in his home country, the Philippines, in the medical and academic field, and won recognition for his endeavours.

Dr Christopher Cabalza (left) had attended an INIA programme in Malta on Medical Gerontology and Geriatrics, which was held between May 7 and 18, 2007.

Five years later, he contributed a report on caring for and treating the elderly in the Philippines, which was published in BOLD, INIA's quarterly journal, in November 2012.

Dr Cabalza is a graduate of the Philippine Academy of Medical Specialists, holds a diploma in Medical Gerontology and Geriatrics, is a Fellow of the International Academy of Medical Specialists and an Associate Fellow of the International College of Surgeons – Philippine Section.

Dr Cabalza is a visiting consultant in Trauma Surgery, Gerontology and Geriatrics, and Occupational Medicine with sub-speciality in hypertension and venereal diseases at Dr Domingo S. De Leon General Hospital, Tuguegarao City, Cagayan; Tuguegarao People's General Emergency Hospital; and St Francis of Assisi Medical-Surgical Clinic in Tuguegarao, and administrator of the VIP Medical Center (A. Vidad-Cabalza Medical Group).

He is also Associate Professor at the School of Medicine of St Paul University in Tuguegarao, regional medical specialist for the government's social security system in Tuguegarao, and was appointed by the government's Department of Labour and Employment as National Career Ambassador 2014-2015.

In December 2012 Dr Cabalza was nominated by the Junior Chamber International Philippines, Tuguegarao, Inc. as one of Ten Outstanding Young Men of the Philippines and this year by the Cagayan Medical Association for the Filipino Physician with Distinction Dr Jose P. Rizal Memorial Awards of the Philippine Medical Association.

Dr Cabalza has spearheaded a number of medical missions since 2007 among children, women and the elderly in Cagayan, the Philippines.

**Dr Cabalza receiving his certificate at the end of the short training programme (Medical Gerontology and Geriatrics) run by UN-INIA in Malta between May 7-18, 2007.**



# Improving the lives of older persons in Nigeria

Anne Grech interviews Juliet Barong Agbor, founder/CEO, Agewell Care Initiative (AWCI)



## What inspired you to set up the non-governmental organisation Agewell Care Initiative?

The circumstances that led to the death of my aunt and several other older relatives made me aware of the poor treatment being given to older persons in Nigeria. Nigerians seem to prefer spending huge resources on death and burial ceremonies of older persons than in taking care of them while they are still alive.

## What are the challenges which older persons face in your country?

First, social welfare, as they are no specified social welfare schemes for older persons.

Second, older Nigerians tend to be isolated since their families relegate them to the back yard without communicating with them and only give them food when they are hungry; some are treated like outcasts, and others suffering from dementia are ostracised by society.

Third, pension issues – the only persons who have adequate levels of income security are government employees; workers in the private sector and the self-employed, such as farmers, artisans, small traders and rural workers have no such benefits.

Fourth, it is not out of place to claim that older Nigerians are faced with many challenges since, as the saying goes, old age comes with its pleasures and pains. Many older Nigerians have failing eyesight, sometimes accompanied by mobility and hearing problems, together with a general decline in health.

Fifth, economic challenges – older Nigerians with no history of paid employment cannot obtain a gratuity or pension and have to depend on the care provided by their children. If this is unavailable, older persons have no other choice but to go begging.

## What are the living conditions of older people in Nigeria?

In Nigeria 80 per cent of elderly citizens live in the countryside, while 20 per cent live in urban centres. The condition of those living in rural areas has in recent times gone from bad to worse due to modernisation and urbanisation. These twin processes have increased the mass migration of the younger population to urban centres in search of better living conditions, thereby making older persons feel more neglected.

Much needs to be done in Nigeria to effectively implement national policies within the framework of the United Nations principles for older persons This is why Agewell Care Initiative promotes social advocacy for the elderly in rural areas – to improve their living conditions.



## What contribution does the state offer to older Nigerians?

The state has no contribution targeting older Nigerians and is still working on a national framework for older persons.

## What kind of initiatives have you carried out so far to create awareness on ageing in Nigeria?

Agewell Care Initiative has undertaken several initiatives to reach out to the elderly Nigerian population; they include the 20 Saturday Intervention for older persons, free eye care, and celebrating World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, the International Day for Older Persons, and the International Day of Families.

