

Facilitating intergenerational
solidarity and learning through
building friendships between
youngsters and elderly



Annex F

National Report



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1. INTRODUCTION

The project “*BONDING – Facilitating intergenerational solidarity and learning through building friendships between youngsters and elderly*” is funded under the Erasmus+ Programme and it is implemented in six countries: Poland, Italy, Spain, Greece, N. Macedonia, and Cyprus. The project aims at enhancing the opportunities for young people’s civic engagement, through strengthening their competences in designing and conducting innovative volunteering services for elderly.

The first project result R1: Mapping the Befriending Landscape will encompass *an in-depth mapping of the good practices in befriending services* provided by youth across Europe and lessons learned, and explore how can those practices be adapted and enhanced to fit the *needs and expectations of the target groups* in the project countries.

These good practices will act as examples for youth, youth organisations and other organisations providing voluntary services for youth on how they can actually set up and run voluntary befriending services of benefit to the elderly and other vulnerable community groups.

In addition to the added value of this resource in exploring, analysing and presenting the European landscape of befriending services provided by youth, its findings will be key in informing the development of the e-learning course (R2).

This project result will be available as an e-publication in all partner languages and in English, and it will be of benefit to young people, formal or informal associations of young people, youth and other organizations providing youth voluntary services, as well as to policy makers in the social field and researchers interested in the topic that could use it and expand on it.

The activities for the development of this result will be structured in two phases: i) research phase, which will include desk research/good practices identification and key informant interviews with youth and elderly (findings compiled in national reports), and ii) elaboration phase, which will include synthesizing of the national reports into the e-publication, its graphic design and peer review.

In the lines below, following the guidelines shared in the Research Protocol outlining the overall aims of the research, the research methodology and presenting the needed research and reporting templates, data from the desk and field research conducted in Cyprus within the months of March, April and May 2022 are reviewed. The following Annexes may be found:

- Research methods/ Good Practices Identification Template (**Annex A**)
- Information sheet (**Annex B**),
- Consent form for the interviews (**Annex C**),
- Interview protocol for youth (**Annex D**),
- Interview protocol for elderly (**Annex E**) and
- Data from CY (**Annex F**).



2. REPORT FROM THE GOOD PRACTICES

Good practice 1

Title	<i>'In Touch' – In Touch Befrienders</i>
Location	Cyprus
Organisation	Cyprus Samaritans & World Befrienders
Website	https://www.cyprussamaritans.org/in-touch-befrienders/
Overview	<p>This befriending service offered, called “In Touch Befrienders”, is registered through Befrienders Worldwide which operates in over 38 countries in the world.</p> <p>In Touch Befrienders, is operated by Cyprus Samaritans listening volunteers who have volunteered to be In Touch as well, however not all Cyprus Samaritans Listening volunteers are “In Touch” volunteers.</p> <p>“In Touch” has its own dedicated phone number, i.e. 99091614 and anyone who would like to make use of the service only needs to ring this number once. All other calls are generated by the “In Touch” volunteers.</p> <p>Having no one to talk to can make humans feel isolated and alone. Talking to one of the friendly, trained volunteers at a suitable and most needed time can make all the difference to one's day.</p> <p>Calls are made by the befriending service volunteers at the time and day that the recipient would like and the topics of the calls are chosen by the recipients as is the length of call.</p> <p>The “In Touch” system has been running for over 2 years, and there are recipients that still call on a weekly basis.</p> <p>“In Touch” tries to allocate 2 volunteers to each recipient so that relationships can be built up if required. The calls can be stopped, time/day/date changed, calls suspended and anything else solely dependent on the wishes of the recipient.</p> <p>If someone wants to have further information or to contact the service, then s/he can arrange a regular “In Touch call” with the befriending team at: 99091614. All calls are confidential.</p>
Impact	<p>This is an innovating initiative practice that has been recently running under the motto: “A simple friendly call can change lives”. Thus no data is available at this point. However, as it is noted on the website, positive feedback has been received from those making use of this service.</p>



