Second international seminar on the Active Ageing Index

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SECOND INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON THE ACTIVE AGEING INDEX
27–28 September 2018
Bizkaia Aretoa, Bilbao, Spain

Programme
The presentations and posters are available from http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=49105.

Summary
The UNECE Population Unit and the European Commission’s DG EMPL in cooperation with the University of the Basque Country and the Oxford Institute of Population Ageing, and with the support of the Government of Biscay (Spain), organized the Second international seminar on the Active Ageing Index on 27–28 September 2018 in Bilbao, Spain.

The goal of the seminar was to provide a multidisciplinary forum for those interested in the use of AAI to enhance the knowledge about ageing
and older people and lead to the
development of better policies. The
seminar attracted 144 participants
from 37 countries, including
researchers, policymakers,
representatives of international and
regional organizations, national
statistical offices, and civil society.

In preparation for the seminar, in
June 2017, the co-organisers
launched a call for papers. Over 60
abstracts were submitted, and
authors of 37 papers were eventually
selected by an independent
evaluation board and invited to
present their research at the seminar
at a plenary session, workshop, or
poster session.

The seminar was opened by a
keynote session with presentations
by Maurizio Bussolo from the World
Bank, and Ritu Sadana from the
World Health Organization touching
upon the issues arising from the
population ageing across the world
and highlighting ways to address
those. The presentation of the Better-
life index by Mark Keese from the
Organisation for economic co-
operation and development
showcased an interesting approach
towards measuring complex social
phenomena such as well-being. A
joint presentation by Asghar Zaidi
(London School of Economics and
Political Science), Jolanta Perek-
Biaas (Jagiellonian University and
Warsaw School of Economics), and
Andrea Principi (National Institute of
Health and Science on Ageing,
Centre for Socio-Economic Research
on Ageing) demonstrated the AAI
results at the national level in the
European Union (EU) and at
subnational level in Poland, as well
as comparative analysis of AAI
results for different population
subgroups in Poland and Italy.
This followed by a plenary session built around three selected papers and chaired by Sarah Harper (Oxford Institute of Population Ageing). Three parallel workshops and a poster session concluded the first day. On 28 September, another session of two parallel workshops was followed by the award ceremony where authors of five papers and two posters were presented with a prize. In addition, two authors were also recognised for their posters (no monetary prize). The closing panel with contributions from Sergio Murillo Corzo (the Government of Biscay, Spain), Anne-Sophie Parent (AGE Platform Europe), and Giovanni Lamura (National Institute of Health and Science on Ageing, Centre for Socio-Economic Research on Ageing) concluded the seminar.

A recurrent theme of the studies presented, but also of the key note speeches and panel discussions was inequality: inequalities are present in living conditions, well-being, life expectancy of older persons, but also in enjoying active ageing. Once again, it was highlighted that older persons are not a homogenous group: different subgroups
(disaggregated by sex, age, income and education levels, or even language they speak) show unequal levels of realisation of their potential, as measured by the AAI.

The seminar had a strong methodology component, which manifested itself not only during in-depth discussions at the methodology workshop, but throughout the whole seminar. Indeed, analyses carried out by researchers for a wide variety of topics required new approaches towards the index application. Discussions of these results helped to better understand the way the AAI is constructed, the rationale behind its indicators and domains, how to calculate the index in different contexts, and, importantly, that it is possible to calculate the index in the contexts that are different from the original (application at a national level across EU countries). In this way, the seminar also offered capacity-building elements in the area of work with composite indicators and measurement of complex social phenomena.

Please contact us at aai@un.org if you have any questions.

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