## In your opinion, what are the benefits of participating in INIA's training programmes?

Participating in INIA's international training programme on Policy Formulation, Planning, Implementation and Monitoring of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing gave me a better understanding of the Madrid action plan, global demographic trends and their implications for socio-economic development, policies and plans, while also making me more aware of what is really needed to improve the quality of life of older persons.

## What social policies would you like to see in the near future for older Nigerians?

AWCI believes that Government should subsidise health care for older Nigerians, so as to reduce the burden on their families. Government should develop old people's homes through the various community healthcare centres in Nigeria for easier delivery of the health policy it has initiated.

Government should also establish structures for the transfer of knowledge from the old to the young generation. We believe that older persons have the potential to contribute to societal growth and development.

Moreover, there should also be an urgent review of Nigeria's pension system so as to enable older persons to have acceptable levels of income security. This is important, as adequate pensions promote gender equality. Social pensions generally redistribute higher levels of income to women, who have less opportunity to be entitled to a contributory pensions, and who live longer.

Government should also charge pension administrators to come up with programmes for persons with no fixed income. Through our ageing intervention in Nigeria we have discovered that the biggest casualties are elderly persons who have no one to look after them because they have little or no money or pension to sustain themselves.

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## Agewell Care Initiative marks International Day of Older Persons in Nigeria on October 1, 2014.



# OUTREACH

## What world do you want?

On October 1, 2014, the United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, said: "The post-2015 development agenda offers a historic opportunity for the United Nations and its member states to strengthen the rights and roles of older people in society as an integral part of our commitment to leave no one behind".

By 2050, there will be two billion older people, who will make up 22 per cent of the world's population. Be part of the movement by answering the questions on ageing on the World We Want website.

## Let's Talk about Sex Conference

The Let's Talk about Sex Conference takes place in Melbourne, Australia, on September 8-9, 2015. It aims to challenge many assumptions, taboos and stereotypes when it comes to older people and sexual intimacy. The failure to acknowledge sexuality and ageing has left many older people deprived of their right to a fulfilling sex life.

The conference, organised by Alzheimer's Australia Victoria and co-hosted by COTA Victoria, will promote discussions that aim to improve the health and emotional well-being of older people through recognition of their rights to sexual expression.

Deadline for the call for abstracts is April 22 and early bird registration is open until June 10.

## 13th International Workshop on Pensions, Insurance and Savings

The 13th International Workshop on Pensions, Insurance, and Savings is being convened at the Dauphine Universite Paris on May 28-29, 2015. This workshop aims to provide researchers with an opportunity to present and discuss their latest research pertaining to financial markets, demographic risks and governance in developed and developing countries.

## The Magic of Music for those suffering from Alzheimer's and dementia

"When you are listening to music you forget about problems, you forget about loneliness, you forget about depression, things like that" - Alex Morales at Lemon Grove Care Centre, California.

In 2006, the founder of Music & Memory, Dan Cohen, had the simple idea to bring music - through the use of digital technology - into the lives of older people suffering from Alzheimer's disease, dementia and other cognitive changes. Read more on the MUSIC & MEMORY website.

## This looks like a normal village, but it's hiding a wonderful secret

After years of working in the senior care system, Yvonne Van Amerongen saw the need for a change. This change inspired the 'Dementia Village,' a neighbourhood in the Netherlands that is the only place in the world where all its residents are patients with dementia.

The idea behind this project came to Yvonne when she realised that dementia patients should be able to have a happy life in their own homes, doing the things they loved to do before their illness advanced.

In this village, residents carry out many normal day-to-day activities that help their mental health and the positive atmosphere the village offers has in large part contributed to more active people who require less medication.



# Challenges of Asia's ageing population

The International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics (IAGG) is holding the 10th Asia/Oceania Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics at the International Convention and Exhibition Centre in Chiang Mai, Thailand, from October 19 to 2015.

Today the Asia-Oceania region accounts for more than half the world's population aged over 65 years. Most of these 74 countries are characterised as "developing" and all have ageing populations. For this reason age-related research in Asia is growing at a constant rate.

