

## Compendium of Good Practices of Advocacy in Age-Friendly Environments



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# 1. Introduction to Age-Friendly Environments

## Background

By 2060, almost one third of the European population will be 65 years or above. The demographic old-age dependency ratio (people aged 65 or above relative to those aged 15-64) is projected to increase significantly across the EU as a whole in the coming decades. The EU would move from four working-age people for every person aged over 65 years in 2010, to around two working-age people in 2070. Ageing is thus not only an individual but also a societal challenge, for which age-friendly environments – as concept of participation, active and healthy ageing – offer crucial solutions.

## What are Age-Friendly Environments?

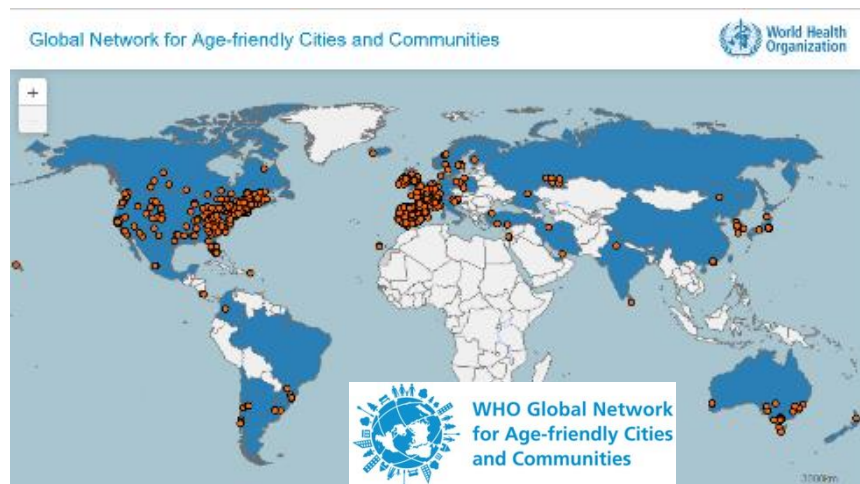
The environments in our cities and communities are critical for supporting and maintaining health and well-being in older age. The World Health Organization (WHO) promotes the creation of age-friendly environments with a focus on cities and communities. The concept of age-friendly cities and communities was launched in 2007 by the WHO:

“Age-friendly environments foster health and well-being and the participation of people as they age. They are accessible, equitable, inclusive, safe and secure, and supportive. They promote health and prevent or delay the onset of disease and functional decline. They provide people-centered services and support to enable recovery or to compensate for the loss of function so that people can continue to do the things that are important to them.”<sup>1</sup>

## The Current State of Public Discussion on Age-Friendly Environments

With this integrative and holistic concept, several aspects of the physical and social environments of citizens are being assessed and improved in order that those environments facilitate and support active and healthy ageing for all. The concept takes into account all ages and has a life-long approach: from birth until old age. The concept aims to achieve a higher level of participation in society, to build up self-esteem and to improve the functional and intrinsic capacities of people.

However, on a day-to-day implementation and delivery level, it can be very challenging to develop age-friendly environments in a collaborative manner in close cooperation with citizens, civil servants, social and health care providers, public health providers, architects, urban designers and planners,



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.who.int/ageing/projects/age-friendly-environments/en/> (verified on 2019.01.24)

engineers and IT companies. It is difficult to organise a joint sense of urgency and time and financial investments in age-friendly environments within civil services and related stakeholder groups. One of the reasons for this is that most investment outcomes become visible in the longer term, and short term successes are scarce. Besides this, successes are hard to measure.

Nevertheless, there are some international networking initiatives. Since the launch of the age-friendly environments concept, over 800 cities and communities in 39 countries, covering over 210 million people worldwide, have signed up with WHO's Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities to improve their physical and social environments to become better places in which to grow old.

The WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities supports cities and communities in achieving this aim by showing what can be done and how, connecting cities and communities worldwide to facilitate the exchange of information, knowledge, and experience; and supporting cities and communities in finding appropriate innovative and evidence-based solutions.



#### Action Group D4 Innovation for age friendly buildings, cities and environments

launched in 2015. At the same time, the WHO Regional Office for Europe developed a tool for policy makers and urban planners to realise age-friendly environments.

During 2018, two of the EIP AHA action groups collaborated in the creation of the Thematic Network on Smart Healthy Age-Friendly Environments (SHAFE). At the end of 2018, SHAFE achieved more than 140 formal subscriptions partner organisations from across Europe, representing large numbers of people and presented the European Commission during its Annual EU Health Policy Platform Event the resulting Joint Statement on Smart Healthy Age-Friendly Environments.

Since 2012, the initiative to bring together public authorities, advocacy organisations, businesses and research in the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP AHA) has been in place. The partnership aims to improve the quality of life of European citizens, the sustainability of national healthcare systems and to give a boost to European industries and SMEs. EIP AHA currently consists of six action groups: one of them is dedicated to age-friendly buildings, cities and environments. From this action group comes the Covenant on Demographic Change: Towards an Age-friendly Europe, which was



## 2. Cases of Good Practice for AFE Advocacy

### 2.1 Case Collection Strategy

Aiming to give those interested an idea of what age-friendly environments are and which kinds of initiatives can be launched, examples of good practices have been compiled by the organisations involved in the AFE Activists project.

To structure the search for good examples, a case collection strategy was developed. It first defines the terminology of good practice and age-friendly environments. In addition, it was determined that the examples could be located both in the countries of the organisations involved in the project and in other EU countries, covering all AFE domains.

#### AFE domains

- Outdoor spaces and buildings
- Transport and mobility
- Housing
- Social participation
- Social inclusion and non-discrimination
- Civic engagement and employment
- Communication and information
- Community and health services

#### Criteria for good AFE practice examples

Older adults or older people are advocating / lobbying in bottom-up initiatives for age-friendly environments.

• Practical examples can relate to both the physical environment and social aspects of the environment, such as relationships, participation and inclusion.<sup>2</sup>

• The initiative should not have begun more than 10 years ago.

• The examples found are considered models in terms of their results, their benefits and their sustainability, and worthy of imitation. This assessment is based on the expertise of the project partners.

It was also determined that research should be done using online resources, networks and databases.

Finally, a template was developed to provide a structure for the description of the selected practical examples. The descriptions of good practice examples can be found on the next pages.

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<sup>2</sup> Buffel, Tine / Phillipson, Chris / Scharf, Thomas (2012): Ageing in urban environments: Developing 'age-friendly' cities, in: Critical Social Policy 32(4), p. 597-617.



## 2.2 Good AFE Practice Examples Focusing on Bottom-Up Initiatives

### OMAS GEGEN RECHTS (“Grannies Against the Right”)

**Domains:** Social inclusion and non-discrimination / Social participation / Communication and information

**Vienna, Austria**

#### Objectives

Grannies Against the Right is a civic initiative based in Vienna that wants to interfere in Austrian political discourse. Older women, the “grannies”, raise their voices to current societal questions and the political agenda addressing them. Their objectives are the maintenance of parliamentary democracy and social standards and a respectful living together, regardless of ethnic affiliation, religion, age, etc. They want to raise awareness that “the older woman” is a political force, and therefore represent themselves in public as a self-confident group of older women. With this initiative, they want to encourage and connect older women to engage politically, or in their words: to be old doesn’t mean being voiceless!

