

Older Women Attacked

ASAG



by Ermira PIRDENI
Ageing activist



Every Wall has a Gate

Wow! Shameful news regarding ASAG.

#mipaa20Rome

Ageism strikes again and continues to be the last bastion of discrimination!

ASAG contribution, as the only advocacy of MIPAA in Albania, wisdom, immeasurable experience and insight, was ignored by our exclusion in the Albanian delegation (a group of 5 members from the government and non-profit sector) in UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing held in Rome 15 to 17 June 2022. The conference was organized by the United Nations Economic Commission in Europe in cooperation with the Italian Government. The conference aimed to complete the 4th review and appraisal cycle (2018-2022) of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) and its Regional Implementation Strategy.

Ageism closed the doors to the Albanian delegation's diversity. **#diversity #olderwomen**
The representative of ASAG, Mrs. Pirdeni, who with her personal initiative made MIPAA known in Albania, became part of the conference with the support of INPEA & Italian government.

*Conformity is
the jailer of
freedom and the
enemy of
growth. J. F.
Kennedy*

**A special Thank You goes to Susan Somers, President the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA)!
Gratitude to the Italian government for the major contribution in favor of MIPAA and the participants!
And many thanks go to Miss. Cristina Calvi for her constant, effective communication and ability to simplify and eliminate confusion.**

The conference with the focus on **"A sustainable World for All Ages - Joining forces for solidarity and equal opportunities throughout life"** marked the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the MIPAA.

During the three days, national delegations, civil society and researchers discussed the interactions between the international processes on human rights of older persons and on comprehensive socio-economic policies mainstreaming ageing.

The outcome of the conference are two complementary declarations; one adopted by the Ministers, reaffirming the commitment towards positive ageing policies and; a second which was adopted jointly by civil society and researchers.

Preceding the ministerial conference, the Joint Forum of Civil Society and Research discussed all the major topics set on the agenda for the ministerial conference itself and adopted a Joint Declaration to voice the concerns and demands of older persons' organizations, careers and academia to the Ministers.

This Joint Forum of Civil Society and Research shaped the discussions.

The Joint Declaration raised the ambition towards a stronger rights-based approach in ageing policies calling for reflection on the topics of ageism and intersectional discrimination, promoting equity in digital technologies, minimizing bias, participation of older persons, mainstreaming gender, social inequality, older refugees, etc.

Keynote of Prof. Alexander Sidorenko reminded conference the long way the Ageing Policies have come since the First World Assembly on Ageing in Vienna 1982 and the Second in Madrid in 2002.

Ageing policies suffer from insufficient coordination, marginal technical support and limited analytical capacity of the UN and member States to inform implementation.

More information:

- [UNECE website on the event with presentations and official outcomes,](https://www.uneca.org/ageing)
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/98046700@N04/sets/72177720299843493/>

INPEA side event: UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing held in commemoration of the World Elder Abuse Awareness Day #WEAAD2022

17 June 2022 / Rome, Italy

- **Opening Remarks** by Susan B. Somers, President of INPEA
- **Interactive Dialogue** moderated by Prof. Alexandre Sidorenko, Senior Advisor at the European Centre for Social Welfare.
- Policy WHO, in collaboration with members of the United Nations Inter-Agency Group on Ageing (IAGA), experts in the field and representatives from civil society launched an advocacy brief “Tackling Abuse of Older People: Five Priorities for the Decade of Healthy Ageing” at an event organized by the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA) in collaboration with WHO, DESA and the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights by older persons.
- Mrs. Mira Pirdeni, participated in a side event and intervention to join forces for Decade Healthy Ageing and Communities.

This year, WEAAD coincides with two important events. The first is the start of the United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-2030). This marks the beginning of ten years of concerted, catalytic and sustained collaboration with diverse stakeholders on improving the lives of older people, their families and their communities. The second is the 20th milestone of the Second World Assembly on Ageing and the fourth review and appraisal of the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA). These provide an opportunity to generate renewed momentum for international action to advance the ageing agenda.

Activity photo:



On the day of WEAAD, Mrs. Pirdeni from Roma Conference had an interview with euronewsalbania TV, on the abuse of the elderly in Albania and the importance of the Rome Conference.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ytXPeNu6aMQ>

[#euronewsalbania](#) [#miremengjes](#) [#tirana](#)

Jun 15, 2022



The United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021–2030) is to improve the lives of older people, their families, and the communities in which they live. To foster healthy ageing and improve the lives of older people and their families and communities, fundamental shifts will be required not only in the actions we take but in how we think about age and ageing.