The success of the Seoul World Congress in 2013 (4,289 delegates from 86 countries) is a good indicator of this phenomenon.

The Chiang Mai congress is another opportunity for gerontologists, geriatrics scholars, policy decision-makers, professional activists, related companies, and researchers of this region to get together and share recent discoveries and study results.

Prof. Sutthichai Jitapunkul, chairman of the local organising committee, said the congress – whose theme will be "Healthy Ageing beyond Frontiers" – will call for the setting up a forum with the regional society. "Apart from being an excellent forum for information sharing," he adds, "it will also provide a good opportunity to connect with people who work in all areas of gerontology and geriatrics in the region."

Abstracts have to be submitted by April 30, while the deadline for registration is May 26. For more information visit the congress website, [info@iaggchiangmai2015.com](mailto:info@iaggchiangmai2015.com)

## Exercise in nursing homes

Several studies have proved the importance of exercise training for residents of long-term care facilities. However, the best exercise regimen in terms of feasibility, safety, and effectiveness has not yet been established.

IAGG-GARN (Global Ageing Research Network) collaborates in the organisation of the taskforce prior to the International Conference on Nursing Home Research on December 2-3, 2015. The main purpose of the workgroup is to gather the experience and viewpoints of worldwide leaders in the field of exercise for residents living in long-term care facilities in order to define clear exercise guidelines and to elaborate a first draft of a consensus paper on the best exercise regimen.

The conference is being held at the Hotel Dieu St Jacques in Toulouse, France, and aims to raise further awareness on the need to promote research in nursing homes. It will deal with Alzheimer's disease and relevant drug and non-drug therapies, behaviour disorder, care organisation, homecare, nursing homes, and new technologies. Abstract submission deadline: June 30, 2015. <http://www.nursing-home-research.com>

## Other upcoming meetings

*The International Conference on Frailty and Sarcopenia (ICFSR2015), April 23-25, 2015 in Boston, USA.* A conference dedicated to raising awareness of the need to implement frailty and Sarcopenia into clinical practice. Keynote lecturers will include: Shalender Bhasin from Harvard Medical School, Boston; Jack Guralnik and Stephanie Studenski from the National Institute on Aging, Baltimore, USA; Marco Pahor from University of Florida, Gainesville, USA; Jeremy Walston from Johns Hopkins University's Center of Aging and Health, Baltimore, and Matteo CESARI from the Toulouse Gérontopôle, France. <http://www.frailty-sarcopenia.com>

*International Academy on Nutrition and Ageing (IANA), June 18-19, 2015 in Barcelona, Spain.* After Seoul, Albuquerque, Firenze this edition of the IANA conference will deal with Nutrition and Age-Related Disease Nutrition Function and Ageing. Its aim: to promote better understanding and implementation of nutrition and age-related diseases into clinical practice. <http://www.iana-congress.com>

*IAGG's 21st World Congress on July 23-27, 2017, in San Francisco, USA.* The Gerontological Society of America (GSA) will host this event that is held every four years. It will be dedicated to "Global Ageing and Health: Bridging Science, Policy and Practice". The call for abstracts will be available in Spring 2016 and registration will open at the beginning of 2017. <http://www.iagg2017.org>

**INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE ON AGEING**  
**UNITED NATIONS – MALTA**  
in collaboration with  
**United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)**

**INTERNATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMME**

**POLICY FORMULATION, PLANNING,  
IMPLEMENTATION and MONITORING:**  
Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing

November 23 – December 4 2015, Malta

**BACKGROUND**

The dramatic and unprecedented increase in the number and proportion of older persons in the world is leading to various political, economic and social consequences and challenges. In developing countries, where by 2025, 72 per cent of the world's older persons are expected to be living, this demographic phenomenon will pose a particular challenge. Although a number of developing countries have initiated various innovative and concrete measures aimed at meeting the needs of older persons, there exists an acute shortage of ageing welfare policies. In 2007, the United Nations began its five-year review of progress towards the achievement of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, with a second review and appraisal process finalised in 2012. Since plans for a third global review of the Plan of Action are currently under way, this training programme is highly suited to personnel in the field of ageing who are interested in measuring the implementation of the Plan of Action in their own countries.