#### Key Facts

The founders of the initiative are Monika Salzer and her daughter. They started as a Facebook group in November 2017, and now they are organised as an association. The initiative grew quite quickly. The founding group is based in Vienna but several regional groups with regional coordinators have already emerged in other Austrian federal states. One group was even established in Germany. The initiative was formed in the context of the current conservative and right-wing societal and political tendencies in many European countries.



## Implementation (referring to main group in Vienna)

The local group in Vienna is organised into various working groups (granny-hat knitting group, button group, etc.). Their general programme and activities are:

### Public Appearance and Activism:

- They regularly participate as “Grannies Against the Right” in demonstrations. In order to achieve recognition value, they wear home-made “Granny-hats” and buttons as their trademarks, and perform the “Granny Song”. They are present on social media, and have their own website.
- They also perform as a “granny choir”, do actionist interventions and take part at various events to promote their concerns.

**Jour Fixe and Granny’s Five o’clock:** regular meetings to plan, organise, exchange ideas



### Results

“Grannies Against the Right” connects older women and supports them in articulating themselves in public. The initiative promotes a self-confident “granny” and encourages and empowers older women to take part in the political discourse. The movement has attracted a lot of attention, also in the national and international media (TV, press).

### More information

<https://www.omasgegenrechts.com/>  
Video ARTE Doku 2018

# Mobility Scouts Project **Danube Island – Towards a Barrier-Free Recreation Area**

**Domains: Outdoor spaces and buildings / Communication and information / Civic engagement and employment**

## Vienna, Austria



### Objectives

Danube Island is an important inner-city recreation area for running, walking and swimming in Vienna. A group of Mobility Scouts decided to identify barriers for older people or people with disabilities in terms of access and usability of the area, and to communicate these problems, as well as ideas for solutions, to the city administration.

### Key facts

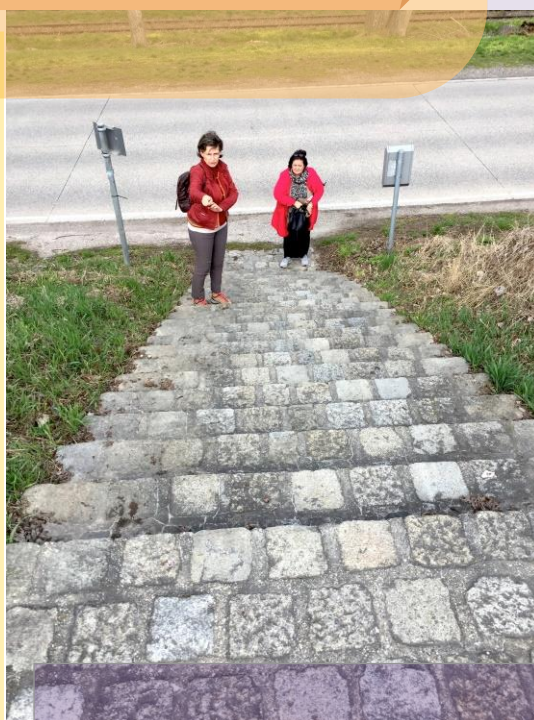
The initiative was developed in the framework of the Erasmus+ project Mobility Scouts (2016-2018). Based on a participants own personal experience of barriers, a group of five Mobility Scouts decided to focus on this issue. Besides support from queraum, the national partner organisation of the Erasmus+ project, the group has also been supported by the Vienna Mobility Agency.

### Implementation

The group chose one part of the island for their mapping of barriers. Based on the main problems they identified, they wanted to collect the opinions of the actual users, mainly old people. Therefore, they developed a short questionnaire and conducted interviews. The main barrier for older people concerned access to the water, because of the lack of railings on the steps. With their documentation of barriers and ideas for solutions, they contacted the city administration and started a discussion.

### Results

The group was invited to a meeting with the responsible authority in which they could hand over their documentation of barriers, discuss the issues and become informed about the city administration's concerns regarding their solutions. They were successful in putting the issue on the agenda of the city administration. Finally, after months of persistence, the city agreed to construct a railing along the steep stairway to support older people accessing the recreation area.



© Mobility Scouts

### More information

<http://www.mobility-scouts.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Handbook.pdf>



# Refurbishment of an Activity Centre

**Domains: Outdoor spaces and buildings / Social participation / Social inclusion and non-discrimination / Civic engagement and employment**

## Objectives

The starting point of the planning process was the perception that many seniors lack company and social interaction. From the beginning, the idea was to offer opportunities for meetings around culinary services for senior citizens.



**Tinglev,  
Denmark**

## Key Facts

The Tinglev-Uge Pensionsforening pensioners association in Southern Jutland initiated and lead the project, located in Tinglev, a town (with 2800 inhabitants) in the Aabenraa district of southern Denmark.

In this project, 9 members of the pensioners' association took over responsibility for its implementation. Independently and with the support of a large number of volunteers, they renovated the facility, including the kitchen. The premises have been left to the municipality and the senior citizens in Tinglev and the renovation was co-funded by The Velux Foundations with a grant of DKK 90,000 (approx. €

## Results

The reopened centre is especially designed to offer opportunities for seniors to meet and is – besides a pizzeria – the only place for people to meet for coffee in the town. As a result of the refurbishment, the centre has a modern kitchen and a new patio. Its architecture ensures inclusive access, such as a disabled-access toilet and a wheelchair ramp.

In order to foster social interaction it also offers programmes and activities such as: gymnastics, computer training, crafts, excursions, talks, dancing, sports, bingo and is open to ideas from citizens. The average number of visitors per week is 100 - 150.

It was a once-off project that was completed in October 2016.

## Implementation

The modernisation of the centre was realized through administrative, technical and manual work by the members of the pensioners' association and local municipality. With the aim of stimulating social participation of senior citizens in Tinglev, it has become a meeting point with a café, run by seven senior citizens.

### More information

[Website of The Velux Foundations](#)

## Mobility Scouts Project **Traffic Security**

**Domains:** Outdoor spaces and buildings / Transport and mobility / Civic engagement and employment / Communication and information / Community and health services

### Objectives

Many citizens are aware of problematic traffic situations but do not inform the authorities as they anticipate too many bureaucratic barriers. The aim of the Mobility Scouts project was to identify deficits in traffic security and to arrive at improvements for citizens of all age-groups in Hanau.




**Hanau, Germany**

### Key Facts

The activities were initiated in the framework of the Erasmus+ project Mobility Scouts (2016-2018). 16 older citizens were trained as volunteers in the promotion of age-friendly environments; 3 of them decided to work on the improvement of traffic security, having a specific professional or volunteer background in this area. The City of Hanau, in particular the departments for senior citizens and demographic development, adopted the approach, facilitated the work process and appreciated the results.

## Implementation

Mobility Scouts organised several excursions to places which had been reported as problematic. Traffic situations were documented with photos, short descriptions and suggested improvements. The results were submitted to the responsible officials of the City of Hanau who valued this feedback from citizens and took it seriously. A number of proposals for the improvement of traffic security were implemented quickly and with much less bureaucracy than expected.

