



PREVEN

NEWSLETTER 1

MAY 2026

Why Prevention Matters More Than Ever in Europe's Ageing Societies



FROM DEMOGRAPHIC CHALLENGES TO INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS IN HEALTHCARE TRAINING

Across Europe, population ageing is no longer a future challenge — it is already a reality.

Today, around 21% of the European population is aged 65 and over, representing more than 94 million people. This proportion is expected to rise to over 32% by 2100, meaning nearly 1 in 3 Europeans will be over 65.

At the same time, the number of people aged over 80 — those most likely to require long-term care — already reaches over 27 million, and is projected to more than double in the coming decades.

This rapid demographic shift is already putting increasing pressure on healthcare and social care systems across Europe.



BURNOUT: A HIDDEN BUT CRITICAL ISSUE

Healthcare and social care workers are among the most exposed to work-related stress and emotional overload. Recent studies show that:

- 1 in 6 older people experiences some form of abuse;
- up to 2 in 3 care workers report having committed abusive behaviour at least once in stressful conditions;
- burnout rates among healthcare professionals have increased significantly in recent years.

These situations are rarely intentional. They are often the result of:

- emotional exhaustion ;
- lack of training in managing complex situations;
- insufficient development of key soft skills such as communication or empathy.

A EUROPEAN RESPONSE TO A SHARED CHALLENGE

Italy and Poland, countries that share common challenges but also very different approaches to ageing and care:

- In Italy, one of the oldest populations in Europe, family-based care still plays a central role;
- In France, institutional care structures are highly developed but face increasing pressure and staffing challenges;
- In Ireland, community-based and preventive approaches are strongly promoted;
- In Poland, rapid population ageing is putting increasing pressure on health and social care systems that are still adapting, while family-based care remains essential and workforce shortages intensify demands on professionals.



Even within France, differences are visible:

- in Northern regions, care systems are more structured and institutionalised;
- in Corsica, stronger family and community ties still influence care practices.

This diversity is not a challenge, it is a strength. It allows PREVEN partnership to design solutions that are adaptable, realistic and rooted in real-life practices.



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FROM SHARED EXPERIENCES TO INNOVATIVE TOOLS

Six months into the project, the partnership has already taken key steps:

- an **online kick-off meeting in December 2025**;
- a **transnational meeting in Catania (Italy) in February 2026**, where partners worked closely on the first project outputs

These exchanges have highlighted a common conclusion: technical skills are not enough; soft skills are essential to prevent burnout and improve care quality.



RETHINKING TRAINING: THE PREVEN APPROACH

PREVEN's innovation lies in its approach. Instead of traditional training methods, the project is developing:

- a serious game to assess soft skills;
- based on real-life situations in elderly care settings (daily care, communication with families, medication moments).

Through interactive scenarios, professionals will be able to:

- reflect on their own reactions;
- identify strengths and weaknesses ;
- better understand how to manage stressful situations.

This tool will focus on four key skills:

- communication,
- teamwork,
- problem-solving,
- empathy.

The objective is simple but ambitious: to help professionals better cope with stress, and ultimately improve the quality of care.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The coming months will be dedicated to:

- developing and testing the first version of the game;
- collecting feedback from professionals and learners;
- refining the tool before moving to the next phase: the interactive training pathway.

WHY PREVEN MATTERS

PREVEN is not just a project, it is part of a broader reflection on the future of care in Europe.

As our societies age, the question is no longer only **how to care** but also **how to support those who provide care**.

By focusing on prevention, soft skills and innovative learning methods, PREVEN contributes to building more sustainable, humane and resilient healthcare systems.

Stay tuned for the next steps of the PREVEN journey.