**OBJECTIVES**

This multi-disciplinary Training Programme in Social Policy is aimed at discussing the implications of population ageing, underscore the importance of including ageing issues in a country's development planning and discuss options for policy formulation and programme/services' implementation. It also aims at providing a broad and up-to-date understanding of the complex and far-reaching consequences of longevity. Participants are aided to evolve and implement appropriate policies that ensure the quality of life and well-being of older persons in their own country.

**AREAS OF CONCENTRATION**

The programme consists of lectures, seminars, site visits and workshops. Topics to be dealt with include: understanding the commitments of the *Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing* as well as the *Regional Implementation Strategies*; exploring ways of facilitating the participation of all stakeholders namely: governments, civil society, the family, the community and the older persons themselves; collecting and disseminating the best knowledge and evidence-based practices available regarding adequate policy responses to population ageing, and monitoring progress towards the achievement of the Priority Directions and Recommendations of the *Madrid Plan of Action*.

**WHO SHOULD ATTEND THIS COURSE**

Applications are invited from **policy-makers and decision-makers** in the field of Ageing in developing countries. They should be directly engaged in policy and decision-making for older persons in the statutory, voluntary or private sectors in their own country.

**APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

Interested persons and organisations may apply by sending the following to:

**The Director, International Institute on Ageing, 117 St. Paul Street, Valletta VLT 1216, MALTA**

1. An application form which is available through the Institute's website or directly from INIA.
2. Proof of proficiency in English.
3. A letter of recommendation from the director of your organisation.
4. A personal letter (giving reasons for attending the course).
5. Copies of relevant certificates.

**Closing date for applications is August 31, 2015.**

**Course Fee: US\$2,680 (includes tuition, board-accommodation and meals but excludes travel).**

INIA might have available a limited number of partial scholarships. However, since this is not guaranteed, it is in the interest of prospective candidates to secure alternative funding.

**International Institute on Ageing, United Nations – Malta, 117, St. Paul Street,  
Valletta VLT 1216, MALTA**

**Telephone: (+356) 21-243044/5/6    Telefax : (+356) 21-230248  
E-mail: [programmes@inia.org.mt](mailto:programmes@inia.org.mt)    Website: <http://www.inia.org.mt>**

## Diary of INIA activities 2015/2016

- May 4-15** International training programme on *Health promotion, Quality of Life and Well-being*, **Malta**
- May 20** Fourth International Population Ageing and Longevity Conference in collaboration with the International Expert Committee on Population Ageing and Longevity (IECPAL) of **China**.
- September 7-11** *In situ* training programme on gerontology and geriatrics in collaboration with Philippine Society of Gerontology and Geriatrics, **The Philippines**.
- November 23-December 4** International training programme on "Policy Formulation, Planning, Implementation and Monitoring of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing", **Malta**.
- November 26** "Celebrating Ageing: Challenges and Opportunities", two-day international conference, **Malta**.
- November 27-29** "Dementia care in developing countries", an INIA session during the People's Forum during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, **Malta**.
- December** *In situ* training programme on gerontology and geriatrics in collaboration with the Gerontological Society of China, **China**. (I)
- December** *In situ* training programme on gerontology and geriatrics - in collaboration with the Gerontological Society of China, **China**. (II)

### 2016

- February 15-26** International training programme on Social Gerontology, **Malta**.
- May 2-13** International training programme on "Health promotion, Quality of Life and Well-being", **Malta**.
- November 14-25** International training programme on "Policy Formulation, Planning, Implementation and Monitoring of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing", **Malta**.