Innovation	This is the first initiative of its kind, so it is an innovation/ innovative practice itself.
Sustainability	From its website description, it seems that the practice has all potentials to enjoy the technical, human and financial conditions to ensure its continuity over time. The fact that it is part of a global initiative may also be said to ensure its sustainability.
Transferability	Being a practice of a global initiative it also ensured transferability. Since the global initiative runs in 38 different countries, it seems that the practice can be applicable and replicable in different contexts with positive results, as it has mechanisms and tools in place to enable other organizations to adapt it.
Additional info	N/A

Good practice 2

Title	RED CROSS Home Care Programme for Vulnerable People
Location	<i>Nicosia, Cyprus</i>
Organisation	<i>Cyprus Red Cross Society</i>
Website	https://www.redcross.org.cy/en/home
Overview	Cyprus Red Cross Society operates a home care programme for vulnerable people which promotes social relations by organising group activities like gardening and bingo. Aiming at fighting loneliness and promoting mental health in the older population, the home care programme is influenced by positive psychology, which emphasises the bright side of human nature, the strengths and virtues of an individual, and what makes life worth living.
Impact	A lack of financial resources is a key factor to the vulnerability of older people. For older populations the pension is the only source of income, and at most times, this is low. Thus, poverty risks are higher amongst people further long in life, who are also reported to be already at risk of social exclusion, including minority groups. Women are also more likely to experience poverty in old age, due to a number of factors, e.g. discrimination in the workplace, unpaid maternity leave, informal caring for family members, etc. Thus, promoting and funding programmes targeting the education, social inclusion, befriending, equality, etc. of vulnerable and socially excluded groups is highly critical nowadays and programmes of such kind have a high impact.



Innovation	This programme serves intergenerational goals in contexts of positive psychology which is an innovative context nowadays, opening pathways to well-being.
Sustainability	<p>Promoting and funding befriending programmes for vulnerable and socially excluded groups in the fields of education, social inclusion, well-being, equality, etc. targets sustainability.</p> <p>Red Cross promotes volunteerism, both as a form of lifelong learning and as a way to actively contribute to community life. This is a valuable tool to shape inclusive societies that work to reduce the vulnerabilities and protect the dignity of people of all ages. With the number of older people in the EU continuously increasing in the coming decades, a need emerges for Europe to respond to the realities and needs of an ageing society as well as the demographic changes that will have various implications for the lives of individuals and societies. Sustainable national and regional strategies that will promote solutions together, across generations are essential.</p>
Transferability	With Red Cross being a global organisation with services and initiatives being easily adapted and replicable in multiple world-wide contexts, transferability is insured. It also ensured transferability.
Additional info	<p>https://redcross.eu/latest-news/volunteering-and-intergenerational-connections-to-promote-active-ageing</p> <p>http://redcross.org.cy/images/media/file/CRCs%20Annual%20Report%20for%202018.pdf</p>

3. FINDINGS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

3.1. Reporting Data from the Interviews with the Young People

CARDET team interviewed 7 young people, 4 females and 3 males, aged 20-30yrs, in Spring 2022.

Young people provided answers to all questions, in both parts, and gave their consent for the data given to be reported for the purposes of BONDING project only.

Based on the data, in part I all young participants declared that they have volunteered before mainly for charity events when at schools, at the University and now at work. They have all volunteered with older people since they provide help and support to their grandparents, when needed.

Interestingly, they have never heard of befriending services before and they could not define these. They stated that they have never participated in befriending services and they were not aware of any befriending services for elderly people in their local communities. They could not report any challenges/obstacles in involving an older person in a befriending service. As for the skills that they think that young people need in order to be able to participate effectively in befriending services for the elderly, the



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participants stated the following skills: good listening skills, be respectful, understanding, patient, tolerant, well-prepared and creative. It was also pointed out that young people should love the elderly. To them, befriending services may become more attractive through the social media (FaceBook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.), network, funding, expertise/ specialists and good/ quality services. But first, they need to be well-defined: *“they need to be known, people need to know about them, what they are, what they do and why they are important and useful?”* (YP7).

The CY-based young people agreed that they enjoy helping elderly people. They stated that becoming a befriender of an older person can be a useful way to learn new things, befriending an older person can help them develop their skills, befriending can help them meet new people and socialize, and befriending can increase empathy and active listening. They stated that they would like to learn more about befriending and that they would like to be part of a befriending service.