Surprise is the greatest gift, which **MIPAA20Roma** granted me. Creative and productive people always take our society by surprise. Their example of common sense and courage, especially by women inspired me. We meet so many people in life, but we connect to the heart of very few, but when it happens that helps us to grow and be our best self.

I feel like I am part of history being made.

I left **MIPAA20Roma**, meetings encouraged to do a better job.

It was really a surprise to meet Em. Prof. Dr. Ann Hermans at the last dinner of the conference.

Her publication "THE DIGITAL ERA? ALSO MY ERA!" was a special gift for me, considering we live in the time of two megatrends: Digital and Aging.

I was part of a broadcast on ORA TV about the concerns of older persons in Albania. Starting Sunday, May 1, all administrative public booths in Albania were closed permanently to initiate the shift towards digital services. This means that all document related services will only be provided electronically to all citizens through the e-Albania government portal.

This unfortunately, was a fluke as it lead to many frustrated citizens and older people unable to cope with the change. Lack of information and a preparatory phase of education created a serious obstacle for digital inclusion.

Covid-19 accelerated this process; the pace of digital innovation is not included in the needs of the older people. To create an all-inclusive digital future, we must recognize age diversity, cognitive capacity and income, thus making technically and practically possible the participation of all ages.

Intergenerational support is essential and at the same time promotes common values of society such as solidarity and diversity by increasing awareness of the ease of services, etc.

The international Day of Older Persons theme on October 1, 2021 was “digital equality for all ages.”

We need to address the gaps that prevent older people from benefiting from digital transformation. No single entity can solve these challenges alone, cooperation and a public-private approach to achieve digital equality is imperative.

Low cost equipment along with installation and support is essential for the inclusion of Albanian seniors.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fiqPAP5_t00



Ageism Unmasked

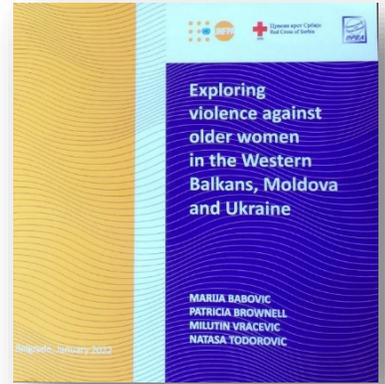
Many people approach me and ask about technicalities of social engagement, almost never about the why. I insist that technicalities are the easy part and that the real work is an inner appraisal of why you do what you do. Be courageous enough to ask these questions and start the work now. Chuck Feeney

Ageism thrives at UNFPA Albania

I Found another surprise in Rome, Mrs. Natasa Todorovic from Serbia gave me the publication "Exploring violence against older women in the Balkans, Moldova and Ukraine".

ASAG, the only voice of older women in Albania, was not informed that there was such a publication for older women in Albania.

UNFPA Albania is doing a sloppy job at identifying stakeholders in ageing policy and include them in the publication distribution list.



The traditional approach to science has resulted in the public's increasing distrust of scientists—their motives, values, and business interests. The science should be a joint enterprise between scientists and the public to demonstrate the value of science in people's lives. Each player will be able to integrate science more easily into civic decision-making and target problems more efficiently and at lower costs. This collaborative work will create new opportunities for civic action and give the public a greater sense of ownership—making it their science.

I myself have been a scientific researcher at the Institute of Public Health for 35 years. In our studies on the health and working conditions of workers; we identified and corrected some health related problems, especially in factories with a majority workforce of women such as textiles, etc.



Our work contributed to improving their health and increasing work productivity.

I have passionately read many publications on aging, attended conferences and I was lucky; they have changed my concept on life. Publications are made with life and life is made with reading, they want freedom and give freedom, to give a new understanding of life at every age and its beauty. We have to accept this new future and this will be important for our freedom.

I was a cofounder of the independent women's movement March '91, documents published in the magazine no. 2 "Active Ageing / for women of all ages".

ASAG is the only one that stood up to the wind, excluded from national and international funds. Money doesn't have to be a barrier. Knowledge, experience, guidance, and insight could help to identify promising solutions to turn a vision into reality. ASAG there is more than achievement, look with courage! 

