

BYE-BYE OLD AGE: 9 SENIORS OUT OF 10 ARE HEALTHY AND AROUND 1 OUT OF 2 IS INDEPENDENT UNTIL OVER 80

AN INTERNATIONAL SURVEY – SPONSORED BY AMPLIFON AND CONDUCTED BY IPSOS – OF 6 THOUSAND OVER 55 IN ITALY, THE UNITED STATES, FRANCE, GERMANY AND AUSTRALIA – SHEDS LIGHT ON A NEW GENERATION: THE “55 SPECIAL”.

HEALTHY (9 OUT OF 10), PHYSICALLY ACTIVE (AROUND 1 OUT OF 2 EXERCISE), CONNECTED TO THEIR FRIENDS (4 OUT OF 10 MEET WEEKLY) AND INDEPENDENT UNTIL OVER 80 (8 OUT OF 10 IN THE 75-84 AGE BRACKET): TODAY’S SENIORS ELIMINATE THE STEREOTYPES ABOUT THE “THIRD AGE”.

Milan, 28 November - Independent, socially engaged, connected to their friends and inseparable from their smartphones. This is not a portrait of the Millennials, but of a new **generation**, the “55 special” - which has a lifestyle that is marking the **end of the third age**. This is what an international study “**Generation 55 special**”, sponsored by Amplifon and conducted by Ipsos, who examined the profile, values, habits and behavior of 6 thousand over 55 in **Italy, the United States, Australia, Germany and France**, seems to say. **More than 4 out every 10 Italian seniors** meet with their friends at least once a week and **around 1 out of 2 is independent until over 80**, with 8 out of 10 people between the ages of 75 and 84 managing their homes and finances on their own. Almost half the over 55 **exercises** (48%) and an impressive 9 out of 10 consider themselves **healthy**. They also cannot do without their **smartphones** - the preferred device of more than 7 out of 10 individuals - and are hyper-connected: almost 8 out of 10 go **online** several times a day. A generation that is destined to become increasingly important: in 2018 - for the first time since the unification of Italy - the over 60 exceeded the under 30 and, based on ISTAT statistics, by 2050 the over 65 will comprise more than one third of the population¹.

Young inside. The “55 special” generation is positive, independent and connected to family. **More than 8 out of 10 Italian seniors are satisfied with their lives**, although they admit that overall conditions are worse than in the past (almost 5 out of 10). Aging does not compromise independence: **almost half the Italians between the ages of 75 and 84 are, in fact, independent** (48%) and do not need assistance managing their homes (80%), their finances (80%) or their health (76%). Family has a key role, **almost 7 out of 10 people are married and 9 out of 10 have children**. The Italians also get a prize for being “**certified grandparents**”: **more than 6 out of 10 take care of their grandchildren regularly** (only 3 out of 10 in other countries) and being a grandparent is a fulltime job for 57% (vs an average of 48%).

“Compared to the over 55 in other countries - Roberto Bernabei, Head of the Department of Sciences for Aging, Neurology, Orthopedics and Head-Neck Studies at the A. Gemelli Policlinico Foundation and Chairman of Italia Longeva stated- Italians dedicate more time to family and to social relationships, in general, which can be explained by the fact that family has always been the number one priority in Italy. Seniors also have a key role in society. In addition to taking care of their children and grandchildren, the over 55 also take care of the elderly who need home care and, based on recent studies, stand out for the number of hours dedicated to their care. This new generation of seniors seems to take care of others consistently and across the board, providing support during all phases of life”.

¹ ISTAT. Demographic indicators – 2017 estimates. Available on <https://www.istat.it/it/files/2018/02/Indicatoridemografici2017.pdf>

A new third act. The new generation has an active social life, spending time with family and friends and going to the movies or theater in the evening. Almost **8 seniors out of 10** regularly see family members (only 6 out of 10 in the United States) and **more than 4 out of 10** see their friends at least once a week (vs. less than 3 out of 10 in France). The Italian over 55 love to dedicate time to **music (76%)**, going to the **park (76%)** or doing **crossword puzzles (57%)** and, compared to their foreign peers, are more culturally inclined. **28%** goes to the **movies** at least once a month (16% in other countries), 23% visit **museums** and go on **organized outings** (vs. 11%). Italians also love **concerts** and going to the **theater**: 13% and 11%, respectively, versus an average of 6%.

