

# Ageing, Active Ageing & Gender

Social Change and Everyday Life Course, Social Work Bachelor Degree, University of Milan-Bicocca

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# Acknowledgments

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I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Prof. Elisabetta Ruspini



## **ACTIVE ageing in changing societies.**

### **Older people's social and digital resources in pandemic and post-pandemic Italy (ACTIVE-IT)**

- Research Stream 1** Active ageing and wellbeing during pandemics  
A quantitative analysis on the impact of COVID-19 in Italy
- Research Stream 2** Older people's every day life, practices, digital media uses  
A qualitative study on older men and women living in the first European Red Zone
- Research Stream 3** Older people, new needs and possible solutions  
A pilot study on peer-to-peer digital education

### **Knowledge Transfer**

Url: [ageingsocieties.unimib.it](http://ageingsocieties.unimib.it)  
E-mail: [ageingsocieties@unimib.it](mailto:ageingsocieties@unimib.it)

# Outline

## ✦ Ageing

- \* Causes & effects
- \* Change over time
- \* Concepts & measures
- \* Workshop with demo – demography in figures
- \* **Ageing as a challenge for social work**

## ✦ Active Ageing

- \* Overview
- \* Political agenda
- \* Academic debate
- \* Workshop with Active Ageing Index – Monitoring active and healthy ageing in the EU
- \* **Active ageing as an opportunity for social work**

# Ageing



# Ageing

## Causes & effects

### \* Causes

- Fertility rates
- + Life expectancy
- ≠ Migratory patterns

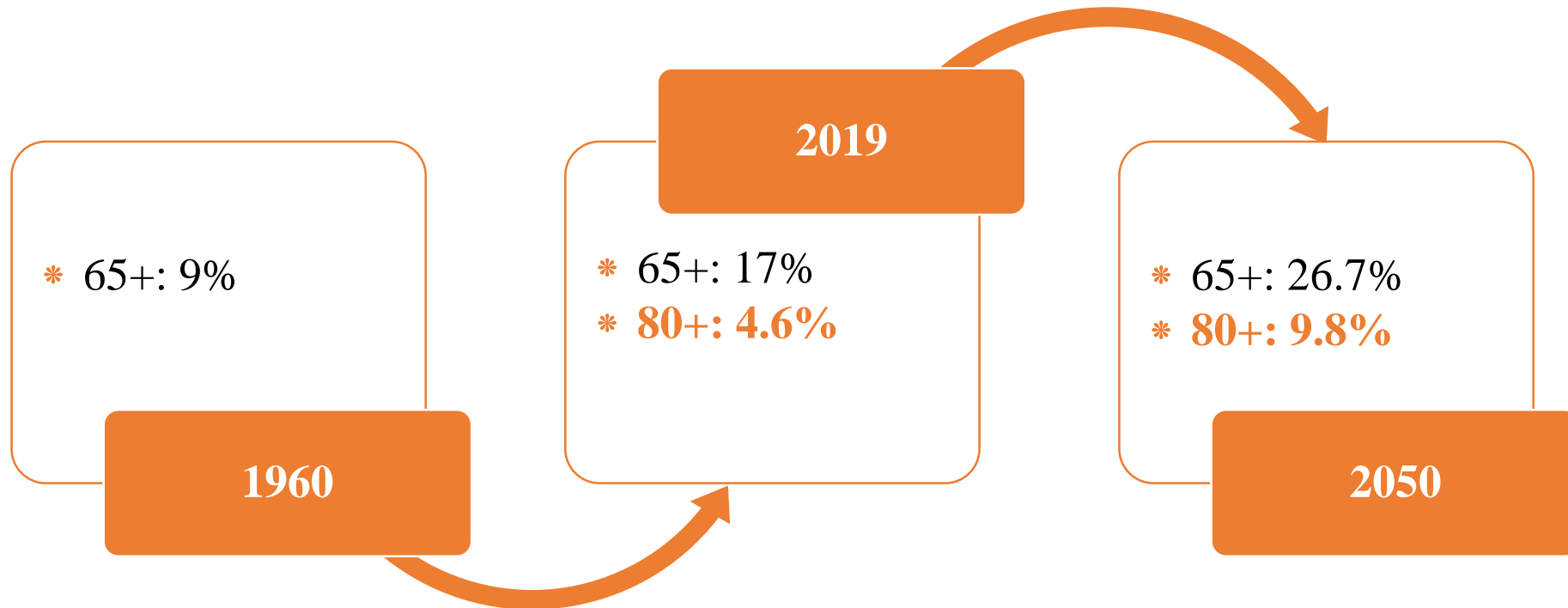
### \* Effects

- ➔ Economy (*i.e.*, productivity)
- ➔ Health (*i.e.*, needs)
- ➔ Quality of life