In part II, the participants stated that in a training programme for young people interested in engaging in befriending services, the following topics should be included, from their point of view:

- Active Listening
- Respect
- Needs of elderly people
- Postive psychology for elderly people
- Inclusion
- Supporting the Elderly
- Effective communication amongst the ages
- Co-create with different ages
- Needs of humans amongst the ages.
- Existing together, living together

3.2. Reporting Data from the Interviews with the Elderly

CARDET team interviewed 7 elderly people, 4 females and 3 males, aged 70-80yrs, in Spring 2022.

Elderly people provided answers to all questions, in both parts, and gave their consent for the data given to be reported for the purposes of BONDING project only.

Based on the data, in part I all elderly participants declared that they have never had the opportunity to use any services from young people. They declared that they have never heard of befriending services before and they did not know (3 out of 7) or were not sure (2 out of 7) if there are benefits from befriending services. However, two participants guessed that by that, we mean “Helping the elderly and the elderly helping the your (EP5) or “Support and help” (EP7).



As for the challenges/obstacles in involving an older person in a befriending service, most elderly people did not know (3 out of 7) or were not sure (2 out of 7) and only two mentioned “health problems/ issues” (EP5 and EP6).

Interestingly the elderly people were not aware of any befriending services for elderly people in their local community and they did not know if there are enough intergenerational services. They said they have never participated in a befriending services, but they would you be interested in taking part in befriending services. The kind of socializing activities that they would like to do with the youth befriender are the following:

- Shared activities (all)
- Human communication and contact
- Cooking (4 out of 7)
- Watch films (3 out of 7)
- Playing cards or other games together (e.g. chess) (2 out of 7)
- Watch TV
- Watch Netflix together
- Sewing together
- Knowledge share on mobiles and technology
- Teaching how to (mobile, cooking, etc.)
- Chatting
- Listening to music together

They said they prefer face to face communication If, yes, what form of communication would you prefer (e.g., face to face, via telephone, via the Internet)?

When asked how can befriending services become more attractive to elderly people, 5 out of 7 replied that they do not know, whereas 3 out of 7 stressed the following: “*be enjoyable* (EP-4), “*meeting their needs and interests*” (EP-5) and “*needs-based*” (EP-6).

The CY-based young people agreed that they enjoy helping elderly people. They stated that becoming a befriender of an older person can be a useful way to learn new things, befriending an older person can help them develop their skills, befriending can help them meet new people and socialize, and befriending can increase empathy and active listening. They stated that they would like to learn more about befriending and that they would like to be part of a befriending service.



In part II, the elderly participants agreed that:

- Befriending will stimulate companionship and conversation
- Befriending will be a chance for new leisure opportunities
- Befriending can help me meet new people and socialize
- Befriending can increase empathy and active listening
- They would like to learn more about befriending
- They would like to be part of a befriending service

4. CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

All in all befriending is unknown and uncommon to young and elderly people in the Cypriot context. Participants from both groups do not know what it is and how to define it and are not aware of the challenges and relevant services examples. Both groups stated however that they would like to know more about it and they emphasized the significance of togetherness, highlighting the significance of working, being and enjoying together (young and old people).



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Annex A – Research methods

2.1. Desk research/Good practices identification

Scope

Each partner organization should identify at least two good practices in befriending services provided by youth, either in their country or elsewhere in Europe. The good practices can include various types of befriending services, including befriending services that rely on young volunteers whose contribution can be as simple as a weekly telephone call to a beneficiary, or extend to regular home visits for a chat and to help with shopping and so on, driving a beneficiary to a social event, or even hosting coffee mornings for groups of beneficiaries. These can, inter alia, include practices on distance befriending, for which there has been an increased demand since the onset of the COVID-19 crisis. Partner organizations should strive to identify befriending services provided by youth volunteers to elderly persons. If such cannot be identified, partner organizations can also draw on befriending services provided by youth volunteers to other vulnerable groups.

As defined by the United Nations: *“A good practice is not only a practice that is good, but a practice that has been proven to work well and produce good results and is therefore recommended as a model. It is a successful experience, which has been tested and validated, in the broad sense, which has been repeated and deserves to be shared so that a greater number of people can adopt it.”* (Def. of UN on europa.eu)

Methodological approach

Partner organisations should identify the good practices through conducting a desk review. The desk review can encompass documents and reports produced by relevant national and international institutions and CSO's, academic literature and media sources.

