



Joe Biden: define people by stage, not age

Description



US President Joe Biden is leading the way for so-called ‘super-agers’. He’s shown it’s time to define people by their stage – not their age.

On his recent historic visit to the island of Ireland – north and south – he pushed through a packed programme of non-stop meetings and greetings. He worked the crowd, engaged with political leaders, took selfies for the fans and chatted with people from castle to cathedral.

At 80 years, he’s still at a key stage of life

President Biden spoke with leaders in Belfast and Dublin, and connected with family, friends and well-

wishers in Carlingford, County Louth, and Ballina, County Mayo. He gazed out on the waters that flow through the port of Newry, from where his ancestors sailed for America.

All of that was in the face of strong winds and constant rain that led to last-minute changes to his schedule.

At 80 years old, he's still at a key stage of life, and reflects the focus of Susan Wilner Golden's book *Stage (Not Age)* – which offers a new understanding of what an 'old person' is. The author says organisations should target life stage – not age.

Fortune magazine pointed out the President has 40 years of experience in international politics, knows almost every world leader, has negotiated more multilateral agreements than anyone in government today, and still retains his health after two bouts with Covid.

Joe Biden beat ageism at the polls

'Joe Biden beat ageism at the polls,' said the *Fortune* article, 'it's time to banish it from the workplace.'

Stuart Jay Olshansky, an expert on aging at the University of Illinois, was interviewed last year for a Reuters article headlined *As Biden turns 80, Americans ask 'What's too old?'* He said Biden may be a member of a subset of older folk who are called 'super-agers', with the mental faculties of people decades younger.

Reuters pointed out that Biden doesn't even register in the 'top ten' of the world's oldest serving leaders. That elite is led by the 89-year-old president of Cameroon, Paul Biya, and includes 82-year-old Queen Margrethe of Denmark.

Deborah Kado, co-director of the longevity centre at Stanford University, told Reuters, 'There's a reason why other societies look to their elders for wisdom and guidance. It's because they have that experience, which should not be discounted'. *(Photo shows President Joe Biden with Tánaiste Micheál Martin at King John's Castle in Carlingford. Pic: Columba O'Hare/ Newry.ie)*

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