## International Diary 2015/2016

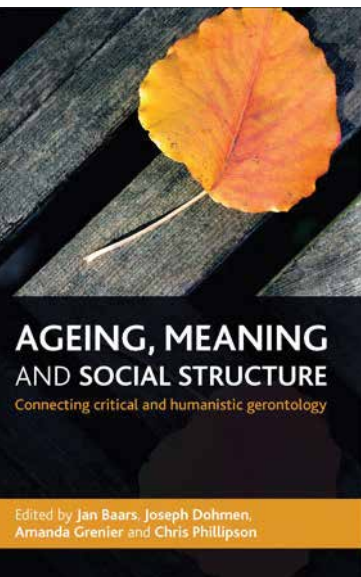
- April 9-11** VII COMLAT Congress of the Latin American and Caribbean Committee in Geriatrics and Gerontology promoted by the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics (IAGG) and held by the Brazilian Society of Geriatrics and Gerontology (SBGG), **Belem, Brazil**. Conference Website: <http://comlat2015.com.br>
- April 16-17** International Seminar *Building an evidence base for active ageing policies: Active Ageing Index and its potential*, organised by the European Commission and UNECE, **Brussels, Belgium**
- April 21** *Active, Healthy Ageing in the EU: Transforming Care growing the Silver Economy*, organised by Public Policy Exchange, **Brussels, Belgium**. Conference Website: <http://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/FD21-PPE2?ss=em&tg=1a>
- April 22-24** *Med-e-Tel conference* organised by the International Society for Telemedicine and Health (ISTH), **Luxembourg**. Conference website: [www.medetel.eu](http://www.medetel.eu)
- April 23-26** IAGG 8<sup>th</sup> European Congress on *Unlocking the Demographic dividend*, hosted by the Irish Gerontological Society, **Dublin, Ireland**. Conference website: <http://irishgerontology.com/events/iagg-er-2015>
- August 31-September 4** *Global communities come together*, organised by Aged and community services Australia (ACSA) and International Association of Homes and Services for the Ageing (IAHSA), **Perth, Australia**. Conference website: <http://www.globalageingconf2015.com/>
- September 2-4** 25<sup>th</sup> Alzheimer's Europe Conference on *Dementia: Putting strategies and research into practise*, **Ljubljana, Slovenia**. Conference website: <http://www.alzheimer-europe.org/Conferences/2015-Ljubljana/>
- September 24-25** *From Managing to Networking - Building Partner Networks in Long-term Care* organised by the European Association for Directors and Providers of long-Term Care (EDE), **Montreux, Switzerland**. Conference website: [www.ede-congress.ch](http://www.ede-congress.ch)
- October 15-17** *International Health and Wealth Conference*, **Algarve, Portugal**. Conference website: <http://www.ihw-conference.com/>

### 2016

- September 22-24** The European Association of Homes and Services for the Ageing (EAHSA) Biannual Conference, **Lyon, France**. Conference Website: [www.eahsa.eu](http://www.eahsa.eu) Twitter: @eahsa2016

# Social and ethical dilemmas facing ageing societies

*Ageing, meaning, and social structure: Connecting critical and humanistic gerontology*, edited by Jan Baars, Joseph Dohmen, and Chris Phillipson, 256 pp., Policy Press.



Academic texts on the intersection between critical and humanistic gerontology are sparse in academia. Most of the literature in contemporary ageing studies oscillates either towards the social and the structural or the personal and the autobiographical.

This collection of papers is an exception. All chapters seek to integrate the analysis of structural mechanisms such as social inequality on one hand and the interpretation and articulation of the meaning of later life on the other, focusing on that interface between the rubric of political economic perspectives on ageing and humanistic ageing studies.

The title of the book struck me as a compelling one, since many gerontologists tend to discuss critical aspects of later life while overlooking its existential process. In many ways, *Ageing, meaning, and social structure* builds upon the excellent collection of essays found in the special issue of *Journal of Aging Studies* (Ray and Cole, 2008) which provided an exceptional reflection on the intersection between the theoretical and the autobiographical, the personal and the social, and the generalised and the closely corporeal experiences of ageing.

This collection of chapters emerged from two interrelated symposia that focused on a confrontation and integration of structural and meaning-oriented approaches at the annual meeting of the British Society for Gerontology in 2010 that highlighted the need for the so-called “more structurally oriented researchers to include dimensions of personal meaning and the need of more existentially oriented researchers to include structural dimensions in their work” (p. 4).

The book lacks a strong preface/foreword that presents a precise understanding of the editors/authors’ standpoint, one that relates the historical perspectives of the critical-humanistic divide in ageing studies. This would have been a beneficial starting point for undergraduate and other novice readers in this specialised area of studies, as it would have provided a robust backdrop to the dialectical relationship between ‘structuralist’ and ‘individualist’ discourses that are so prevalent in both past and contemporary gerontological texts and articles.