In elaborating the good practice, partner organisations should be guided by the Good Practice Identification Form (provided in Annex A), which foresees several key aspects, including the practices':

✓ *Impact*

How many volunteers and beneficiaries have been involved in the befriending service? What has been their level of satisfaction of the befriending services? What has been the outcome of evaluation conducted, if any?

✓ *Innovation*

What are the main characteristics of the practice that are innovative? In which area lies the innovative aspect and why (e.g., social innovation, technological innovation)?

✓ *Sustainability*

Whether the practice enjoys the technical, human and financial conditions to ensure its continuity over time?



✓ *Transferability*

Whether the practice has mechanisms and tools in place to enable other organizations to adapt it?
Has it been replicated with positive results in other organizations?

In order to avoid overlapping (i.e., two or more organisations identifying and elaborating on the same practice), partners are advised to fill in this common [Excel spreadsheet](#) as soon as they identify a practice they would like to elaborate, and make sure that it hasn't been already identified by other partner organization.

2.2. Key informant Interviews

Each partner organization should conduct key informant interviews to explore expectations of befriending services among elderly and youth, as well as youth's training needs in regard to establishing and maintain befriending services for elderly.

Participants, sampling and recruitment

As per the project application, the total number of key informant interviews should be 5-7. Thus, partner organisations should strive to include a balanced number of youth and elderly (e.g., 3-4 youth and 3-4 elderly). Youth invited to participate in the key informant interviews should be aged 18-29 and preferably be involved volunteering activities, while elderly should be aged over 60 and preferably be beneficiaries of volunteering activities.

Partner organisations should utilise purposive non-probability sampling. Namely, they should aim to include participants with different linkages to the area of focus who can bring to the table different perspectives of understanding. Potential interview participants should be recruited through the partner organisations' existing networks. They can be invited in person, via e-mail or a telephone call.

Obtaining informed consent

When inviting potential participants, partners should provide them with the *Information Sheet* (provided in Annex B) and *Consent Form* (provided in Annex C). The Information Sheet entails information on the overall objective of the research, the duration of the interview, their rights related to participation, information on confidentiality, recording, transcription and use of data acquired. The Consent Form includes a number of statements related to the participation in the interview and the use of data, presented in separate sections, enabling the participants to select the ones that they consent to. If needed, partner organisations should adapt the content of the Consent Form to ensure its compliance with the relevant national laws.

The participants should be asked to read both documents, raise any questions they may have, as well as fill in and sign the Consent Form. Besides obtaining written consent, before the beginning of the interviews, the participants should be once again explained the interviewing, their rights and other aspects of the Information sheet and Consent form.



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Setting and duration of the interviews

The interviews should be conducted face-to-face, online or via telephone. The face-to-face interviews should take place in a comfortable room at a convenient location, meeting the needs of the participants. The COVID-19 protection measures in the respective country should be strictly followed. The time date and venue of the interviews should be arranged in agreement with the participants. Each interview should last approximately 30 minutes.

Interview protocols

Partner organisations should utilise the interview protocols developed for the purpose of this research. Namely, interviews with young people should be guided by the Interview protocol for youth (provided in Annex D), while the interviews with elderly should be guided by the Interview protocol for elderly (provided in Annex E).

The interview protocols encompass a sequence of questions providing a logical structure of the interview. The order and formulation of the questions is flexible in order to ensure logical follow-ups to participants' responses. This format should ensure that all the themes of importance for the research will be addressed, while at the same time it was flexible enough to allow the participants to come up with new ideas and speak broadly on the questions raised.

Data recording and transcription

The interviews can be recorded via audio taping or by taking written notes. Obtaining an audio record of the interview is dependent on the participant's consent. Audio-recorded interviews should be transcribed.

Confidentiality and anonymity

For the purpose of ensuring anonymity, neither participants' names, nor identifiable characteristics should be used in the transcripts or the National Report.

The raw data (audio recordings and written notes) and transcripts should be kept separate from identifying information, while all information collected should be securely stored on the password-protected computers, ensuring confidentiality. Audio recordings should be deleted after completing the transcription. All other raw data should be destroyed after the completion of the National Report.