01	Beispiel: Gehweg	
	Steinheimer Str. 1	Problembeschreibung
		<p>Das Foto zeigt eine typische Situation:</p> <p>Der Radfahrer links auf dem Foto fährt auf dem sehr schmalen <b>Gehweg</b> (ca. 2 m). Dadurch werden Fußgänger verunsichert durch überholen und klingeln. Der Gehweg wird von Radfahrerinnen in beide Richtungen befahren.</p> <p>Der Fahrradfahrer rechts fährt verkehrskonform auf der Straße.</p>
	Diskussion	
	Was zur Sicherheit für alle Verkehrsteilnehmer beitragen könnte:	<p>a) Es wäre gut, wenn durch eine Markierung auf der Straße ein Radweg eingezeichnet würde.</p> <p>b) Die Radfahrer könnten über die Seitenstraße „umgeleitet“ werden.</p>

## Results

In some places signs were erected to warn road users about difficult traffic situations, plus special traffic lights to make it easier for older citizens to cross the road. The main success of this working group is that in the future, informal meetings will take place to allow citizens to present their complaints. Thus, Mobility Scouts were able to nudge a citizen-oriented implementation of security measures. The concept – proper preparation and documentation of the problems as well as mutually respectful communication – is likely to contribute to changes and solutions to problems.

## More information

<http://www.mobility-scouts.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Toolkit.pdf>

## Informationen unter [www.hanau.de](http://www.hanau.de)



Magistrat der Stadt Hanau  
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Steinheimer Straße 1  
Telefon: 06181 66820-0  
[seniorenbuero@hanau.de](mailto:seniorenbuero@hanau.de)

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Stadtteilentwicklung  
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Telefon: 06181 295-0  
[step@hanau.de](mailto:step@hanau.de)



# Uhlenbusch ...More than a Housing Project

**Domains: Outdoor spaces and buildings / housing / Social participation / Social inclusion and non-discrimination / Civic engagement and employment**

## Bosau, Germany



### Implementation

As Uhlenbusch seeks to be environmentally conscious, neutral and energetically self-sustaining, the newest environmental technologies were used in its planning and construction. The village covers approx. 50.000 m<sup>2</sup>. Next to 30 residential houses, there are several community and guest houses, a store, workshops for handcraft and art activities and an indoor pool (currently under construction). There are also large gardening areas where the residents cultivate ecological fruit, vegetables and flowers, and areas for animals such as sheep, chicken and goats. The inhabitants are responsible for social activities and community life, which is facilitated by a council. Some problems arose during the first stages of planning. Due to a miscommunication about the initiators' intentions, the approval of the authorities was not initially granted.

#### More information

<https://www.uhlenbusch.org/>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gNEcVmYdwv0>

### Objectives

The Uhlenbusch housing project began as an alternative to assisted living for older people. Target group are people aged 55+ (current residents between 55 and 85), who have usually retired from working life but still want to be an active part of the community and shape their own futures. The core concept is living in a self-determined and active manner. This should be achieved through three principles: age-friendly architecture, the creation of opportunities for activities and willingness to be part of a mutual support system.

### Key Facts

The project was initiated by Caroline and Ulrich Reimann in 2015 (at that time on the verge of turning sexagenarians), who founded a private limited liability company (Uhlenbusch GmbH) in 2016. Uhlenbusch was built in Bosau, in a fairly rural area in Schleswig-Holstein. While Uhlenbusch GmbH is responsible for the project, it was supported by various stakeholders, like the local administration, construction companies and consultancies. The project gained wide public attention and support from media.

The project was financed with the help of a social bank. Some residents provided capital in advance to facilitate the start of the project. The investment costs are expected to be refinanced by the monthly rental income.

### Results

The village itself is an ongoing project. All of the buildings have been built (and rented), the infrastructure is almost complete and regular life has begun. The inhabitants and their neighbours arrange activities and projects according to their own preferences. In order to secure the special character of the village for the future, the houses remain permanent property of Uhlenbusch GmbH; its transfer into a foundation is envisaged for the future.



# Liberi di essere, liberi di muoversi (“Free to Be, Free to Move”)

**Domains: Transport and mobility / Social participation / Civic engagement and employment**

## The objectives are...

...To facilitate mobility of older people within a big city – one of the main problems faced by senior citizens and others with mobility problems in having an active social life and contributing to their participation in public decision-making.

...To mobilize private and public support and foster more opportunities for the elderly of Rome Municipality I – the main beneficiaries of the service – to move around the city.

## Rome, Italy



## Key Facts

The project, which allows free taxi transportation for seniors and people with mobility problems, started in 2014 in Rome Municipality I and, in addition to the Municipality, it has involved *Mobility Life*, the Elderly and Retired Persons Federation and the taxi cooperative *Samarcanda*.

Altogether, over 50 taxis are currently available and may be booked through two call centres, which are organised and managed by senior volunteers.

The public-private partnership is based on social marketing principles: private companies take advantage of advertising on the *Free to Be, Free to Move* cars and co-fund a useful transportation system specifically supporting the mobility of senior and/or citizens who have trouble with mobility.

## Implementation and results

Beyond problems which might best be described as physiological and which have been solved through the strong partnership created around the project, no other significant problems have emerged so far in what should be considered a *win-win* experience.

The project is ongoing and has expanded and multiplied its results, involving new actors such as the Rome City Government, *ACLI* – the Christian Associations of Italian Workers, the *Frà Albenzio Association*, Genzano and Mentana, two of Rome’s nearby towns.

During the *Erasmus+* supported *Mobility Scouts* project, the *Esquilino* elderly centre volunteers expressed interest in developing contacts with similar experiences in other European countries, in order to plan visits and exchanges of seniors related to sustainable mobility innovation in other European cities.

ROMA



MUNICIPIO ROMA I CENTRO

**E' ATTIVO IL SERVIZIO DI  
TRASPORTO GRATUITO E  
ACCOMPAGNAMENTO  
RISERVATO ALLE PERSONE  
FRAGILI RESIDENTI NEL  
MUNICIPIO ROMA I  
CENTRO**

**IL SERVIZIO PUO' ESSERE  
PRENOTATO TRAMITE DUE CALL  
CENTER:**

**ASSOCIAZIONE FRÀ ALBENZIO**  
VIA FRÀ ALBENZIO, 1/A

**DAL LUNEDÌ AL VENERDÌ  
ORE 10.00—17.00**

**06.8976.7250  
340.0918028**

**IL SERVIZIO DI ACCOMPAGNAMENTO  
DEVE ESSERE PRENOTATO CON ALMENO  
10 GIORNI DI PREAVVISO**

**ACLI PROVINCIALI DI ROMA**  
VIA PROSPERO ALPINO, 20

**DAL LUNEDÌ AL VENERDÌ  
ORE 10.00—13.00**

**06 57087048  
06 57087025  
3442402333**

**PER OTTIMIZZARE IL  
SERVIZIO SI CONSIGLIA DI  
RIVOLGERSI ALLA SEDE PIU'  
VICINA ALLA PROPRIA  
ABITAZIONE**

## "Liberi di essere, Liberi di muoversi"

**PROGETTO PATROCINATO DAL  
MUNICIPIO ROMA I  
E REALIZZATO IN COLLABORAZIONE  
CON MOBILITY LIFE SPA,  
ASSOCIAZIONE FRÀ ALBENZIO,  
ACLI PROVINCIALI DI ROMA E  
FEDERAZIONE ANZIANI E  
PENSIONATI.**



*Frà Albenzio*



**CON LA COLLABORAZIONE DI  
TAXI SOLIDALE SAMARCANDA**



### More information

<https://www.comune.roma.it/web/it/municipio-i-progetti.page?contentId=PRG35496>

<http://www.mobility-scouts.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Toolkit.pdf>

## Nonni su Internet (“Grandparents on the Internet”)

**Domains: Communication and Information / Social participation and inclusion / Civic engagement and employment**

### Rome, Italy



#### The objectives are...

...To foster older people's digital literacy.

