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**Adults for Future**

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# GUIDELINES FOR ADULT CENTRES

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DEVELOPED BY  
EUROSUCCESS CONSULTING

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# INTRODUCTION

## The Project:

Adults For Future aims to promote a more complex definition of activism by exploring the different circumstances and difficulties of older people in order to gain a better knowledge of how they can be actively involved in green activities.

In addition, we want to support adult educators and adult education organisations to improve the way they involve older people in environmental education. And finally, we want to strengthen the influence that senior citizens have as environmental activists in society as a whole.

## Objectives:

- Define, together with adult educators and adults, the key skills and expectations of the factors that trigger older adults' environmental activism in different everyday contexts.
- Develop practical advice for and with educators, senior centre managers/caregivers/professionals to make adult centres more sustainable and use them as climate change think tanks.
- Empower older adults by providing materials to support them in taking action in different scenarios of their everyday life.





## The Guidelines:

This document is a strategic guide to be adopted by adult centres to support older people's environmental activism.

It is a simple document with relevant guidelines to turn adult education centres into forward-looking centres that are part of the green transition and where green mainstreaming is applied.

The guidelines are the result of the synergetic work of adult educators.

## Objectives:

- To improve sustainable education in adult education centres.
- To strengthen the competences of the adult educators involved in the project and those who have contributed to the production of the materials.
- To improve the capacity of the adult education centres involved, the associated partners and the partner organisations to develop strategies and promote an active attitude of older adults.





# HOW TO MAKE ADULT CENTRES SUSTAINABLE?

Adult centres can reduce operating costs, improve community wellbeing and have a positive impact on the environment by taking a comprehensive and holistic approach to sustainability.

- Invest in **energy efficient** practices, adopt methods that help save energy and become more resilient.
- Promote **water conservation** measures by using water-saving technologies.
- Try to avoid **waste management** practices, instead of this implement a comprehensive recycling program for reusable materials (e.g. paper).
- Encourage **alternative transport** options, e.g. public transport, carpooling, etc. Provide facilities for bicycle parking and charging stations
- Create **green spaces** or community gardens within the building to promote sustainable living and create a sense of connection with the natural world.
- Promote the mindset of sustainable living **by educating and raising awareness** among your participants and employees. Also use social media, signage and newsletters to promote sustainable behaviours.



- To support **local sourcing** and reduce the environmental impact of transport, buy locally sourced goods.
- **Utilise and integrate technology** to reduce the use of paper or other materials.
- Seek **environmental certification** (e.g. LEED Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) to demonstrate your commitment to sustainability.
- Involve your **employees in decision-making and environmental initiatives**. Encourage your employees to make suggestions and provide training on sustainable practices.
- Consider **financial incentives** such as grants, tax breaks or other awards for adopting sustainable practices. Identify cost reductions associated with sustainability activities and share the results with others.
- Create an environment where **sustainability initiatives** are **always being improved** upon by periodically **evaluating and revising plans** in accordance with lessons discovered.





# PRINCIPLES

- **INCLUSIVITY & ACCESSIBILITY:** Ensure that people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds have access to programmes, services and facilities.
  - Design inclusive spaces, provide accessible resources and actively involve diverse communities in programme development.
- **COMMITMENT AND COLLABORATION WITH THE COMMUNITY:** Engage with the neighbourhood, learn about its needs and collaborate with nearby businesses and groups.
  - Assess community needs, conduct regular feedback sessions and form alliances for mutual support.
- **ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY:** Reduce your impact on the environment by supporting sustainable use of resources and adopting environmentally friendly habits.
  - Adopt green building standards, recycle and compost waste and put energy-saving measures into practice.
- **FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY:** Create a model that is financially sound, diversified in its funding sources and sustainable in the long term.
  - Create a comprehensive financial plan, seek a variety of funding sources and apply financial controls.
- **ADAPTABILITY:** Foster an environment that values creativity, flexibility and continuous growth to meet ever-evolving needs.
  - Evaluate programmes regularly, solicit input from participants and modify offerings based on lessons learned.