Annex B – Information sheet

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The project “*BONDING – Facilitating intergenerational solidarity and learning through building friendships between youngsters and elderly*” is funded under the Erasmus+ Programme and it is implemented in six countries: Poland, Italy, Spain, Greece, N. Macedonia, and Cyprus. The BONDING project encompasses a strong intergenerational learning and solidarity aspect, it addresses the need for increasing the opportunities for youth active community engagement through volunteering, on the one hand, and the need for strengthened support for elderly in overcoming their experiences of loneliness and isolation, on the other hand.

THE RESEARCH

Currently, the partner organizations are conducting interviews with young people and elderly for the purpose of exploring expectations of befriending services among elderly and youth, as well as youth’s training needs in regard to establishing and maintaining befriending services for elderly. The findings of these interviews will be presented in the e-publication Mapping the Befriending Landscape, alongside good practices in befriending services across Europe.

TIME COMMITMENT

We would like to invite you to take part in an interview. The estimated duration of the interview is approximately 30 minutes. It can be conducted remotely over the Internet, via telephone, or face to face, depending on your preferences. The date and time will be arranged according to yours the interviewer’s availability.

PARTICIPANT’S RIGHTS

Participation in the interview is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw your consent to participate at any stage, including during the interview. You can also skip any questions you do not want to answer.

CONFIDENTIALITY/ANONYMITY

Your answer will be anonymous and confidential. The information you provide will be used solely for the purposes of this research and no one other than the research team will have access to it.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

[Insert the name of the responsible person from your organization] will be glad to answer your questions about this study at any time. You may contact him/her at *[Insert the responsible person’s email and/or phone number]*.



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Annex C - Consent form for the interviews

I, _____ hereby declare that:

I consent to participate in the research, organized by *[Insert the name of your organisation]*, in the ambit of the European project “*BONDING- Facilitating intergenerational solidarity and learning through building friendships between youngsters and elderly*”.

I have been informed about the project and the research and I understand what they are about and what they aim to achieve.

I agree the interview to be recorded and I understand that the recording will be used exclusively by the researcher for the purpose of data analysis and that it will be deleted after the transcription of the interview is completed. I understand that I may choose not to answer one or more of the questions that I will be asked. During the interview, or at its end, I can ask to modify or remove some of my answers.

I understand that my name will not be published or communicated to anyone outside of the research team.

I understand that the information I will provide will only be used for this research.

My participation is voluntary, and I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

I would like to be informed about the next steps of the project.

Place and date: _____

Participant's signature



Annex D - Interview protocol for youth

INTRODUCTION PHASE (5 MINUTES)

- Thank the participant for taking part in the interview
- Introduce yourself and your organisation
- Brief introduction to the BONDING project
- Brief description of the purpose of the interview and how the findings will be analysed and reported
- Explanation of how issues of confidentiality will be dealt with (e.g., anonymity, confidentiality); request permission to record the interview (if answer is negative then for note taking); signing of the Consent form for the interviews and explanation of its purpose (*Annex C*).
- Setting the ground rules (e.g., duration; there are no right or wrong answers etc.)
- Address any questions the participant might have

MAIN PHASE (20 MINUTES)

- Keep eye contact and maintain neutrality by not verbally or not-verbally approving or disapproving opinions
- Present each of the interview questions one by one and by the order provided below.
- Use probe questions to elicit more information from the participant when necessary. For example: “Could you elaborate?”; “Could you clarify and explain in detail?”; “Can you give us an example?”.

PART I: BASIC INFORMATION

1. Participant's age

2. Participant's gender

- Female
- Male
- Other
- Prefers not to state

3. Highest education level

- Less than primary
- Primary education
- Secondary education
- Tertiary education
- Bachelor's or equivalent
- Master's or equivalent
- PhD



3. Employment status

- Employed
- Unemployed
- A student
- Other_____ (please specify)

PART II: KEY QUESTIONS

1. Have you volunteered before? If yes, could you please share a bit about that experience?

Answer:

2. Have you ever worked/volunteered with older people? If yes, could you please share a bit about that experience?

Answer:

3. Have you heard of befriending services before? What is your understanding of befriending services?

Answer:

4. Have you ever participated in befriending services?

Answer:

5. Are you aware of any befriending services for elderly people in your local community?

Answer:

6. What do you think motivates young people to participate in befriending services for elderly people?

Answer:

7. What do you think are the benefits that young people might have from participating in befriending services for elderly people?