# Ageing

## Change over time

While the rise in the population aged 65 and over has been striking across OECD countries, the increase has been particularly rapid among the oldest group – people aged 80 and over (OECD 2021: 252)<sup>1</sup>

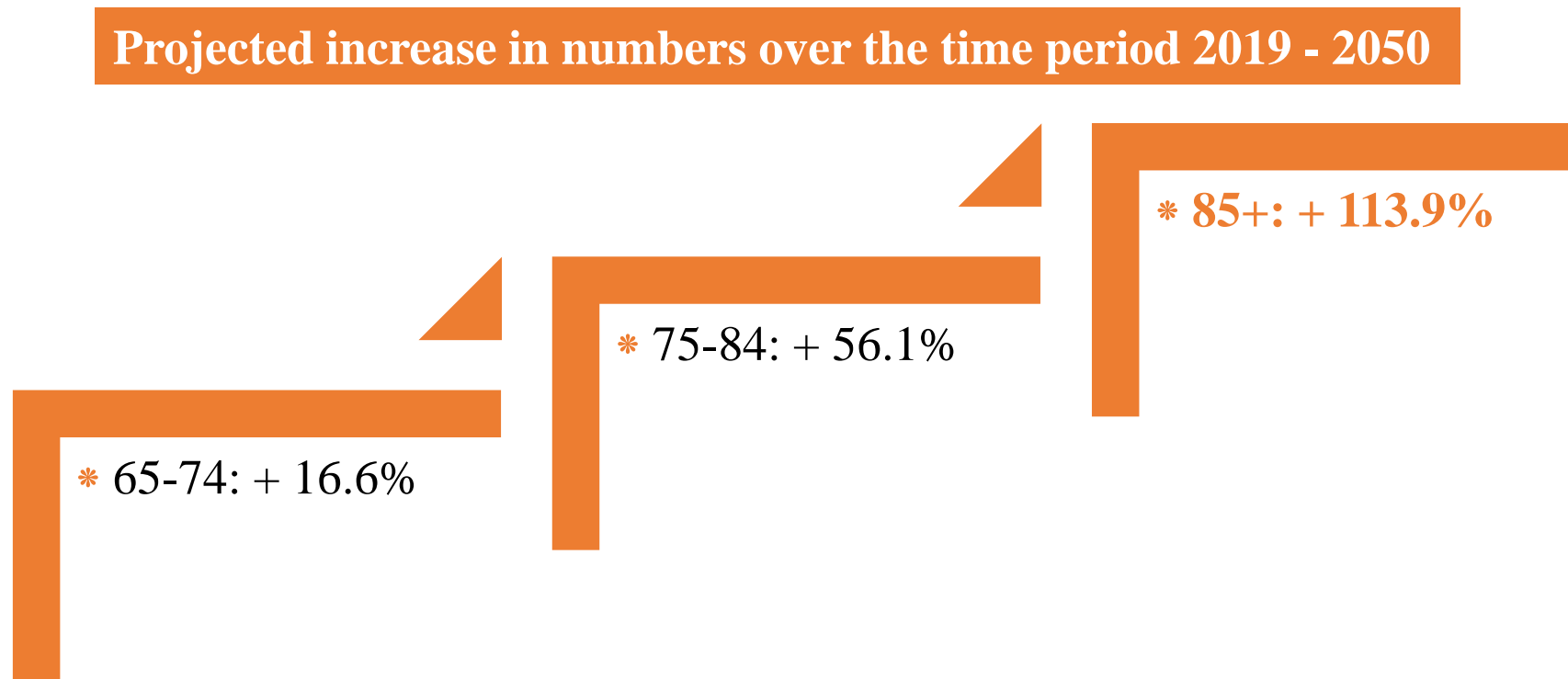


<sup>1</sup> OECD (2021). Health at a Glance 2021: OECD Indicators. OECD Publishing, Paris. DOI: 10.1787/ae3016b9-en.

