Ageism

Ageism refers to how we think (stereotypes), feel (prejudice) and act (discrimination) towards others or ourselves based on age.
Ageism is everywhere

Ageism affects people of all ages

Ageism exists in our institutions, our relationships and ourselves
Ageism is prevalent

• 1 in 2 people are ageist against older people

• In Europe, younger people report more ageism than other age groups
Ageism is harmful and costly

• Ageism has far-reaching impacts on all aspects of people’s health - their physical health, their mental health and their social well-being.

• Ageism takes a *heavy economic toll* on individuals and society

• Ageism intersects and *exacerbates other forms of disadvantage* including those related to sex, race and disability
Ageism can be combatted

3 strategies work in addressing ageism:

1. Policy and law
2. Educational activities
3. Intergenerational interventions
Policy and law

- Policy and law can **address discrimination and inequality** based on **age** and **protect the human rights** of everyone, everywhere.

- Policy and law can be used to **reduce or eliminate ageism against any age group**.

- Different mechanisms are used to **implement and monitor** policies and laws, including human rights agencies, courts, ombudspersons and bodies working to uphold treaties.
Policy and law (examples)

• Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing – art. 5 on eliminating all forms of discrimination MIPAA review is an opportunity to report progress and share experience in combatting ageism

• Int’l and regional instruments and mechanisms (e.g Inter-American Convention, UN human rights mechanisms) can catalyze changes at national level MIPAA review feeds into these mechanisms and to development of int’l standards

• Role of national human rights institutions in monitoring violations, providing remedies and raising awareness (e.g. Australia’s Age Discrimination Commissioner)
Educational activities

• Educational interventions include **instruction that transmits information, knowledge and skills**, as well as activities to **enhance empathy** through role-playing, simulation and virtual reality.

• Educational interventions are **among the most effective strategies for reducing ageism against older people**.

• **Examples**: Iran – introduction of workshops on ageing in schools **reduced ageist attitudes among students**.
Intergenerational interventions

• Intergenerational interventions aim to foster interaction between different generations

• Intergenerational interventions are effective interventions for reducing ageism against older people, and are promising for reducing ageism against younger people

• Examples: Video games in Singapore with older and younger people; on-the-job learning in Hong Kong, China, pairing nursing students and older patients
3 recommendations for action

1. Invest in the 3 evidence-based strategies to address ageism

2. Improve data and research to gain a better understanding of ageism and how to reduce it

3. Build a movement to change the narrative around age and ageing
MIPAA Reporting - important questions on actions taken to address ageism

• **Question 3**: Does your country have a dedicated legislation, policy or action plan to promote and improve the well-being of older persons and protect their rights, such as a “decree or law on older persons”?

• **Question 3e**: Does the Government foster work and volunteering of younger and older persons in intergenerational settings?

• **Question 3f**: Does the Government offer opportunities for intergenerational contact and exchange?

• **Question 4**: In the development and implementation of legislation with a focus on older persons, has the Government encountered any of the following challenges? **Challenge answer option**: Misconceptions and stereotypes about population ageing and older persons
MIPAA Reporting - important questions on actions taken to address ageism

• **Question 11:** Has the Government engaged in actions to support older persons’ participation in income-generating work, as long as older persons want and are able to do so?

• **Question 22:** Has the Government undertaken actions to record and prevent discrimination on the basis of age in access to health services including access to providers, medicines and preventive measures?

• **Question 25:** Is the Government implementing any follow-up actions related to the United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-2030), such as a national action plan? – Here they could specifically indicate activities related to Action Area 1 of the Decade, which focuses on ageism
**MIPAA Reporting - important questions on actions taken to address ageism**

- **Question 32**: Has the Government undertaken measures to protect older persons’ dignity and enjoyment of all human rights, including to address and eliminate ‘ageism’ and age-based discrimination?

- **Question 47**: How has the Government designed and/or implemented measures for the pre-ageing population (future older persons) in the following aspects: (a) security, (b) health, and (c) participation - Here they could specifically indicate activities taken to address ageism as it affects younger populations and/or prevent ageism against older populations
For more information:


Full report: English
Executive summary: English, Spanish, French

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