Answer:

8. What do you think will be challenges/obstacles in involving an older person in a befriending service?

Answer:

9. What kind of skills do you think that young people need to be able to participate effectively in befriending services for elderly?

Answer:

10. How can befriending services become more attractive?

Answer:



11. Please evaluate each of the following statements on a 1 to 7 scale (where 1 is Strongly disagree and 7 is Strongly Agree):

STATEMENT	GRADE
I enjoy helping elderly people	
Becoming a befriender of an older person can be a useful way to learn new things	
Befriending an older person can help me develop my skills	
Befriending can help me meet new people and socialize	
Befriending can increase empathy and active listening	
I would like to learn more about befriending	
I would like to be part of a befriending service	

PART III: ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

12. In your opinion, which topics should be included in a training programme for young people interested in engaging in befriending services?

Answer:

13. Do you have any additional comments you would like to share?

Answer:

CONCLUDING PHASE (5 MINUTES)

- Thank the participant for taking part in the interview
- Ask the participant if they have any questions regarding the interview and the use of the data.



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Annex E - Interview protocol for elderly

INTRODUCTION PHASE (5 MINUTES)

- Thank the participant for taking part in the interview
- Introduce yourself and your organisation
- Brief introduction to the BONDING project
- Brief description of the purpose of the interview and how the findings will be analysed and reported
- Explanation of how issues of confidentiality will be dealt with (e.g., anonymity, confidentiality); request permission to record the interview (if answer is negative then for note taking); signing of the Consent form for the interviews and explanation of its purpose (*Annex C*).
- Setting the ground rules (e.g., duration; there are no right or wrong answers etc.)
- Address any questions the participant might have

MAIN PHASE (20 MINUTES)

- Keep eye contact and maintain neutrality by not verbally or not-verbally approving or disapproving opinions
- Present each of the interview questions one by one and by the order provided below.
- Use probe questions to elicit more information from the participant when necessary. For example: “Could you elaborate?”; “Could you clarify and explain in detail?”; “Can you give us an example?”.

PART I: BASIC INFORMATION

1. Participant's age

2. Participant's gender

- Female
- Male
- Other
- Prefers not to state

3. Highest education level

- Less than primary
- Primary education
- Secondary education
- Tertiary education
- Bachelor's or equivalent
- Master's or equivalent
- PhD



3. Employment status

- Employed
- Unemployed
- Retired
- Other _____ (please specify)

PART II: KEY QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever had the opportunity to use any services/support from young people? If yes, could you please share a bit about that experience?

Answer:

2. Have you heard of befriending services before? What is your understanding of befriending services?

Answer:

3. Do you think there are benefits from befriending services? If yes, could you please clarify which?

Answer:

4. What do you think will be challenges/obstacles in involving an older person in a befriending service?

Answer:

5. Are you aware of any befriending services for elderly people in your local community?

Answer:

6. Do you think that there are enough intergenerational services?

Answer:

7. Have you ever participated in befriending service?

Answer:

8. Would you be interested in taking part in befriending services?

Answer:

9. If, yes, what kind of socializing activities would you like to do with the youth befriender?

Answer:

10. If, yes, what form of communication would you prefer (e.g., face to face, via telephone, via the Internet)?

Answer:

11. How can befriending services become more attractive to elderly people?

Answer:



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12. Please evaluate each of the following statements on a 1 to 7 scale (where 1 is Strongly disagree and 7 is Strongly Agree):

STATEMENT	GRADE
Befriending will stimulate companionship and conversation	
Befriending will be a chance for new leisure opportunities	
Befriending can help me meet new people and socialize	
Befriending can increase empathy and active listening	
I would like to learn more about befriending	
I would like to be part of a befriending service	

PART III: ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

13. Do you have any additional comments you would like to share?

Answer:

CONCLUDING PHASE (5 MINUTES)

- Thank the participant for taking part in the interview
- Ask the participant if they have any questions regarding the interview and the use of the data.



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Annex F – Data from CY

(see additional word file)



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