'Loss and damage' in the poorest Albanian community:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSpCFXZHNBI>

Some MIPAA activities in Albania organized by me personally

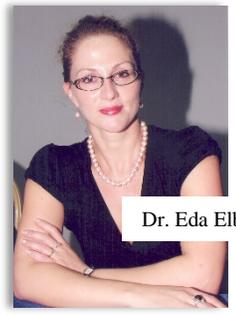
*“All the darkness in the world cannot extinguish the light of a single candle.”
— St. Francis of Assisi*

“Everybody likes handing out things or funding buildings, because that’s tangible. But real value comes from systemic change, changed behavior, changed mindsets. The buildings you build might sit empty; mindset shifts keep influencing generations to come. Ask yourself what you have to do to create truly lasting positive change and act upon that” Nihar Kothari



Dr. Nora Malaj

On September 30, 2005, MIPAA was announced with all the actors of the society, Mrs. Nora Malaj, Chairperson of the Women’s Committee, organized the political support



Dr. Eda Elbasani

15th of June, 2006, on the First World Day of Awareness against Elderly Abuse, ASAG organized a workshop with the participation and the support of four ministries, older people associations, local government, etc. **The Minister of Health Mr. Maksim Cikuli created the first Aging Focal Point in Albania.** Doctor Eda Elbasani was appointed as director.

In #mipaa20Rome, Albania was represented at the level of deputy minister by Miss. Vjollca Braho, due to my persistence to strengthen the aging institutional structure in Albania.



The UN Mission also organized training for MIPAA with NPO of older people



Continuous activities in universities, community, women, media, intergeneration, etc.

Gabicce Mountain / Italy

After the Rome Conference, I happened to visit the natural terrace of Gabicce Monte located in the Italian Riviera. The gaze could sweep over the wide gulf, accompanied by a sunset boulevard resembling a nocturnal art architecture. The area is full of beauties, which, by day and by night, offer a breathtaking spectacle. The hilly paths of broom branch off into a pristine-looking landscape between the cliffs overlooking the sea that hide small inlets among the rocks.

I met by chance two Albanian older ladies who had a rich career behind them. Mrs. Habibe Koka, my son's pediatrician and an elderly woman textile worker, Mrs. Fatbardha Musta from the textile city of Berat in south Albania.

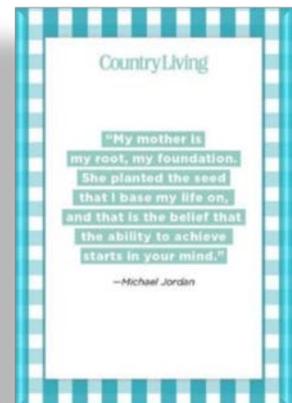
Both had accumulated 40 years of work and later in life migrated to Italy in order to stay under the full care of their children. As long-term Italian residents they now enjoy access to the health and social care system in Italy, as the Albanian care institutions have been absent for decades leaving them fending for themselves. The shift from a totalitarian society to a democratic one brought forth in Albania a wide range of changes, which erased their decade long contributions.

As part of our Albanian cultural upbringing, we have culturally tied families to the ideas of sacrifice, servitude, and dependence as a mark of collaborative living. However, we must remember that this care comes at a price; it requires time, resources and effort by our loved ones. In order to ensure that there are no awkward moments in the dusk of our life, we (the older persons) must keep a low profile with our children and their families in order to ensure a smooth and effortless ongoing. Do not depend on them for time, attention and resources. Seek the children out as an exception, rather than as a norm.

The doctor Mrs. Habibe represents the class of those persecuted by the communist regime. After the 1990s, the politically supported 'elite' stole her family's properties.

I am negotiating free of charge with the National Chamber of Mediators to pursue the injustice of her stolen assets. I hope to reach a fair outcome for her. Our struggles to find ways to help poor people and community focus on alternative approaches that are worth trying – working with trusted individuals, who might be able to get things done, even while our leaders are busy looting.

These Albanian older women in Italy live with the dream of returning to their homeland and enjoy a prosperous and dignifying older age.



ALBANIA

Tulipa albanica (Liliaceae) is illustrated and described as a new species from a serpentine area in Kukesi district, northeastern Albania.

It is compared with *T. scardica* from the western Balkans (Macedonia and Kosovo) and with *T. schrenkii* from the Ukraine, Caucasus, Central and Southwest Asia.



Italian painter Alberto Sebastian (1971) comes with a pencil portrait of a woman on the beach in these hot summer days.

Summer ends, and autumn comes with a full moon every night and the ripeness of autumn fills the air.