...To improve their chances for active citizenship through intergenerational computer technologies teaching.

...To train volunteers specialized in helping senior citizens attain digital literacy. These volunteers need valid skills in information technology, management, teaching, and personal relations. Men and women of any age can become knowledge volunteers: current students and even retired teachers.

#### Key facts

Started by the non-profit *Fondazione Mondo Digitale* (Digital World Foundation), in the 14 editions of this digital literacy project for people 60 and older conducted so far, over 30,000 senior citizens have become certified *Internauts* through instruction by 21,000 student tutors and 2,100 IT teacher coordinators.

Each edition is enhanced by the multimedia work that both tutors and senior citizens perform together as an exercise in working on the PC: from the preparation of an online dictionary of yesterday's toys and games to photo albums with digitalized vintage photos.

The first digital literacy kit for adults prepared with assistance from Rome's *La Sapienza* University Linguistics Department is composed of 7 volumes.

Other modules are currently being structured and video lessons are also being prepared for long-distance teaching (e-learning).

The project's educational validity has been appreciated by the schools to the extent that it has been inserted in their training offer plans, and credits are awarded to the student tutors.

## Implementation and results

The activity is on-going and expanding: In the 2015-16 school year, this intergenerational learning model has been applied in 20 Italian regions and 11 different nations.

The duration of the free courses is 30 hours, divided into 15 weekly lessons of 2 hours each. Participating seniors, student tutors and teacher supervisors all receive an attendance certificate at the end of the course.



*Senior Citizens on the Web:* this online platform was created for all those involved in the experience, senior citizens, tutors, teachers and volunteers. Manuals, case histories, success stories, and testimonials are placed at the disposal of one and all, as well the respective research work and real-time evaluation methodology.

Schools can take part in the *Non mi buttare... al Centro anziani c'è post@ per me* (Don't Throw me Away, There's a Pl@ce for Me at the Senior Community Center) recycling campaign by setting up their own *Recycle Shop* where expert students can repair computers (hardware and software) which are no longer required by companies in order to donate them (after repair) to senior community centers or other schools where they are needed.

The impact of the project is constantly monitored and analysed using innovative qualitative and quantitative instruments (RTE – Real-time Evaluation), while consolidated communication strategies add value to the results.

### More information

<http://www.mondodigitale.org/en/what-we-do/areas-intervention/active-aging/nonni-su-internet-0>



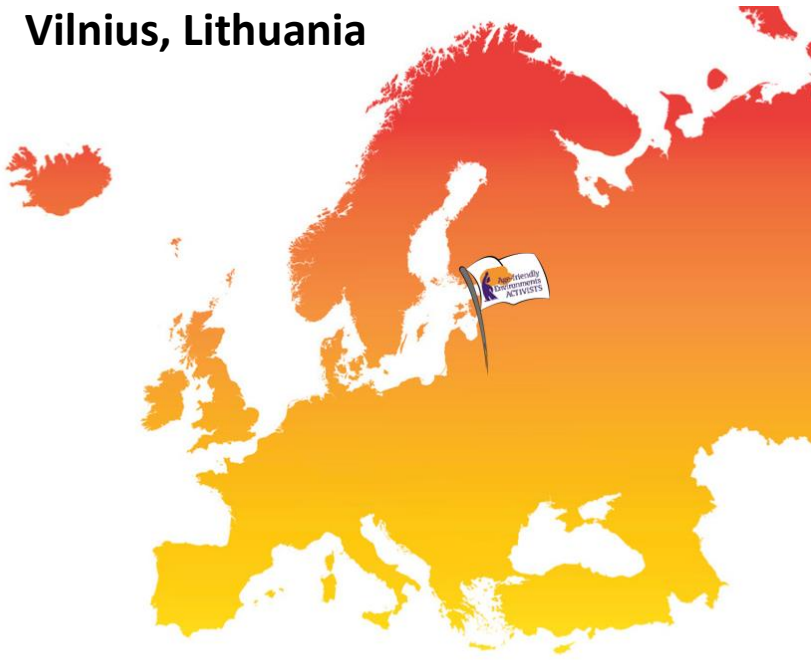
## Vilnius Branch of the Lithuanian Pensioners' Union

Domains: Social participation / Civic engagement and employment / Communication and information

### The objectives are...

- ...To protect pensioners' rights.
- ...To implement pensioners' right to participate in social dialogue.
- ...To fight against poverty in old age.
- ...To stop the protectionism of private pension funds by transferring 2 % from the budget of the statutory pension system to support Tier 2 pension schemes.

### Vilnius, Lithuania



### Key facts

Lithuania ranks at the bottom by pension income among the EU member states. In spite of improving economic indicators, one-third of older people in Lithuania are on the brink of poverty (with a monthly pension of EUR 200) and the poverty rate among people aged 65+ is increasing. Pension expenditure as a share of GDP is less than 7 %, compared to the EU average of 12.8 %.

The Vilnius Branch of the Lithuanian Pensioners' Union Bočiai unites about 1200 members who are mainly involved in cultural activities, handicrafts and travelling. Dissatisfaction with low pensions is usually expressed on a personal level, with the expectation that things will improve with the government following the next election.

The situation has changed since 2016, after the election of the new deputy chairperson Vilija Tūrienė and some new members of the board. Pensioners were encouraged to analyse and to understand the pension scheme, to compare it with schemes from other countries, to analyse economic indicators and pension reforms, and to exercise their rights. The analysis revealed the hard-to-explain practice of supporting Tier 2 pension schemes involving private pension funds from the budget of the statutory pension system, approved by the pension reform in 2004.

## Implementation

In 2017, Vilniaus Bočiai organised a conference in Parliament, with prominent economists as speakers, to analyse the retirement pension calculation formula and conditions proving the availability of resources, in order to increase the retirement income of the poorest pensioners. Four protest meetings, each attended by 200-300 older people, have been organised at the Government Office, the Parliament and the President's Office since 2016. In a meeting in May 2017, a resolution was passed to the heads of the state, ministers and MPs demanding a stop to the protectionism of private pension funds.



## Results

Lithuanian pensioners shifted their focus from cultural activities and handcraft to political and economic issues. The meetings drew the attention of both the public and the media. Representatives of the Pensioners' Union were invited on to different TV forums and talk shows to speak about their issue next to politicians and economists. The pension reform developed by the government in 2018 cancelled Tier 2 pension system funding from the statutory pension system budget, from 1 January 2019 on. Among other demands was a request to allocate time on national TV for representing interests of retired people and giving them the floor at least once per month.