- **FLEXIBILITY & RESILIENCE:** Develop your resilience by having the ability to adapt to unforeseen difficulties, emergencies and changing conditions.
  - Develop alternative strategies, establish emergency procedures and encourage your employees to think flexibly.
- **TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION:** Reduce your environmental footprint while maximising productivity, communication and programme delivery through the use of technology.
  - To increase productivity and reduce paper use, utilise digital technologies for online communication, virtual programming and administration.
- **SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY:** Encourage employees and participants to develop a sense of social responsibility and global citizenship.
  - Provide conversations and activities that promote social responsibility, sustainable living and an understanding of global challenges.





# SUGGESTIONS/ GOOD PRACTICES:

## 1. Energy Efficiency:

- Install LED lights or other energy-efficient lighting.
- Set up programmable thermostats to control the temperature inside and out.
- Perform energy audits to find areas that need improvement.

**Good example:** LED lighting fixtures can be installed into the center to drastically lower energy usage.

## 2. Waste Reduction and Recycling:

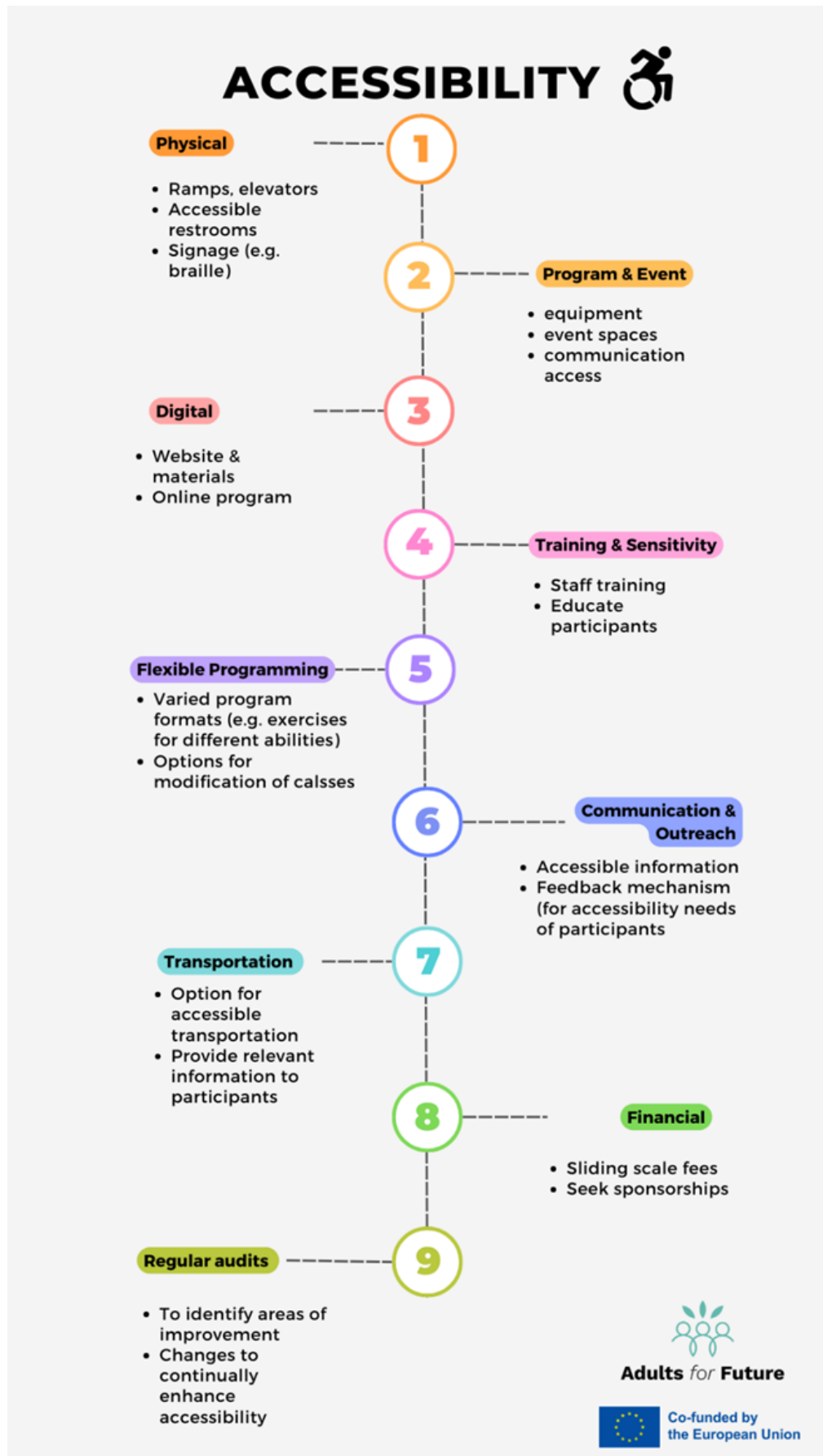
- Establish an extensive strategy for recycling plastic, paper, and other materials.
- Reduce the number of single-use items and promote the use of reusable products.

