

UNIE KBO

**THE ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC ORGANIZATIONS
OF SENIOR CITIZENS IN THE NETHERLANDS**

UNIE KBO 



UNIE KBO ADVOCATES THAT: SENIOR CITIZENS CAN PARTICIPATE FULLY ON EQUAL TERMS WITH OTHER PEOPLE IN SOCIETY

Seniors comprise a growing, highly varied group of people in Dutch society. The seniors of today are generally more **vital, have **greater financial power** and remain **independent** longer than in the past. However, there are still many senior citizens who have to make ends meet with a subsistence-level **income**. Many senior citizens have become more **self-confident** and **vocal**. Nonetheless, society's views on senior citizens are still stereotypical. Senior citizens count their blessings, but they also note that welfare does not necessarily mean well-being. They are concerned about issues such as loneliness.**

In the social and political discussion about the increasing ageing of society, the emphasis is on aging as a financial problem. Insufficient attention is devoted to the important contributions senior citizens have to offer society. Increasingly, the Dutch government is formulating its policy around wealthier, vocal citizens. As a result, vulnerable senior citizens are in jeopardy of getting squeezed, time and time again. The business community has already found its way to the new consumer group of vital senior citizens. But manufacturers and suppliers still give insufficient consideration to the desires and requirements related to an ageing society.



Unie KBO, a large senior citizen organization in the Netherlands, advocates a society in which all seniors feel at home. Since 1952 Unie KBO promotes the interests of senior citizens and develops a range of activities and services for them, considering the needs and desires of various groups of seniors.

Elderly volunteers are the
lifeblood of the organization

OBJECTIVE

UNIE KBO ADVOCATES THAT:

- SENIOR CITIZENS CAN **PARTICIPATE** FULLY ON EQUAL TERMS WITH OTHER PEOPLE IN SOCIETY;
- SENIOR CITIZENS CAN TAKE RESPONSIBILITY AND MAKE THEIR OWN **VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION** TO EACH OTHER AND SOCIETY, IN AN EFFORT TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABILITY AND **SOCIAL INCLUSION**;
- SENIOR CITIZENS CAN **DECIDE FOR THEMSELVES** HOW THEY WILL LIVE THEIR OWN LIVES;
- SENIOR CITIZENS CAN GROW OLD WITH **DIGNITY IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES**.

THE ORGANIZATION

Unie KBO is an organization of people aged 50 and older. The organization has about **200.000 members**. These members are affiliated with one of the **517 local branches**. The local branches of each province together comprise the provincial KBO. The provincial KBOs combined, form the Unie KBO.

For **sixty years now**, Unie KBO has devoted itself to such issues as good income/pension, suitable and safe housing, good social welfare and health care, mobility, education, new technologies, leisure and recreation.

The office of Unie KBO has about **thirty employees**. On a daily basis, they work on national advocacy, supporting the KBOs and providing information.

In the Netherlands, Unie KBO collaborates with many other organizations and companies that deal with issues concerning seniors.



SOME 15.000 VOLUNTEERS:

- **PROMOTE THE INTERESTS** OF THEIR FELLOW SENIOR CITIZENS TO NATIONAL, PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS;
- **PROVIDE INFORMATION** MEETINGS FOR SENIOR CITIZENS AND ADVISE INDIVIDUAL SENIOR CITIZENS;
- ORGANISE **RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES**;
- **VISIT HOME-BOUND SENIOR** CITIZENS IN THEIR AREA;
- SUPERVISE **COURSES TO SENIOR CITIZENS**, SUCH AS COMPUTER AND ART COURSES;
- ARE THE ORGANIZATION – **ELDERLY VOLUNTEERS ARE THE LIFEBLOOD OF THE ORGANIZATION**.



ACTIVITIES

The emphasis is on three aspects: national advocacy, providing services to the associations and service to individual members.

ADVOCACY

Unie KBO advocates the collective interests of senior citizens in the Netherlands in the areas of a good income/pension, suitable and safe housing, good social welfare and health care, mobility and education.

SERVICE

Unie KBO provides training to provincial administrators, advisors and volunteers. Furthermore, Unie KBO develops brochures on existential questions that senior citizens have, which are discussed in groups in the local branches. Nine times a year the newsletter *Wegwijzer* is published, containing current information for staff members and other volunteers.

MEMBER SERVICE

Members receive the *Nestor*, a monthly magazine. Furthermore, senior volunteers provide information and give assistance in the local branches with financial and legal matters. Unie KBO takes part in a national tax service; elderly volunteers assist seniors filling in their tax form (120.000 forms in 2012). Members can also call a service number for information and advice. Unie KBO provides an insurance package for members.

Needs and desires of seniors and their caregivers are the starting point

INTERNATIONAL

Unie KBO is a member of AGE Platform Europe, an European network of around 165 organizations of and for people aged 50+. It represents over 30 million elderly European people directly. Its work focuses on a wide range of policy areas that have impact on elderly and retired people.

These include issues of anti-discrimination, employment of elderly workers and active ageing, social protection, pension reforms, social inclusion, health, elder abuse, intergenerational solidarity, accessibility of public space and new technologies (ICT). The Platform participates in several EU projects.

Furthermore Unie KBO is involved in the European **AAL (Ambient Assisted Living)** programme. Objective of this programme is to use **ICT solutions** to improve the quality of life of seniors and enable them to live independently as long as possible, even if they experience physical or mental limitations. The needs and desires of seniors and their caregivers are the starting point of this programme. Therefore their involvement is considered to be very important. Unie KBO participates as user organization in several AAL projects (**Happy Ageing, E-mosion, Chef Myself**).

Unie KBO is also active beyond the borders of Europe. Unie KBO has contacts with **COSE** (Coalition of Services of the Elderly) in the Philippines with the aim of learning from each other. In the past, members of the KBOs have demonstrated their solidarity with senior citizens in other places of the world through their Solidarity Fund. From 2013 this fund supports local projects by and for senior citizens in The Philippines and informs KBO-members about the situation of senior citizens in this country.



UNIE KBO

JULIANAPLEIN 2
NL - 5211 BC 'S-HERTOGENBOSCH
THE NETHERLANDS

P.O. BOX 325
NL - 5201 AH 'S-HERTOGENBOSCH
THE NETHERLANDS

PHONE: +31 73 612 34 75
EMAIL: UNIEKBO@UNIEKBO.NL
WEBSITE: WWW.KBO.NL

 [FACEBOOK.COM/UNIE.KBO](https://www.facebook.com/unie.kbo)
 [@UNIE_KBO](https://twitter.com/UNIE_KBO)

2013