It was not easy to encourage older people to participate in the street demonstrations. Trade Union Solidarity supported the organisers and gave practical advice. Activism among Lithuanian pensioners is gaining momentum and they will continue fighting for their rights in an active form, instead of complaining quietly.



Deputy Chairwoman of the Lithuanian Pensioners' Union Vilnius Branch Vilija Tūrienė giving an interview during the meeting

### More information

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YNDcE\\_LHbAQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YNDcE_LHbAQ)

Protest meeting at the Lithuanian Parliament on 13 March 2017

Protest meeting at Lithuanian President's Office on 12 April 2018

# Laakse Lente: The Living Room as Meeting Room for the neighbourhood

**Domains:** Communication and information / Community and health services / Social participation / Social inclusion and non-discrimination

## Objectives

The aim is to offer a room and free entrance to (mainly older) people in the neighbourhood, to meet each other for a drink and a chat.

## The Hague, The Netherlands



## Key Facts

To reduce public expenditure, the executive board of The Hague decided to close down most community centres in local neighbourhoods in 2011. An older married couple, Netty and Leo Olfers, decided to open up their living room in Laakkwartier for (older) people to meet in 2012.

The Laakkwartier neighbourhood was built around 1930. Together with Spoorwijk, the area contains almost 42,000 people, about 3,500 of whom are older than 65. Laakkwartier-Spoorwijk is a heterogenous neighbourhood. It houses 10,000 people with a Dutch background; the rest of the population has a foreign background. The main groups are Eastern-Europeans, Surinam people and people from other non-Western countries. Other groups are people from Morocco and Turkey. Laakkwartier-Spoorwijk contains about 19,000 dwellings, of which 2/3 are rented. Most houses (90%) are located in apartment buildings.

The initiative for the living room was not funded at first. It started with a couple of opening times and offering coffee to some older people, but in time it became known that the living room was available, and people started to share their daily problems. During summer, there was a need for older people to meet, because (grand)children and professionals were on holidays. More room and longer opening hours were needed.



## Implementation

Making use of their networks within the municipality of The Hague, the couple managed to obtain funding for hiring a meeting place, where they could organise larger meetings. These meetings varied from shuffleboard competitions and designing to lectures about several (historical) topics. They also managed to get more volunteers to run the initiative. Members of Laakse Lente pay € 5 per month. In return, members get: 10-12 hours to meet in the living room, participation in activities with reduced fees, support filling in administrative forms, advice and listening to problems, plus special activities during the summer.



## Results

After 7 years, the Laakse Lente, living room for the neighbourhood still exists and is very active. They receive visits from the Mayor, students and foreigners. They have built their own website, [www.laakselente.nl](http://www.laakselente.nl), and support the interests of older people.

### More information

<http://www.delaakselente.nl/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a1pz3E74QBU>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g9Z\\_pwAyzkIO](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g9Z_pwAyzkIO)

### Other sources

[https://www.scribd.com/embeds/389400230/content#from\\_embed](https://www.scribd.com/embeds/389400230/content#from_embed)

[https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laakkwartier\\_en\\_Spoorwijk\\_\(wijk\\_in\\_Den\\_Haag\)](https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laakkwartier_en_Spoorwijk_(wijk_in_Den_Haag))

[https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?cat\\_open\\_code=c326](https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?cat_open_code=c326)

<https://allecijfers.nl/wijk/laakkwartier-en-spoorwijk-den-haag/>



## Ageing in Place. Stichting friendly wonen Amsterdam

Domains: Housing / Outdoor spaces and buildings / Communication and information / Community and health services / Social participation / Social inclusion and non-discrimination

### Amsterdam, The Netherlands



#### Objectives

Three older people living in Amsterdam (Dick van Alphen, Olga van den Berg, Jan van Essen) decided to establish a foundation to jointly work on the provision that people from Amsterdam are able to age in their own living environments with dignity, despite frailty or dependency.

#### Key Facts

Amsterdam is the capital city of The Netherlands and is the most populous municipality of the country. There are about 850,000 people in the city, and up to 2.4 million in the metropolitan area. 105,000 (12%) of them are older than 65 (January 2018). In 2015, Amsterdam joined the Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities.

The foundation looks after the interests of people who live independently and are willing to continue to live in their own house, or want to move to a smaller and accessible house but don't know exactly how to manage. These people don't have health or mobility problems, but anticipate them in the future. There are too few suitable housing opportunities in Amsterdam, and people have to wait a long time before they are able to take further action. According to the initiators, this waiting may lead to accidents, isolation and an early death. Besides this, if people are able to continue living independently, they will remain healthy and this benefits their wellbeing and reduces healthcare expenditure.

## Implementation

The foundation shows some good examples of projects and organises meetings with the council of the municipality and local stakeholders, such as social housing, real estate companies and healthcare/social care providers. They have visited the Second Chamber of Dutch Parliament to speak with a VVD (Liberal Conservative Party) MP on housing. They pay attention to the accessibility of housing and present good accessibility practices. They present a handbook on prolonged independent living in Plan Berlage (architect) ("Lang Leven in Plan Berlage"). They have also met Professor Dr. Yoko Matsuoko and contributed to the international Social Housing Festival.

## Results

The foundation started its work 1 or 2 years ago. They have gained recognition for their advocacy and visibility, and have seen their first results.

### More information

<https://www.agefriendlywonen.nl/>

### Other sources


<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amsterdam>

<https://www.ois.amsterdam.nl/>

https://www.agefriendlywonen.nl

**Ageing in place**  
Stichting friendly wonen Amsterdam

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**Ageing in place**

**LAATSTE NIEUWS**

**LANG LEVEN IN PLAN BERLAGE**

**LANG LEVEN IN PLAN BERLAGE**

Het project Lang Leven in Plan Berlage is afgerond ! Dit project was een onderdeel van MAAK JE STAD

**Lees Meer >**

**Doel van de Stichting**

De stichting pleit ervoor dat Amsterdammers in hun vertrouwde omgeving waardig en in eigen en/of ondersteunde regie zo zelfstandig mogelijk oud kunnen worden, bij mogelijk toenemende kwetsbaarheid en afhankelijkheid.

Daarvoor gebruikt de WHO het begrip "Ageing in place" oud worden in je eigen omgeving.

**Waardig oud worden in de vertrouwde omgeving**

## Activa tu barrio (Activate your neighbourhood)

**Domains: Outdoor spaces and buildings / Social participation / Social inclusion and non-discrimination / Civic engagement and employment / Communication and information / Community and health services**

### Objectives

The target group is older people, living in their homes and characterised by e.g. social isolation, cognitive impairment, limited economic resources and/or ignorance of available resources. The aim is to obtain the maximum level of social cohesion and individual well-being, to involve various organisations and to give a collective response to a social problem, referring people to the resources available.

A general objective is to promote neighbourhoods that are more welcoming and accessible for older people. To achieve this, the goal is to inform the community about the characteristics and needs of older people, and to weave a network of collaboration between the different agents.

### Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain



### Key Facts

The local initiative is promoted by the network of socio-cultural centres for older people in the Vitoria-Gasteiz City Council (Basque Country, Spain). It started in Nov. 2016 and has developed in two neighbourhoods, and is now being extended to a third one.