**Good example:** Recycling among participants and staff can be encouraged by placing clearly labeled recycling bins throughout the center.





In terms of accessibility





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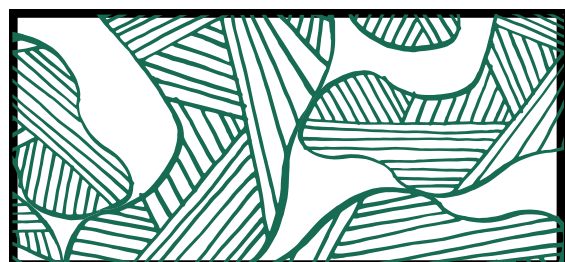


Adults *for* Future

GOOD STORIES OF

# GREEN ACTIVISM

IN ADULT CENTERS  
IN PARTNER  
COUNTRIES:





# SPAIN



In 2019, the senior citizens' association "l'Esplai de Reus" and the School Pompeu Fabra in Reus started a joint project that has worked excellently for four years. Every week, some elders from the association go to the school to work with final year students in a vegetable garden.

- The initiative connects the young students with the elderly through an encounter with nature. It's a movement that teaches values, knowledge and empathy for the planet.

L'ESPLAI DE REUS

Blog AMPA Escola Pompeu Fabra  
<https://agora.xtec.cat/escpompeureus/>

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# CYPRUS

The campaign Let's Do It! has been active in Cyprus since 2012, counting over 180 thousand volunteers from different age groups who came together to help, protect and preserve the cities of island, and ridding Cyprus of tons of garbage, which are on the streets, in the cities and in the natural environment of our country! The campaign "Let's Do It! Cyprus" is the largest environmental action on our island. Together, they organized regular beach clean-ups, removing tons of garbage and debris, gardening, street cleanups etc. They also worked with local authorities to install recycling bins and promote sustainable practices in the community.

- The intergenerational nature of the group was a key part of its success. The young volunteers brought energy and enthusiasm, while the older volunteers brought experience and knowledge of the local area. They learned from each other and worked together to create a cleaner, more sustainable environment.



Let's Do IT! Cyprus, 2012: <https://www.togetheryprus.org/lets-do-it-cyprus/>

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# PORTUGAL



The 65+ Ambiente project was born out of a collaborative process between Laboratório da Paisagem (research and education centre), Guimarães City Council, and other partners. This project offers a vast portfolio of activities directed at the senior community, in the field of environmental sustainability. Besides Laboratório da Paisagem, the project counts with the participation of more than forty institutions in the municipality that provide the activities free of charge to the elderly community.

- The goal is to promote active and healthy ageing through an approach to nature. It encourages the sharing of memories, knowledge, and transformation of the territory, local fauna and flora, as well as promoting intergenerational, sensory activities, experimentation, and creativity, which stimulate the cognitive component and the involvement of the senior community.



65 + Ambiente. (2016, June 27). Laboratório da Paisagem. Retrieved from: <https://www.labpaisagem.pt/65-ambiente/>





# ITALY



The intergenerational cooking classes done by discovering local sourced products and ingredients were born as part of the local activities of Adults4Future, in which we involved adults, seniors and children to reflect on the value of sustainability and at the same time reflecting on how eating habits have changed. In this sense, in our workshops we valorised the importance of supporting local economy and those products which are at the basis of longevity of our grandparents.

POLYGONAL

Polygonal, Cori. (February 2024). Intergenerational Cuisine.  
Retrieved from: Polygonal's insgram account  
<https://www.instagram.com/polygonal.ngo/reel/C4LsPJxt7ID/>

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