2.1 Voluntary activities
### 1. Unpaid Voluntary Activity

**Definition**
Percentage of population aged 55+ engaging in unpaid voluntary activity through organisations *(at least once a week)*

**Goal (rationale)**
To capture non-market unpaid productive activities of older population offered in the form of organised voluntary activities.

**Survey question**
Please look carefully at the list of organisations and tell us, how often did you do unpaid voluntary work through the following organisations in the last 12 months?

- a. Community and social services *(e.g. organisations helping the elderly, young people, disabled or other people in need)*
- b. Educational, cultural, sports or professional associations
- c. Social movements *(for example environmental, human rights) or charities *(for example fundraising, campaigning)*
- d. Political parties, trade unions — not included in the AAI indicator calculation to avoid overlapping with the indicator 2.4
- e. Other voluntary organisations

**Scale:**
1. Every week
2. Every month
3. Less often/occasionally
4. Not at all

**Source**
European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS) *(https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/surveys/european-quality-of-life-surveys)*

**Year**
2007 (see comparability block), 2012, 2016

**Notes**
Voluntary activity undertaken through the organisations is captured, thus missing out informal voluntary activities often undertaken by older people. This definition may introduce systematic bias against some countries where there are lower levels of organised volunteering activities in favour of informal voluntary activities *(for example, countries in the Central and Eastern Europe)*.

**Comparability**
The corresponding indicator drawn from EQLS 2007 is based on a response to a single category question, thus the comparability over time of this indicator is restricted.

**Question in EQLS 2007**
How often are you involved in any of the following activities outside of paid work?

- d. Voluntary and charitable activities
  
  1. Every day
  2. Several days a week
  3. Once or twice a week
  4. Less than once a week
  5. Never

### 2.2 Care to children, grandchildren

**Definition**
Percentage of population aged 55+ providing care to and educating their children, grandchildren *(at least once a week)*

**Goal (rationale)**
To capture activity of older population in the form of care provision to their own children or grandchildren.
## Survey question

In general, how often are you involved in any of the following activities outside of paid work?

- a. Caring for and/or educating your children
- b. Caring for and/or educating your grandchildren

1. Every day;
2. Several days a week
3. Once or twice a week
4. Less often
5. Never

### Source


### Year

2007, 2012, 2016 — see comparability block

### Comparability

The comparability over time is restricted given the changes in the EQLS questionnaire between waves.

The indicator drawn from EQLS 2012 is based on the following question:

In general, how often are you involved in any of the following activities outside of work?

- a. Caring for your children, grandchildren

1. Every day
2. Several days a week
3. Once or twice a week
4. Less often
5. Never

In 2016, the word “paid” is added to the question (as it was in 2007, see below); the word “educating” is added as activity (also was present in 2007), and the question was split in two separating care for and education of children and those for and of grandchildren. The answer categories are the same.

The indicator drawn from EQLS 2007 is based on the following question:

How often are you involved in any of the following activities outside of paid work?

- a. Caring for and educating children

1. Every day
2. Several times a week
3. Once or twice a week
4. Less often than once a week
5. Never

It is not clear if all respondents included caring for their own children and grandchildren only or also included children outside their own family. The latter is a possibility since the EQLS 2007 referred to the possibility of not just caring but also educating children. In 2016 EQLS the question also includes education, but it includes grandchildren and does specify that care and education are provided to own children / grandchildren.

### 2.3 Care to infirm and disabled

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Percentage of population aged 55+ providing care to infirm or disabled family members, neighbours or friends (at least once a week)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal (rationale)</td>
<td>To capture valuable activities of older population in the form of care provision to infirm and disabled</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Survey question

In general, how often are you involved in any of the following activities outside of paid work?

- d. Caring for disabled or infirm family members, neighbours or friends under 75 years old
- e. Caring for disabled or infirm family members, neighbours or friends aged 75 or over

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Every day</td>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Several days a week</td>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Once or twice a week</td>
<td>4.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source**

**Year**
2007, 2012, 2016 — see comparability block

**Notes**
It includes care provision for resident as well as non-resident adults and not only older persons but also the disabled. The occasional care, provided less than at least once a week, is not included in the indicator.

**Comparability**
The EQLS question was modified in 2016 and covers now also care provided to infirm or disabled friends and neighbours, and not only relatives. This change caused an increase in this indicator in 25 out of 28 EU countries. The comparability is thus restricted starting from 2016.

**EQLS 2007/2012:**

How often are you involved in any of the following activities outside of (paid — EQLS 2007) work?

- c. Caring for elderly or disabled relatives

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Every day</td>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Several days (times — EQLS 2007) a week</td>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Once or twice a week</td>
<td>4.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### 2.4 Political participation

**Definition**
Percentage of population aged 55+ taking part in activities of a trade union, a political party or a political action group

**Goal (rationale)**
To capture the wider participation of older population in political and trade union activities and thus their abilities to influence decision-making

**Survey question**
Over the last 12 months, have you …?

- a. Attended a meeting of a trade union, a political party or political action group
- b. Attended a protest or demonstration
- c. Signed a petition, including an e-mail or on-line petition
- d. Contacted a politician or public official (other than routine contact arising from use of public services)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>No</td>
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</table>

**Source**

**Year**

**Notes**
Participation recorded not just in political parties but also in trade union activities is included here.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Comparability</strong></th>
<th>No differences between EQLS waves 2007, 2012 and 2016, thus the comparability of the indicator over time is not restricted.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The survey question in EQLS 2007 was:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Over the past year, have you...?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Attended a meeting of a trade union, a political party or political action group</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Attended a protest or demonstration, or signed a petition, including an e-mail petition</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Contacted a politician or public official (other than routine contact arising from use of public services)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The second category included two separate categories of EQLS 2012 and 2016:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>b. Attended a protest or demonstration</td>
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<td></td>
<td>c. Signed a petition, including an e-mail or on-line petition</td>
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