85 older people are members of mentor groups and meet at least once weekly to:

- Plan, design and support the activities that interest them.
- Disseminate the programme to agents, businesses, neighbours, and the media.
- Inform other senior citizens of the programme and accompany them to activities.
- Support the mentor group, also in terms of recruitment and motivation to participate.
- Visit establishments, resources and collaborate in activities with other groups.

Collaborating organisations are public services, municipal services (incl. urban planners, police, etc. who advise on the programme), private organisations, neighbours and shops (who provide support on an everyday basis).



## Implementation

“In our neighbourhood, if we help each other, then we walk better”

A new methodology of working with people was developed, using creative elements based on relationship, accompaniment and participation. After designing the intervention methodology, the mentor group was consulted and adjusted to the social reality of the older people. Since then, the group members have designed and planned activities that interest them, like talks on different topics, safe itineraries and summer activities. Based on 49 cases, information and personalized support is offered to show them resources and activities based on their interests and needs. This is done by a network of collaboration that has been woven of the different agents in the neighbourhood. A “go find people” methodology of active proximity is used to reach fragile people who are alone in their homes and not easy to find and help. The network informs them about the programme, then supports and accompanies them.

In addition, many dissemination activities and training for organisations were given. They get a sticker to place in their offices and establishments, and public services are given a dossier with specific recommendations for these resources.

## Results

The evaluation was done in December 2017, using a quantitative and a qualitative methodology. The most important parts of the process were evaluated (design, development, evaluation) and facilitating elements and obstacles were detected. A result of the evaluation was that the actions developed have had a real impact on the life of the neighbourhood.

A total of 463 people participated in the programme. People expressed their satisfaction with the programme, since it has allowed them to fight loneliness and implies an improvement in their quality of life. The number and quality of contacts and social relationships with other people have increased.

### More information

[City website](#)

[Leaflet of a concrete neighbourhood](#)



# Age in Place – Interaction for Good Living

**Domains: Outdoor spaces and buildings / Housing / Communication and information**

## Objectives

This initiative is about enabling older people in Gothenburg to go on living comfortably in their own homes, with the municipality and several housing firms investing in increased community involvement, better access and more welfare technology (Smart socio-economic investments).

The purpose: based on the concept of solid economics, the city makes strategic investments in availability, technology and community so that older people can stay at home for longer, with a high quality of life – good for older people, families, property owners and the municipality.

Another objective is to create conditions for collaboration and a common vision, concerning knowledge and the exchange of experience:

- Increased accessibility and community.
- Increased use of technology to strengthen older people's independence and facilitate everyday life.

## Gothenburg, Sweden



## Key Facts

The initiative has been led by Gothenburg's local authorities.

Görbra för äldre ("Doing Good for Seniors") kicked off in 2011-2012 as part of a national trial within the government programme Teknik för äldre II ("Technology for the Elderly II").

Six district administrations, four housing companies, the local authority real estate office, architects' home care staff and older people in Gothenburg all took part.

Senior Göteborg held the whole thing together and produced a communication plan.

Along with inspiration days and study visits, an active Facebook group and a social website with blogs has helped to exchange experience and build knowledge.



### Implementation and results

GR/FoU i Väst (Gothenburg Region/R&D in the West) carried out an evaluation and the audit firm PWC carried out a socio-economic analysis.

The results show that smart, thoroughly renovated bathrooms, simple improvements in public spaces and the outdoor environment, anti-dazzle lighting and modern information and communication technology such as tablet computers and GPS alarms can contribute to increased security and a high quality of life for many older people, and also to good public finances. Final reports, films, guidelines and full-scale models are now being used to spread the results both inside and outside the municipality.

The initiative continues, also involving nearby municipalities.

#### More information

<https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/afp/age-in-place-interaction-for-good-living/>

## KOVE: Kilburn Older Voices Exchange

**Domains: Outdoor spaces and buildings / Transport and mobility / Communication and information / Community and health services / Social participation**

**London,  
United Kingdom**

### Objectives

KOVE is a community action group that aims to improve the quality of life for older people through organising activities and campaigning on issues that affect older people. Their aim is to overcome social isolation, promote well-being and an age-friendly Kilburn, and increase the influence that older people have on local issues and decision makers.



### Key Facts

Kilburn Older Voices Exchange (KOVE) is an independent, constituted community group of older people in the Kilburn, West Hampstead, Finchley Road and Swiss Cottage areas of North West London, and has been doing so since 2001. It is part of the Ageing Better in Camden project, run by Age UK Camden.

It is supported by various local groups and community centres. They have a community partnership approach, working with different agencies, engaging them in joint project work and trying to improve service delivery with the participation of older people and service users.

KOVE is supported by funds such as Trust For London, Hampstead Wells & Camden Trust, and the Waitrose Community Matters fund. KOVE meetings take place at Camden's Kingsgate Resource Centre.

## Implementation

In the field of advocacy for and with older people, KOVE organises the following activities:

**Policy issues and campaigns:** KOVE works with various groups to campaign for better facilities for older people. Some of the current issues they are working on include the provision of public toilets, transport issues (in particular bus services) and the provision of benches. They also organise the annual Kilburn Debates event, involving academics who are working on issues affecting older people.

**Films:** They have made various films about the issues facing older people, such as one about the barriers and obstacles for people getting around the streets (2011, **watch the video**) or on the difficulties that some people have in using road crossings, due to the shortage of time on some crossings (**watch the video**).

**Debates:** KOVE organises public debates and “older voice exchanges” on age-friendly issues such as safe crossings, and brings older people, researchers, public bodies, politicians and companies together.

## Results

The work and campaigns ran by KOVE have had a great impact.

In 2017, their film *All Aboard!* highlighted the various issues that made it difficult for older people to use buses. These included the lack of shelter and indicator boards at bus stops, bus stops with several routes, difficulty getting on buses when they do not stop near the kerb, and issues for visually impaired people in identifying buses. The film has been nominated in the Charity Film Awards (**watch it here**).

KOVE have also campaigned for many years on the issue of public toilet provision. Academic research indicates that a lack of public toilet provision makes it more difficult for older people to go out. There is no legal obligation for local councils to provide public toilets. They have worked with Camden Council on their Community Toilet Scheme, and have encouraged local businesses (e.g. Transport for London) to become involved in this project.

### More information

<https://www.kove.org.uk>

<http://tonyellis.net/kove/About%20Us.htm>



# The Curtain Up Players

**Domains: Social inclusion and non-discrimination / Community and health services / Social participation**

## Kirklees, United Kingdom



### Objectives

“The Curtain Up Players” is an amateur theatre group for people of 50+, that supports people in living well with serious illnesses and isolation. The group helps its members to stay creative and mentally agile and to voice their opinions and ideas.

### Key Facts

The group, which has 13 members, was founded by Dr. Ron Wiener, a world-renowned socio-dramatist and community theatre director, and has been running for 8 years. The group uses the rehearsal room offered by the Proper Job Theatre Company for a low rent, and receives a small grant from Kirklees Council to cover basic costs.

