

# → *the elderly*

There are 8.5 million people in Spain over the age of 65, constituting 18% of the population. As opposed to common misconception, senior citizens are an asset to our society. In accordance with how well we further the improvement of their life quality, their development and social integration, and their important role is recognised, we will thereby progress into a more just and prepared society.

Through the Social Services department and in close collaboration with public administration, Clece currently tends to 90,000 elderly people. In total 22,197 employees care for the well-being and life-quality of our senior citizens in the 131 homes and 60 day-centres, as well as the different home-assistance services throughout the nation.

Beyond the provision of the social service set out in the contract with the corresponding administration, Clece's professionals perform in a voluntary manner, innovative treatments for well-being and with the aim of improving the quality of life of the elderly people, nurturing their development and social integration: gardening activities, conviviality theme days, occupational workshops, familiarisation with surroundings and game or cultural competitions and activities.

In its awareness-raising role, Clece promotes initiatives such as theme-days, intergenerational gatherings, activities with relatives and care-takers to include issues of special interest to the elderly such as in recognition of their important role in our society, or charitable activities in which they are directly involved.

## SITUATION OF SENIOR POPULATION IN SPAIN

There are

**8,572,779**

people over 65

A total

**18.4%**

of the entire Spanish population is over 65

Over

**270,000**

people live in retirement homes,

**68.6%**

of these are women



### *Joy despite difficulty*

Vicente is the living example of the fact that, despite disability, one can be happy and make others happy too. After several operations he ended up wheel-chair bound, a fact that hasn't stopped him from enjoying an active life-style. A user of the home-assistance service in Jaén, managed by Clece, Vicente lives alone and has been through very hard times. "For me home assistance is everything, it is the greatest miracle to happen in my life", he emotionally assures. Yet in spite of his difficulties, Vicente is full of optimism and does not hesitate to take part in leisure activities and what's more, he makes an effort to help others.

It was in this way that he had the idea to get together with other people benefiting from the home-assistance service in his town of Jaén, and create what they themselves call, playfully, "The maimed club". All of them have some form of disability and nevertheless wish to continue enjoying what life has to offer them. They meet every morning in their village park and get away from what can be a tough routine for them. "We are always having a laugh, when we get together we leave all our grievances behind under the bed", explains Vicente with a smile. For all of them, their membership in the group has given them back the desire to fight, giving them joy in their daily life.





### *Loyal companionship*

With this name (Fieles Compañías), an initiative was set in motion in Zaragoza for the advancement of adoption for pets by the elderly and people with a disability. A program from the Zaragoza city council, in collaboration with Clece, the Oficina Municipal de Protección Animal and the association “Zarapeludos Protección Animal”, which facilitates the adoption of abandoned cats and dogs by people benefiting from social services and with a suitable profile for the care and attention of pets.

It is proven that living with pets revitalises physical, psychological and social health. Clece therefore proposed the responsible adoption of cats and dogs for the more elderly users of the Home Assistance Service managed in Zaragoza. A project that has expanded to the Clece retirement homes in Villanueva de Gállego and Tardienta, in which animals may live with their owners all year round.





### *Life-filled kitchen gardens*

The elderly in the day centre Centro de Día de La Paz in Baracaldo (Vizcaya) were able to rediscover enjoyment for rural life in the big city thanks to the horticulture and gardening activities, carried out by the centre in its goal of promoting a more active way of aging.

This activity, which is already part of their daily routine, has provided them with numerous therapeutic benefits arising from the emotional bond they establish with the plants.

Thanks to their work in the small organic kitchen garden, the seniors feel useful and have the chance to enjoy physical exercise, improve their self-esteem and lift their spirits in general.

This so-called “hortoterapia” has further contributed to a series of cognitive developments in attention, concentration and memory in the elderly.