

Silver DOST – Establishing Respect to All Ages

Organisation(s):	The Agency for Sustainable and Operative Social Provision (DOST Agency)	
Country:	Republic of Azerbaijan	
Contact:	policy@esn-eu.org	
Theme:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ageing & Care <input type="checkbox"/> Asylum & Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Young People <input type="checkbox"/> Support for Children & Families <input type="checkbox"/> Community Care <input type="checkbox"/> Integrated Care & Support <input type="checkbox"/> Co-Production <input type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Housing & Homelessness <input type="checkbox"/> Artificial Intelligence <input type="checkbox"/> Digitalisation <input type="checkbox"/> Quality Care	<input type="checkbox"/> Labour Market Inclusion <input type="checkbox"/> Social Inclusion <input type="checkbox"/> Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce and Leadership <input type="checkbox"/> Social benefits <input type="checkbox"/> EU Funding <input type="checkbox"/> Social Service’s Resilience <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Person-centred Care <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:
Principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights: <i>Check the 20 principles here.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Education, training, life-long learning <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Gender equality <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Equal opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Active support to employment <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Secure and adaptable employment <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Fair Wages <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Transparent employment conditions <input type="checkbox"/> 8. Social dialogue <input type="checkbox"/> 9. Work-life balance <input type="checkbox"/> 10. Healthy, safe work environment	<input type="checkbox"/> 11. Childcare and child support <input type="checkbox"/> 12. Social protection <input type="checkbox"/> 13. Unemployment benefits <input type="checkbox"/> 14. Minimum income <input type="checkbox"/> 15. Old age income and pensions <input type="checkbox"/> 16. Health care <input type="checkbox"/> 17. Inclusion of people with disabilities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18. Long-term care <input type="checkbox"/> 19. Housing and assistance to homeless <input type="checkbox"/> 20. Access to essential services
Current status of the practice:	<input type="checkbox"/> Concept and Design Phase <input type="checkbox"/> Execution & Monitoring Phase <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consolidation Phase <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scaling Up and Transformation Phase <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)	
Context/ Social issues addressed <i>Please explain the problem you attempt to solve.</i>	Since the start of the DOST Agency’s activity in 2019, the analysis of citizens’ appeals revealed that a tailored approach is needed for older persons as a specific risk group due to their growing number and physical and mental conditions. In the meantime, despite receiving monthly social payments, the older persons faced	

	<p>other difficulties and needs that the service system could not address. These were the older person groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited self-care opportunities, living alone and requiring special care at home, or lack of proper physical condition to spend the pension; - Psychological problems like non-confidence, disappointment, and resentment of life; - A strong will to work (highly qualified professionals) that faced social stigmas associating ageing with 'passiveness', 'ballast', 'weakness', and 'useless', which isolated them, decreased self-respect and left their potential unused. <p>In response, in 2019, we initiated a process relentlessly focused on placing older persons at the centre of social services and addressing the challenges below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deliver new services targeting the needs of older persons by themselves - Assist in raising their self-confidence - Eliminate the social stigmas - Create programs and projects to enable older persons to participate in planning and delivering services.
<p>Objectives: Please provide a maximum of three objectives in bullet points.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase older peoples' self-respect • Overcome social stigmas and psychological frames about older people • Consequently, renew the societal attitude about older people
<p>Activities: Please summarise the activities put in place to achieve the objectives (maximum 200 words).</p>	<p>The Silver DOST sub-program under the Volunteer DOST Program is continuously implemented in the DOST centres to facilitate the reintegration of people of retirement age into society and to play the role of a bridge between the young and the old generations. The mentioned approach is applied in all operating centres in a centralised way, and it is being implemented through existing service passports, manuals, training programs, guidelines, instructed staff, and communication through social platforms to stimulate older persons to join the active service delivery process through the Silver DOST sub-program. More specifically, the activities include video seminars for youth, practical lectures for youth to increase their skills, sign language services, IT training for older people, surveys to identify leisure time interests of older people and 11 graduation ceremonies)</p>
<p>Evaluation of practice: Please explain how you evaluate the practice and what the results were/are so far</p>	<p>Quantitative data was collected internally.</p> <p>The initiative has led to better social inclusion of older persons. It also raised the self-respect and self-confidence of the project participants, and their self-attitude became positive by overcoming the existing stigmas. For the first time (in Azerbaijan):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Older persons have been involved in the implementation of social projects and delivering services

2. Taking into account the feedback about the needs collected from DOST information platforms, DOST has added new projects to social payment services provided to older persons;

3. As a continuation of the Silver DOST subprogram, the Seniors' Club have been created, and a website for Older Persons' (initiated by the older persons) is being developed;

4. The proposal to finance the Organisation of Leisure Time for Older Persons from the state budget has been submitted to policymaker structures by the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of Population.

Impact reflected in figures:

- 3,100 older persons took part in the survey for the organisation of their leisure time, and their interests were identified
- 1,050 older people received IT training
- 150 became a member of the Seniors' Club, and 14 of them are very active
- 54 alumni and 11 Graduation Ceremonies within the Silver DOST Volunteer Program
- A couple of the Seniors' Club members (aged 78-87) married in 2021
- A 75-year-old home-based social service receiver has been recruited as a sign language interpreter at the DOST centre
- Due to enormous public resonance, 19,000 youth were provided with video training delivered by people aged 65-72, and 1,054 of the former were awarded certificates for active participation and complete course attendance. The training was organised in the framework of joint with the UNFPA project 'Active Ageing' during the COVID-19 pandemic. The DOST Agency provided filming of educational video materials (later posted on online video platforms) with 30 retired yet highly qualified professionals of various disciplines.
- 200 senior experts have been added to the Silver Heritage Bank database to be involved in different specialised events in the future. Data was generated based on the names, contacts, areas of interest, and specialities of Silver Volunteers, as well as those active older people who participated in the survey and expressed interest in being involved in activities and different projects.
- 150 beneficiaries involved in different camps and trips.
- 61,870 users received DOST services from the Silver DOST.
- The Silver DOST educated 3,337 Young DOST volunteers.

Outcomes:

- Essential changes in the attitude of older persons towards themselves
- Positive behavioural transformation of society toward older persons
- Employment of older persons and peer support in service provision policy
- Experience/knowledge transfer from older persons to the younger generation.

Links to supporting documents:
e.g. website or report of the practice

<https://dost.gov.az/en/>

<https://dost.gov.az/en/page/gumusu-dost>

<u>Comments and tips, i.e. for people willing to use your Practice</u>	DOST managed to break the paradigm by transforming older persons from the category of 'persons who receive services' to the category of 'persons who provide knowledge, services, and assistance'.