The external partners are: Kirklees Council SSD, Huddersfield University, Kirklees Dementia Action Alliance, Age U.K., West Yorkshire Police, and community organisations such as luncheon clubs, care homes and different disability groups.

The plays are based on the Morenian psychodrama tradition – they encourage audience participation, demand spontaneity and creativity from actors, and usually lead to exchanges between the spectators.

## Implementation

The group creates two or three plays a year and performs them at theatres, in village halls, lunch clubs and libraries. They do not have a script, starting with roughly worked-out scenes around which people improvise about serious topics, such as dementia, visual impairment and family relationships, but also Christmas pantomimes. The group activities benefit both the members and the people they perform to. As there is no script, there is no fear that an actor will forget their lines, and the audience is encouraged to join and improvise.

**The book:** Dr. Ron Wiener and psychodrama psychotherapist Di Adderley published 'The Handy Book of Unscripted Plays', consisting of 20 unscripted plays with scenes about dementia and ageing, family relations, Christmas shows and one-off plays. The plays are designed so that everything can be adapted – scenes, actors, dialogues, endings. They can be used as straight plays evoking reflection, exercises for encouraging creativity and spontaneity, and warm-ups and training exercises.

**Video recordings:** The group has made video recordings of some of their plays portraying aspects of caring for someone with dementia and illustrating distressing situations old people and their carers deal with. (Watch **Oh No She Won't**, **Little things make a difference**, a performance of 'Seeking Joan').

## Results

The Curtain Up Players performances have a great impact in terms of raising awareness of dementia and issues of old age. Drawing on concepts and methods from psychodrama, they maximize member spontaneity and connection, providing opportunities for positive interactions in the community.

Sister groups in Leeds and New York have been established.

Amateur theatre for older people using the psychodramatic method can be seen as form of soft activism or artistic activism – a dynamic practice combining the creative power of the arts to move people emotionally and to bring about social change.



### More information

<https://www.facebook.com/CurtainUpPlayersTheatre/>  
<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/jul/29/acting-ageing-theatre-group-older-people>  
<https://www.creativekirklees.com/curtain-up-players/>

# Council of European Grandmothers

Domains: Social participation / Civic engagement and employment

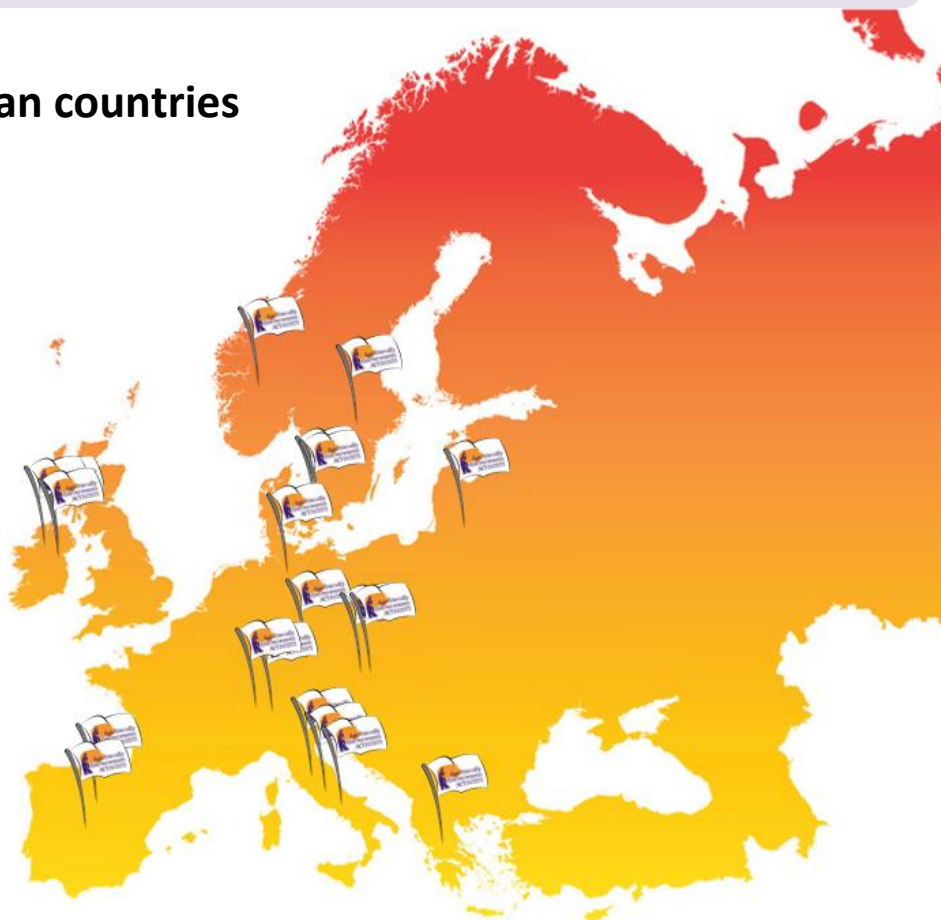
## Different European countries

### Objectives

The members of the Council want to pass the wisdom and culture on to younger generations, spreading light, peace and calmness into peoples' hearts.

They do their best, using their lifelong knowledge and professional experience, to support and maintain a sustainable world for the next seven generations.

Furthermore, they aim to support and learn from each other and people in different countries, experiencing the indigenous cultures of Europe.



### Key Facts

Since 2004, **thirteen indigenous grandmothers** from all over the world have been working on an international level to maintain their traditional wisdom (which is based on respect for the Earth that supports all life, along with accepting responsibility to preserve it for future generations). They exchanged their wisdom amongst each other in their countries of origin.

Some of the later members of the European Council of Grandmothers were guests in these meetings, and recognized that Europe was not being represented. This led them to invite women from several European countries to a meeting in Merano, in the South Tyrolean Alps, in 2015. They created a platform, which is now known as The Council of European Grandmothers.

The activities (travelling, accommodation, catering) are funded personally by the council members. The member hosting the meeting looks for support in the local community, finds premises, disseminates the mission of the council in the local community, arranges a programme dedicated to the topic and invites local participants.

The thematic background of the initiative is environmental protection, education and human rights.

## Implementation

Since starting the initiative, the European Grandmothers have met every nine months in one of the member countries to support and expand the vision of their council.

Each meeting has a specific theme (for example, the theme for the Lithuanian meeting was exploring sound: inner sound, songs of ancestors, discovering our native path with folksongs), which the members work up and prepare for over the nine months between the meetings.



### More information

<http://www.councileugrandmothers.eu/background.html>

## Results

The activity is ongoing; since 2015, five meetings have been held.

The organisation is still developing, and decisions are being made regarding the group's future size, how to handle guests, the procedure for welcoming new members, and the inner and outer circles.

In the venues for the meetings, they have open sessions to which people of the communities around the area are invited, and also the local press. Such sessions are very important, both for the public and for participating council members. They confirm how much such "grandmothers" are needed, and how important the work which they have set out to do is.

They think of projects and activities which could receive added value through the council.



### 3. Age-Friendly cities to be introduced

#### The Hague, The Netherlands

In 2015, the municipality of The Hague became a member of the Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities, the first city in the Netherlands.