# Ageing

## Change over time

The population of older people (defined here as those aged 65 years or more) in the EU-27 will increase significantly, rising from 90.5 million at the start of 2019 to reach 129.8 million by 2050 (Eurostat 2020:16)<sup>2</sup>

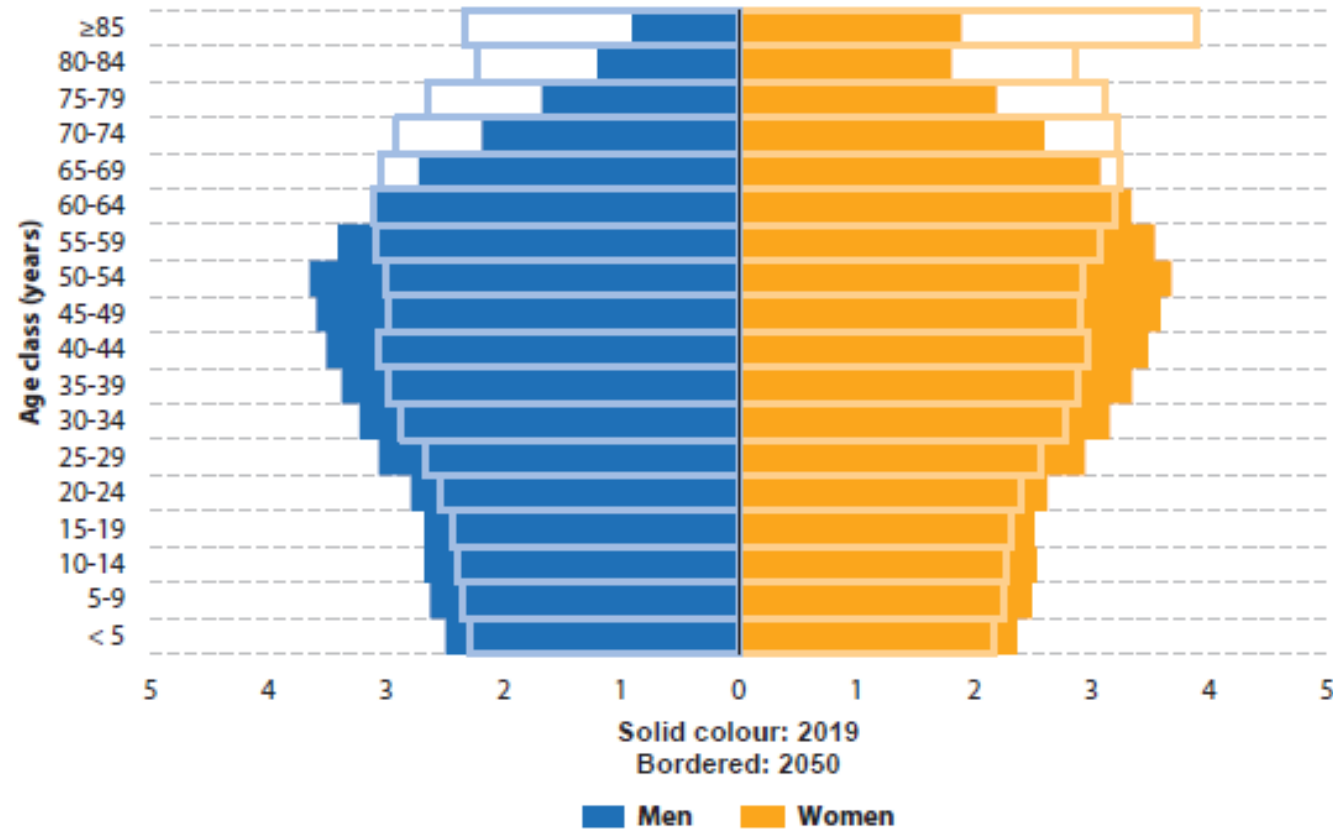


<sup>2</sup> Eurostat (2020). Ageing Europe: Looking at the Lives of Older People in the EU. Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg. DOI: 10.2785/628105.



# Ageing Change over time

**Figure 1.3:** Population pyramids, EU-27, 2019 and 2050  
(% share of total population)



Ageing at the top

Gender gap among the very old

Ageing at the bottom

Note: all data as of 1 January. 2019: estimates and provisional. 2050: population according to the 2019 projections, baseline variant (EUROPOP2019).

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: demo\_pjangroup and proj\_19np)

# Ageing

## Concepts & measures

### \* Concepts & measures for studies on mortality

\*\* Life expectancy

\*\* Life expectancy at age 65, *i.e.*, in OECD, in 2019, 19.9 (3.3 for females)

Although **ageing** has an intrinsic **gender** dimension, there are minor male-and-female differences  
Similar scenario for healthy life expectancy at age 65, *i.e.*, in the EU-27, in 2018 (9.8 for females)

### \* Concepts & measures for analyses on demographic structure of population

\*\* Old-age index

\*\* Old-age dependency ratio

*What can we learn from demo - demography in figures about the Italian case?*

# Ageing

## Workshop with demo – demography in figures



- \*\*\* Let's team up
- \*\*\* Let's click on <https://demo.istat.it/tavole/?t=indicatori&l=it>
- \*\*\* Let's choose one demographic indicator among the aforementioned ones
- \*\*\* Let's choose one Italian region, the relative macro-region, and take into account Italy
- \*\*\* Let's consider the observed value between 2001 and 2021 (or the estimated value for 2022)
- \*\*\* If you choose life expectancy or life expectancy at age 65, let's have a look at gender differences
- \*\*\* If this is the case, can we identify a gender gap? Otherwise, can we detect any change over time?