*“Contrary to what we think, after a certain age relationships continue or new ones are created. You will often see new couples form after 65 as individuals have time to see one another and want to fall in love. Statistics also show that the number of weddings of the over 75 has increased. It doesn’t seem to me -the writer **Lidia Ravera** commented - that the seniors suffer from loneliness. They are part of a generation that grew up as part of a group, that were involved in politics together and often lived together”.*

The “55 specials” are still **creative and interested in experimenting**: **70%** of the Italians stated, in fact, that they are always looking for **new ideas** (vs. an average of 66%) and **73% is enthusiastic** about what they do (vs. 70%). *“Today’s seniors are people that society cannot ignore: many of them have fought against stereotypes since they were young and they have no intention of stopping particularly now during what is the most difficult phase of life. They want to write their own script to follow during this “third act” and not react passively to the dictates of common sense”, **Ravera** stated.*

Health as a sign of age. The health of the new generation is ironclad: **more than 9 out of 10** view themselves as in **good health** and have **regular check-ups**. Almost half (**48%**) **exercises**: higher than in the United States (41%) and Australia (45%), but lower than in Germany (60%) and France (58%). With respect to food, Italians have no rivals: in Italy **12% is careful about what they eat**, compared to only 5% in France and Germany. People are **afraid of getting sick**: sickness is the main source of concern for the future (63% are worried), followed by loss of memory (52%) and physical decline (40%). **Hypertension (39%)**, **high cholesterol (32%)** and **hearing problems (17%)** are the most common disorders for the over 55 in Italy.

*“The results of the IPSOS survey show that in Italy about 2 out of every 10 individuals has a hearing problem. This is a statistic that should not be overlooked, as untreated hearing problems can impact quality of life. As a result of hearing loss people often isolate themselves or avoid social interaction. Getting regular checkups and acting quickly - **Carlo Antonio Leone, Head of ENT and Cervofacial Surgery at Azienda dei Colli - Monaldi Hospital in Naples** stated- is, therefore, key to remaining active. Surprisingly, however, based on the survey only 25% of the people suffering from hearing problems in Italy use a hearing aid compared to 70% in Germany. Technology can provide a solution to this under utilization: more than 8 out of every 10 Italians stated, in fact, to be very interested in using hearing aids that are highly technological, that can be regulated directly by their smartphone and adapted for use in different sound environments ”.*

Take everything from me, but not the wifi connection. The over 55 are not frightened by technology. It has, rather, won them over. In addition to being inseparable from their smartphones - the preferred device of more than 7 out of 10 seniors - the Italians are also hyper-connected. Together with their American peers, Italians are the ones who **go online more often during the day (75%)**. This new generation is also passionate about social networks: more than **7 out of 10 have an account** (only 5 out of 10 in Germany). **Facebook** is the most widely used platform (at 67%, the Italians are exceeded only by the Americans in their use of Facebook), followed by **Twitter** and **Instagram** (22% and 18%, the Italian percentages are the highest of all).

*“The results of the survey shed light on a new generation of seniors: active, independent, technological, who are a vital part of society and their families. It is clear, therefore, that the over 55 of today are not the ones we were used to. In this new scenario, understanding the different facets of the “55 special” world and keeping up with their lifestyles is key in order to ensure that those with hearing disorders also remain active. Toward this end, we are working on several fronts. For example -**Federico Bardelli, General Manager Amplifon Italia** stated - we have developed a new digital ecosystem in order to provide increasingly more personalized services. Our devices also make the most of last generation technologies, can be connected via smartphone and TV, and are individually operated which makes it possible for people to remain active in any situation”.*

About Amplifon

Amplifon, global leader in the hearing care retail market, empowers people to rediscover all the emotions of sound. Amplifon’s 14,000 people worldwide strive every day to understand the unique needs of every customer, delivering exclusive, innovative and highly personalized products and services, to ensure everyone the very best solution and an outstanding experience. The Group operates through a network of over 10,000 points of sale in 22 Countries and 5 continents. More information about the Group is available at: www.amplifon.com/corporate .

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