Since 2014, the policy of The Hague has focussed on participation, support and care. The participation element has been particularly successful in ensuring that more older people continue to take part in society, or helping them to enjoy meaningful activities and engage them. Because older people wish to live independently in their own living environment for as long as possible, maintaining control over their lives for as long as possible, The Hague wishes to help them remain vigorous too. Furthermore, an age-friendly city adapts its structures and amenities to make them accessible to an ageing population with different needs and possibilities. Older people know best what being vigorous means for them, and what they need to remain so. The Hague involves older people in the municipal senior committee, they organise a senior citizen panel as well as group discussions. The WHO framework for age-friendly cities helps older people and the municipality to formulate suitable conditions for remaining vigorous.

In 2016, the municipality of The Hague presented the results of the research on the eight domains of age-friendly city life from the WHO. An **infographic for The Hague Age-Friendly City** with the results of the research has been made by older people. In March 2019, the Older People's Council (Stedelijke Ouderencommissie) presented the results of a survey among 500 older people (65-84 years of age) from The Hague. The respondents were questioned about independent living, living environments, healthy behaviour, meaningful life and participation in society (**more information**).



Source: Roy Wesenhagen, Strategic Advisor Age-Friendly Environments @ D'article

## Concrete actions

The **Vitality Award** is an award of appreciation for initiatives of citizens of The Hague to work towards a senior-friendly city. The Vitality award encourages citizens of The Hague (both local residents and organisations) to be actively involved within the city.

The **Month of Vitality** is a theme specifically aimed at helping senior citizens to participate and stay active. These activities can include sports, cultural activities or activities that encourage senior citizens to be an active part of their communities, such as classes that teach them how to use smart devices such as tablets and smartphones.

The **Common in The Hague** [Doodgewoon in Den Haag] platform considers it essential that citizens of The Hague make conscious decisions with regards to the final phase of their lives, and expands the possibilities of dying a dignified death.

**Golden Plates** [Gouden Bordjes] is an appreciation for excellent provision of meals in elderly care, in accordance with the principle for the elderly by the elderly, but also in cooperation with professionals from various backgrounds.

The **Community Against Loneliness** started as a collaboration between entrepreneurs, professionals and volunteers, who were all looking for chances and opportunities to combat loneliness. In the recent past, coalitions were created between ADO Den Haag (a local soccer club), Xtra (welfare), Pathé cinemas, Buddy Network, Resto VanHarte, and migrant senior citizens.

**Diverse The Hague:** The Hague is a diverse city where citizens feel recognized and play a role which suits them. This ideal connects organisations that are active in advocacy, community service, sports, welfare, healthcare, education and government.

**Cultural Canvas:** Cultural participation of senior citizens forms an integral part of The Hague policy as a senior-friendly city. To implement cultural participation, The Hage uses the Cultural Canvas, invented by the city itself.

**Dementia Community Centres:** The policy in The Hague also pays attention to the support of vulnerable senior citizens who have problems with structure in their daily life. This, combined with the symptoms of dementia, requires their informal caregivers to provide them with daytime activities and social networking opportunities.

In 2017, The Hague hosted the **Age-Friendly City Conference**. In **The Hague Conference Guide**, the view of the city's residents on what The Hague means to them as an age-friendly city is presented.

After local elections in March 2018, a new board of the City Council was elected and appointed. The City Council is now working on the new agreement on age-friendly policies in The Hague.

## Udine, Italy



Udine (according to the Municipality's latest available figures, 99,518 inhabitants in 2018) joined the WHO Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities in 2015, as a consequence of its prior involvement with the Healthy Cities Programme implemented on the basis of the WHO Constitution (1948) and by the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (1986).

The city is part of national, European and international networks to raise awareness well beyond local and regional levels.<sup>3</sup>

### Concrete actions

Udine became a member of the **Healthy Ageing Task Force** within the WHO, which Udine has led since 2004, with the aim of sharing knowledge, tools and experiences with cities and developing new ways to face demographic changes.

Udine has produced the **Healthy Ageing Profile**, the goal of which was to allow for an overall understanding of the local context and to provide evidence as a basis for setting priorities and taking decisions. The profile provides quantitative and qualitative information on the health and the living circumstances of older people and has led to the development of a stable healthy ageing city observatory.

**Health maps** of the urban environment are designed by mapping the distribution of the elderly on the city territory (using GIS) and matching the provision of public, health and social services offered to the community (such as general practitioners, post offices, free-time opportunities, care centres, chemists, bus stops, etc.).



<sup>3</sup> The 2018 WHO Europe publication **Healthy settings for older people are healthy settings for all: the experience of Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Italy** provides details of the activities developed in Friuli-Venezia Giulia, the autonomous Region in which Udine is located.

Udine pioneered the **Vancouver Protocol**, which asked citizens, caregivers and services providers to evaluate the characteristics of an age-friendly city in eight different domains and suggest improvements. Results were incorporated into the **WHO Global Guide** and used locally to determine investment priorities. Udine also participated in a pilot study on measuring the age-friendliness of cities that fed into a **guide** on using core indicators developed by the WHO Centre for Health Development.

The city joined the **Covenant on Demographic Change** (December 2015) and participated in the activities of many European organisations and programmes, such as URBACT, AFE-INNOVNET, the European Innovation Partnership, the Joint Programming Initiative (JPI) Urban Europe, the AGE Platform Europe and AFEE – Age-Friendly Environments in Europe.

The City of Udine has tried to create supportive environments and established patterns for healthy living through food and mobility policies oriented to the elderly. A number of projects have been started to enable and encourage increasing physical and mental activity among local people in their later years as a highly effective way of preventing and lowering the high costs associated with health and social services, while fostering intergenerational relationships.

The new Municipality, elected in 2018, has confirmed Udine's commitment to the promotion of active and healthy ageing.





## 4. Conclusions

The numerous examples of good practice show the various ways in which people can become AFE activists. They have very different ideas and pursue different goals, but all of them have the vision of making older people's lives better and contributing to active and healthy ageing. These examples can serve as inspiration and role models for other people, showing that it is worthwhile to advocate for one's vision of an age-friendly environment. Many of the initiatives presented have already inspired people to implement them in other places.

Most of the practices described were launched at the beginning by just a few people. Some project initiators can now rely on a broad network of supporters, others only needed some support at the beginning and now organise their projects independently. By now, many of the initiatives have already reached a large number of people who participate or benefit from what the initiatives have achieved. Some can also attract media attention and thus reach more people with their ideas and experiences.

The impact of the initiatives on people and their living environments are as diverse as the areas of focus. Some initiatives target political or social change, some raise awareness of issues affecting older people, and some give older people a voice and create a positive public image of older people. Other projects bring about great changes for older people, making small changes in mobility, living environments or through the use of modern communication technology. Many of the examples focus on joint activities and mutual exchange. They promote social inclusion and empower older people to pursue their interests and activities. Accordingly, of all the areas of age-friendly environments, 'social participation' is the most frequently promoted by the initiatives.

Finally, The Hague and Udine serve as examples of how cities can engage in a variety of ways and with a great commitment to creating good conditions for the active and healthy ageing of their inhabitants. Many of the good practice examples have shown that municipalities can benefit all the more from people's commitment to an age-friendly environment. It is therefore worthwhile for all stakeholders when decision-makers show a commitment for age-friendly environments, and support them in the best possible way.