However, such a deficiency is strongly remedied in the book’s second chapter, ‘Connecting meaning and social structure’ (Jan Baars and Chris Phillipson), which strongly identifies the key theoretical foundations for the interconnection of structural critiques and interpersonal meanings in terms of changing relationships between constitutive life worlds and systemic domains. This chapter is extremely useful in highlighting how one-sided approaches – which either underestimate the capacity to overcome difficulties or the finitude of life – distort the reality of human ageing.

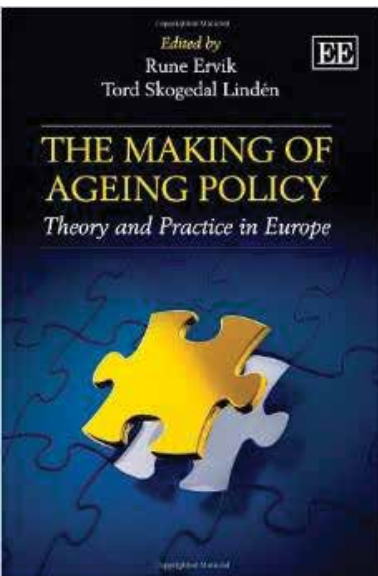
The next seven chapters view critical and humanistic dimensions of ageing through various lenses: personal ethics, ageing and lifestyle (Joseph Dohmen); structural and cultural approaches in rethinking agency in later life (Amanda Grenier and Chris Phillipson); beyond the structures of medication and cultural neglect in dementia care (Margaret Th. Bruens); a spiritual perspective on self-realisation and ageing (Hanne Laceulle); the balance between autonomy and connectedness in the lives of older people as regards social ability and social frailty (Anja Machielse and Roelof Hortulanus); critical perspectives on social work with older persons (Mo Ray); and the opportunities and challenges for critical gerontology through community-based participatory action research (Friederike Ziegler and Thomas Scharf).

All these chapters make a major contribution to understanding key social and ethical dilemmas facing ageing societies. Academics are best advised to read these chapters first hand to grapple how ageing, meaning and social structure confronts and integrates approaches that have been relatively isolated from each other, whilst also interrelating two key stands of thought within critical gerontology – namely, analysis of structural issues in the context of political economy and humanistic perspectives on issues of existential meaning.

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# Strategies to cope with population ageing

*The Making of Ageing Policy: Theory and practice in Europe*, edited by Rune Ervik and Tord Skogedal Lindén. Cheltenham, UK/Northampton, MA, USA: Edward Elgar Publishing, 304 pp.



The second half of the 20th century witnessed unprecedented demographic changes. Declining fertility rates and mortality levels, and major improvements of life expectancies at birth, had far-reaching effects on global population trends, to the extent that the present epoch has been referred to as the 'age of ageing' (Magnus, 2008).

As a result, it is not surprising that in recent years ageing policy has emerged at the forefront of social policies in many countries all over the globe. Indeed, various government statements highlight and refer to the problem of the ageing workforce, the problem of economic sustainability in long-term care, the problem of the lack of social participation on behalf of older persons, the problem of ensuring sustainable pensions for all, among others.

In forums, policymakers are quick to emphasise how global, regional and national strategies are hinged on an altruistic belief that no stone should be left unturned to enable older persons to experience active, successful and productive lifestyles. Nevertheless, critical gerontology documents clearly show that demographic trends are secondary influences to the nature of the debate.

As Walker and Phillipson (1986: 1) underlined so many years ago, "the major determinant [for social policy on ageing] is ideology". This collection of chapters is precisely a move in such an intellectual tradition, seeking to illustrate the ideological and institutional factors that underlie policy decisions relating to ageing in different European countries.

*The Making of Ageing Policy* demonstrates, as illustrated in Sara Arber's blurb on the back cover, "the pivotal role of ideas and international organisations in shaping the policy and practice landscape" of welfare reforms for older persons in Europe. The book drives the point that seemingly neutral terms, such as active ageing, are ultimately grounded in an economic rationale whose overriding *raison d'être* is to make people extend their working lives. While there is nothing inherently wrong in such a policy direction, the fact that policymakers mask this ideological grounding in functionalist discourse of well-being should be a key point of deliberation in 'critical' social policy analysis.