# Ageing as a challenge for social work

- \* Macro- + Public expenditure
- \* Meso- → Social care provision
- \* Micro- → Social worker digital skills

# Ageing as a challenge for social work

- \* Macro- + Public expenditure
- \* Meso- → Social care provision
- \* Micro- → Social worker digital skills
- \* *What else?*

# Active Ageing



# Active Ageing Overview

The **active ageing** framework has become the leading policy response to the challenges of an **ageing** population (Foster 2012: 223)<sup>3</sup>

- \* Threefold meaning

- \*\* Healthy
- \*\* Economically active
- \*\* Engaged in various activities

- \* Three-level important implications

- \*\* Micro-
  - ↑ Health
  - ↑ Wellbeing
  - ↑ Quality of life
- \*\* Meso-
  - Professional experience in companies
  - Personal experience in the third sector
- \*\* Macro-
  - ↓ Social inequalities
  - ↓ Public expenditure

<sup>3</sup>Foster, L. (2012). Active Ageing and Pensions in the European Union. *Journal of Comparative Social Welfare*. 28(3), pp. 223-234, DOI: 10.1080/17486831.2012.753022.

# Active Ageing

## Political agenda

European Commission

1999 Towards a Europe for All Ages. Promoting Prosperity and Intergenerational Solidarity

Council of the European Union

2010 EU documentation promotes **active ageing** in different domains other than employment

European Commission, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

2012 European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations, Active Ageing Index



# Active Ageing

## Academic debate

In the literature **active ageing** is a topic of debate, and a number of criticisms have been made (Principi et al. 2021: 2-3)<sup>4</sup>

- \* Conceptualization's weaknesses
  - ▶ Predominantly productivity vision
  - ▶ Normativity dimension
  - ▶ Top-down approach
  - ▶ 'Selection function'
    - \*\* Low "extended working life"
    - \*\* **Gendered ageism** at the workplace
    - \*\* Cumulative effect of unemployment

<sup>4</sup>Principi, A, Di Rosa, M., Domínguez-Rodríguez, A., Varlamova, M., Barbabella, F., Lamura, G., Socci, M. (2021). The Active Ageing Index and Policy Making in Italy. *Ageing & Society*. pp. 1–26. DOI: 10.1017/S0144686X21001835.

# Active Ageing

## Academic debate

Cluster	Region	E	P	I	C	AAI	AAI/cluster
1	Campania	-19.3	0.5	-1.2	-4.0	-7.5	-7.1
	Apulia	-17.0	-1.6	1.3	-4.0	-7.2	
	Calabria	-15.2	-1.8	0.8	-5.6	-7.0	
	Sicily	-16.1	-0.5	0.7	-4.6	-6.7	
2	Umbria	-9.7	-2.6	-4.0	-4.9	-5.7	-6.2
	Abruzzo	-16.6	-0.5	-1.7	-1.9	-6.6	
	Basilicata	-17.1	-2.0	0.5	-3.4	-7.3	
3	Sardinia	-13.6	2.2	-4.7	-4.0	-5.3	-5.8
	Lazio	-14.0	1.1	-1.4	-2.4	-5.2	
4	Molise	-14.9	-0.8	-1.8	-3.4	-6.4	-4.6
	Piedmont and Aosta Valley	-11.2	1.9	-1.5	-3.3	-4.1	
	Lombardy	-11.7	-0.1	-2.0	-1.4	-4.6	
	Veneto	-13.9	1.3	0.0	-3.4	-5.1	
	Friuli Venezia Giulia	-9.0	0.2	-0.2	-4.5	-4.0	
	Liguria	-10.1	2.2	-1.4	-3.2	-3.5	
	Emilia Romagna	-11.0	-0.4	-1.7	-2.5	-4.7	
Tuscany	-10.8	-2.4	-1.4	-4.5	-5.7		
5	Marche	-11.7	0.0	-3.1	-4.6	-5.3	-3.6
	Trentino Alto Adige	-9.0	0.7	-2.1	-2.4	-3.6	
	Italy	-13.6	0.0	-1.3	-3.4	-5.6	

Figure 5. Gender gap in Active Ageing Index (AAI) domain and overall scores in Italy, by region.

