

EICA

European Interdisciplinary Council on Ageing

#OldLivesMatter : a worldwide campaign against ageism

On May 25th, the whole world, up in arms about George Floyd, the African-American man who died of suffocation during his arrest by the police in Minneapolis, united to fight against anti-black racism with a slogan, "#BlackLivesMatter".

4 months later, the COVID-19 pandemic affects all nations, without distinction; population aged 65 years and older is suffering its highest burden (92% mortality in France, 90% in Sweden, 89% in the United Kingdom). And as the 20th Anniversary of the rights of the elderly in the European Charter is celebrated, 43 geriatrics and gerontology organizations from 29 different countries are launching the slogan "#OldLivesMatter" to fight against anti-old racism and raise awareness among citizens, media and institutions.



Ageism is the most common discrimination

Hospital emergencies refusing to care for old patients during the COVID-19 epidemic, "because there is no room left"; endless advertisements for anti-ageing creams that stigmatize old age; perpetual denigration - "old bashing" - of the elderly for their lack of tech savviness; the word "retired" which immediately rejects you from society; the cult of youth, always, and the ever-ending scorn for old age.

All these are due to ageism, the most widespread, ordinary and universal discrimination (the only kind of discrimination not tackled by law). Most people are unaware of the stereotypes they subconsciously hold about the elderly, and yet it slowly destroys them – studies have proved that people exposed to negative aging behavior live an average of 7 years less than the others.

Insidious discrimination undermines our societies: exclusion of the majority of old adults from the society is an unacceptable tragedy and is contrary to the principle of dignity.

#AllLivesMatter: black people, young people and old people

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of Article 25 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU which officially recognizes "the right of the elderly to lead a life of dignity and independence and to participate in social and cultural life" (right which was not present in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights), the French Society of Geriatrics and Gerontology (*Société Française de Gériatrie et Gérontologie* – SFGG), accompanied by European and American geriatrics societies, is launching a global awareness campaign for the rights of people aged 60 years and older.

With 3 videos available in English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Russian, Italian and German - "#OldLivesMatter" by Jean-Paul Lilienfeld, Director of "La Journée de la Jupe" (2010) with Isabelle Adjani, who received a "Cesar" for her role – showcasing 3 kinds of ordinary racism under a humorous and original light, "*we wanted to show how ageism is such a common discrimination that we no longer see it*".

In 2050, people aged 60 years and older will be 2 billion in the world: "*society will be able to derive an advantage from this aging population if we all age in better health. But for that, we must eliminate ageist prejudices*" explains Prof. Olivier Guérin, President of the SFGG.

One day, if all goes well, you will be old:
#OldLivesMatter

In 2050, people aged 60 years and older will be 2 billion in the world against 600 million in 2020. Prepare your future, fight ageism.

The French Society of Geriatrics and Gerontology (SFGG) would like to warmly thank Jean-Paul Lilienfeld, author and director, as well as all the professional actors who took part, on a voluntary basis, in these videos.

43 organizations : The Geriatrics and Gerontology Societies of Algeria, Armenia, Belgium, Belarus, Bolivia, Holland, Switzerland, Greece, Finland, Malta, Thailand, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Hungary, Brazil, Philippines, Chile, Iceland, Lithuania, Russia, Serbia, Turkey, Senegal, Morocco, Tunisia, Czech Republic and Iceland

and

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