This collection of chapters is made up mostly of working papers presented at an international workshop on "Ideas and practices of ageing policies: European and national perspectives" in Bergen, in March 2012. Unlike most collections of edited books originating from workshops or seminars, *The Making of Ageing Policy* includes a strong introductory chapter that puts forward the empirical and ideological context as a backdrop to the ensuing chapters. "Introducing ageing policy: Challenges, ideas and responses in Europe" provides a thorough assessment of the extent a variety of paradigms unfold across various policy areas and national situations by outlining the demographic changes and challenges, while also operationalising ageing policy.

The ten chapters which follow view critical and humanistic dimensions of ageing through various lenses: the rhetoric, theory and practice of active ageing (Alan Walker and Liam Foster); ageing policy ideas in the field of health and long-term care (Nanna Kildal and Even Nilsson); policymakers' views on the inclusion of older people's interest organisations (Martha Doyle and Virpi Timonen); government policy recommendations on pensions (Tord Skogedal Lindén); ageing policy in Germany (Christof Schiller), impact of the transition of market economy on ageing policy (Anna Ruzik-Sierdzińska, Jolanta Perek-Bialas and Konrad Turek); policy paradigms on active ageing in Britain and Norway (Rune Ervik and Ingrid Helgøy); ageing and long-term care in Poland and Italy (Zuzanna Drożdżak and colleagues); and strategies to meet long-term care needs in Norway, the UK and Germany (Rune Ervik, Ingrid Helgøy, and Tord Skogedal Lindén).

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# Strategies to cope with population ageing

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All these chapters provide insights into the value basis and justifications of ageing policies, the potential for conflict, and how policy ideas are embedded in the advocacy for reform of ageing policy. The authors deliver detailed normative analyses of policies on active, productive and successful ageing, while also contributing to the changing landscape of ageing politics and policies throughout Europe.

The final chapter includes a fitting conclusion to the book by returning to some of the key topics raised in the introduction and preceding chapters. This chapter revisits the challenges of population ageing, pinpointing the role of politics and policies in determining the scope of these contests. It also addresses the political dimension and the ways in which policymakers overcome resistance and create consensus, as well as reflecting on the ambiguity of the notions of active and productive ageing policies in European policies.

At the same time, the concluding chapter presents some findings from comparative studies in three main areas of the welfare state – pension, labour market, and long-term care. It ends by posing a number of questions that merit further analysis in future treatises on the subject, such as: “Did the European Year for Active Ageing have a real influence, or was it just cheap talk?” and “How will the financial crisis contribute to the making of ageing policy?” There is no doubt that one expects many ageing policy reforms to be open to the study of the interaction, ideas, and institutions in the foreseeable future.

This compendium of articles will certainly provide insightful ideas to students, academics and researchers alike who deal with demographic challenges across a wide spectrum of policy sectors. It will also appeal to practitioners in social and health care professions with an interest in ageing studies. There is no doubt that this publication has much to offer to theorising and empirical understanding of what it means to grow old in contemporary societies.

**Marvin Formosa**

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The final chapter includes an apt commentary on the preceding chapters, succeeding admirably to locate their perspective within the distinction between ‘contingent’ and ‘existential’ ageing as especially elaborated upon by Jan Baars and Chris Phillipson in the second chapter. The authors of this final chapter, Dale Dannefer and Jieliu Lin, explore the importance of structural inequalities affecting older people for the themes discussed in this book, notably in terms of the achievement of empowerment and autonomy, without underestimating the various approaches for understanding human needs, and the implications for considering issues relating to spirituality in later life. Their illustrations of examples drawn from work with older people in settings such as long-term care enable the reader to situate the various theoretical strands in the foregoing chapters in a practical framework.

I certainly recommend this book at both an undergraduate and postgraduate levels of study within the wide variety of social scientific disciplines, as well as for students following healthcare degrees or modules with an interest in ageing studies. It has much to offer to contemporary theorising and empirical understanding of what it means to grow old in societies experiencing a transition to a ‘late’ modern stage of capitalism.

**Marvin Formosa**

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