Notes: Within clusters, regions are listed according to the ISTAT usually employed order, starting from North-Western regions descending to the South and lastly islands. E: Employment domain score. P: Participation in society domain score. I: Independent, healthy and secure living domain score. C: Capacity and enabling environment for active ageing domain score. AAI: overall AAI score.

Source: Principi et al. 2021: 19.

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	Veneto	-13.9	1.3	0.0	-3.4	-5.1	
	Friuli Venezia Giulia	-9.0	0.2	-0.2	-4.5	-4.0	
	Liguria	-10.1	2.2	-1.4	-3.2	-3.5	
	Emilia Romagna	-11.0	-0.4	-1.7	-2.5	-4.7	
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	Emilia Romagna	-11.0	-0.4	-1.7	-2.5	-4.7	
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	Friuli Venezia Giulia	-9.0	0.2	-0.2	-4.5	-4.0	
	Liguria	-10.1	2.2	-1.4	-3.2	-3.5	
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	Basilicata	-17.1	-2.0	0.5	-3.4	-7.3	
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Marche	-11.7	0.0	-3.1	-4.6	-5.3		
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Gender gap variation across clusters

What about gender across EU countries?

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Source: Principi et al. 2021: 19.

# Active Ageing

## Workshop with Active Ageing Index

### Monitoring active and healthy ageing in the EU



- \*\*\* Let's team up
- \*\*\* Let's click on <https://composite-indicators.jrc.ec.europa.eu/active-ageing-index/active-ageing-index>
- \*\*\* Let's choose one of the EU-27 except for Italy, but keep in mind it will be our comparison term
- \*\*\* Let's choose one of the four different domains, let's have a look at gender differences
- \*\*\* Can we identify a gender gap? If this is case, are there differences compared to Italy?

# Active Ageing as an opportunity for social work

- \* Life course approach
  - \*\* Aim (*i.e.*, individual wellbeing)
  - \*\* Process (*i.e.*, long-term development)
  - \*\* Working arrangement (*i.e.*, networking)



# Active Ageing as an opportunity for social work

- \* Life course approach
  - \*\* Aim (*i.e.*, individual wellbeing)
  - \*\* Process (*i.e.*, long-term development)
  - \*\* Working arrangement (*i.e.*, networking)
- \* *What else?*

## Relevant readings

- Barbabella, F., Cela, E., Socci, M., Lucantoni, D., Zannella, M., Principi, A. (2022). Active Ageing in Italy: A systematic review of national and regional policies. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19, 600. DOI: 10.3390/ijerph19010600.
- Barslund, M., Von Werder, M., Zaidi, A. (2019). Inequality in active ageing: Evidence from a new individual-level index for European countries. *Ageing Societies*, 39, pp. 541–567.
- European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (1998). One hundred words for equality: A glossary of terms on equality between women and men. Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.
- Eurostat (2021). Ageing Europe: Looking at the lives of older people in the EU. Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg. DOI: 10.2785/628105.
- Foster, L. (2012). Active ageing and pensions in the European Union. *Journal of Comparative Social Welfare*. 28(3), pp. 223-234, DOI: 10.1080/17486831.2012.753022.

## Relevant readings

- Foster, L., Walker, A. (2013). Gender and active ageing in Europe. *European Journal of Ageing*, 10(1), pp. 3-10. DOI: 10.1007/s10433-013-0261-0.
- OECD (2021). Health at a glance 2021: OECD indicators. OECD Publishing, Paris. DOI: 10.1787/ae3016b9-en.
- Principi, A, Di Rosa, M., Domínguez-Rodríguez, A., Varlamova, M., Barbabella, F., Lamura, G., Socci, M. (2021). The Active Ageing Index and policy making in Italy. *Ageing & Society*. pp. 1–26. DOI: 10.1017/S0144686X21001835.
- Steinmayr, D., Weichselbaumer, D. Winter-Ebmer, R. (2020) Gender differences in active ageing: Findings from a new individual-level index for European countries. *Social Indicators Research*, 151, pp. 691–721. DOI: 10.1007/s11205-020-02380-1.
- Zannella, M., Principi, A. Lucantoni, D., Barbabella, F., Di Rosa, M., Domínguez-Rodríguez, A., Socci, M. (2021). Active ageing: The need to address sub-national diversity. An evidence-based approach for Italy. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18, 13319. DOI: 10.3390/ijerph182413319.

**Thanks for your attention**