

# **Educating and learning across the lifespan – adult educators and older learners perspectives. Theory, research, practice, and policy.**

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## **Title: Dementia patient, migrant or just older people**

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The older people, suffering from memory disorders and at the same time belonging to some minority group, is invisible in Finnish society. Because of the ways how we as professionals work, they are at risk of being marginalized multiple times.

People with dementia belonging to minorities are a growing population group, and memory services related to dementia should better respond to the diversity of the population.

In my presentation, I will continue reflecting on Eva Rönkkö on the importance of choosing perspectives. I will consider why memory services for the Finnish population aren't suitable for minority groups. How to improve the quality of memory services so that services related to memory disorders will meet the diversity, starting points, and needs of the aging population belonging to minority language and cultural groups?

What are the assumptions and opinions of different parties about how aging customers belonging to linguistic and cultural minorities will manage in the current service system?

Often, the language skills, health literacy, and knowledge of dementia and memory disorders of a client belonging to a linguistic and cultural minority are not sufficient.

In our experience, dementia care providers lack competence and understanding of minority older people. In my presentation, I open up situations where the usual cognitive assessment, memory tests for diagnosing dementia, or memory-advised methods have not worked.

More background information about the person's daily life, education, skills, and social activity is needed to meet older people from different language and cultural groups suffering from memory disorders. To meet minorities with dementia respectfully is necessary to identify prejudices of our own and recognition.

In sensitive memory work, more research-based information, discussions to create a common vision between organizations and the public sector and a shared understanding of the concepts used by professionals doing fieldwork are needed to develop a work approach that will take diversity into account and respects older people.