

PRO SENECTUTE AND VULNERABILITY FIRST RESULTS FROM THE VLV SURVEY

Aline Duvoisin

Supervisor: Michel Oris

Context and theory

- Pro Senectute is the most well known and oldest foundation for the elderly in Switzerland.
- Its role is to support ageing people considering both inequalities and personal aspirations.
- This perspective can be linked to the capabilities approach developed by A. Sen (figure 1).

Issues

- Is Pro Senectute reaching vulnerable elderly people (with a deficit of capabilities)?
- Does Pro Senectute meet this objective in 5 different Swiss cantons? What about differences between them?

Data and method

- The data comes from *Vivre-Leben-Vivere*, the interdisciplinary survey about living conditions among the ageing population in Switzerland, which features some questions concerning Pro Senectute.
- We used logistic regression models to find out:
 - Who knows about Pro Senectute?
 - Who uses services of Pro Senectute?

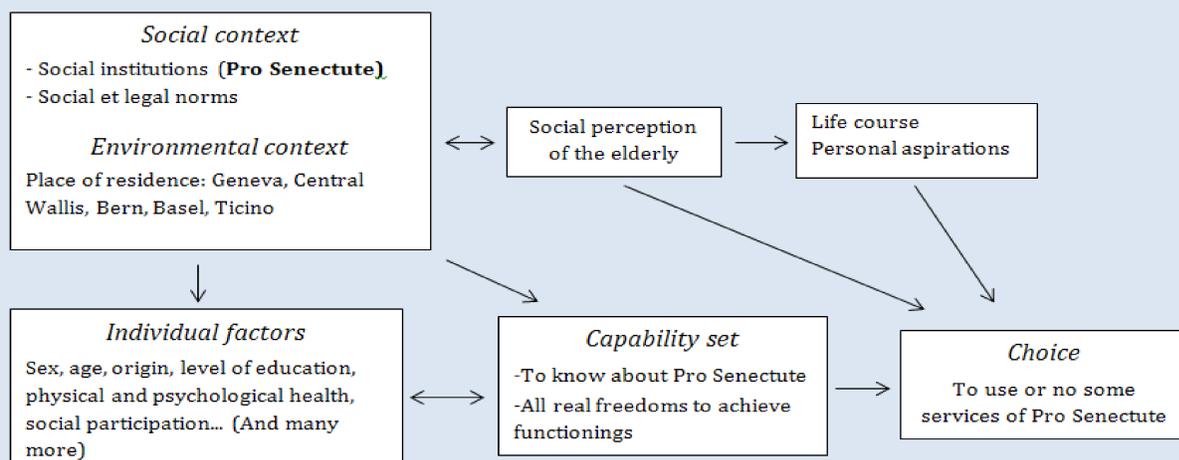
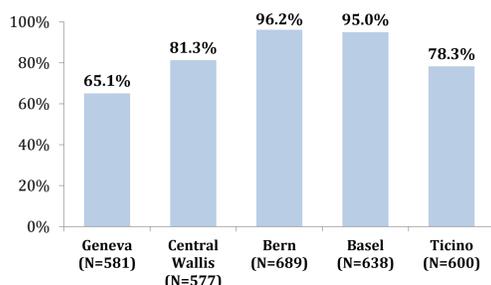


Figure 1: Capability approach adapted to the context Pro Senectute is embedded in.



1. Who knows about Pro Senectute?



- As shown in figure 2, the majority of respondents knows the foundation.

Figure 2: Part of surveyed people who knows that Pro Senectute exists among total respondents (N).

So who does not know about the foundation?

Geneva	Central Wallis	Ticino
Men	Men	Men
85 years and older	75 years and older	-
Foreign origin	Foreign origin	-
-	-	Income higher than 4000 CHF per month
-	Living in the main towns	Living in an elderly home
Catholic	-	-
No regular participation in voting	No regular participation in voting	-
-	Member of none or just one club or association at age 45.	-
-	No volunteering	No volunteering
Not interested in daily medias (tv, newspaper, radio)	-	-

Table 3: Significant factors explaining the lack of awareness of Pro Senectute by region

2. Who uses services of Pro Senectute?

Central Wallis	Bern	Basel	Ticino
Women	Women	-	Women
-	75 years and older	-	75 years and older
-	-	Not in a relationship	-
-	Income between 4000 and 6000 per month	-	-
Education's level below University	-	-	-
-	Swiss origin	-	-
Member of a club or an association at age 45.	-	-	-
Volunteering	Volunteering	-	-
-	To be physically dependant (Katz's scale)	-	-
To have a sensorial handicap	-	-	-
-	-	To be worried (Wang's scale of depression)	-
-	-	-	To feel healthy

Table 5: Significant factors explaining the use of Pro Senectute's services by region

- Results are very different between regions

- **Basel** is exemplary because there is little inequality in terms of use of services: only two factors are significant. And these two factors show that the socially and psychologically vulnerable people are more reached.
- In **Ticino**, to be a woman or among the oldest respondents are factors that increase the use of Pro Senectute; again, potentially vulnerable elderly are benefitting. However, we also observe that feeling healthy has a significant positive effect, which could indicate that in this region the foundation's services convey a false image of being reserved to healthy people.
- In **Bern** and **Central Wallis** the analysis reveals a mixed picture. Active social participation (Central Wallis) and classical integration determinants (Bern) are key factors of the use of services. In addition, they reach disabled persons. That is a very good aspect! However, they do not meet the needs of the physically vulnerable *before* they lose their functional health. Catering to the need of those who are in this state of *latent* vulnerability beforehand is vital from a prevention perspective.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

- Improvements could be done in each region, taking into account the different elements that we have observed, to increase the visibility of the foundation and its services, with the following objectives:
 - all elderly people must know of the existing opportunities,
 - Pro Senectute services come to be seen as not only for the needy. For example, by further developing intergenerational activities.
- BUT... in general Pro Senectute is helpful and has a great potential for further helping vulnerable elderly people "to live the life they have reason to value" [Sen, 1999].

References

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