



AGE-FRIENDLY  
ENVIRONMENTS  
EXPERIENCE HANDBOOK

*Information, support and training  
to advocate for age-friendly  
environments*

# THE PARTNERSHIP

The following people and organisations have contributed to the development of this Handbook

European coordination and implementation in LITHUANIA

Asociacija "Senjorų iniciatyvų centras"

*Edita Šatienė,  
Marija Bagdanavičienė,  
Nijolė Malaškevičienė*  
[rasyk@senjoru-centras.lt](mailto:rasyk@senjoru-centras.lt)  
[www.senjoru-centras.lt](http://www.senjoru-centras.lt)



AUSTRIA

queraum. cultural and social research

Anita Rappauer,  
Michael Stadler-Vida,  
Susanne Dobner,  
[rappauer@queraum.org](mailto:rappauer@queraum.org)  
[www.queraum.org](http://www.queraum.org)



GERMANY

ISIS GmbH – Sozialforschung, Sozialplanung, Politikberatung

Karin Stiehr,  
Welela Samson  
[stiehr@isis-sozialforschung.de](mailto:stiehr@isis-sozialforschung.de)  
[www.isis-sozialforschung.de](http://www.isis-sozialforschung.de)



ITALY

Lunaria

Angela Pagano,  
Sergio Andreis  
[andreis@lunaria.org](mailto:andreis@lunaria.org)  
[www.lunaria.org](http://www.lunaria.org)



THE NETHERLANDS

AFedemy

Willeke van Staalduinen,  
Javier Ganzarain  
[willeke@afedemy.eu](mailto:willeke@afedemy.eu)  
[javier@afedemy.eu](mailto:javier@afedemy.eu)  
[www.afedemy.eu](http://www.afedemy.eu)



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Design: *Vaiva Valeikienė*

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# ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

Welcome to the Age-friendly Environments (AFE) Experience Handbook. This Handbook is an intellectual output developed within the AFE Activists project funded by the Erasmus+ program of the European Commission. AFE Activists project addresses the need for tailored training to adults aged 65 and over who want to promote age-friendly environments in their cities and influence municipal agencies in their decision making so that the infrastructures and services of the town or city are adapted to the diverse capacities, realities, needs and preferences of ageing residents.

The handbook contains a description of study visits to age-friendly cities for transnational learning events attended by selected participants of the AFE Activists training course. Knowledge and understanding of age-friendly environment possibilities helps older citizens to participate in constructive ways in the future of their town or city.

AFE Experience Handbook was developed as an awareness raising resource for older citizens, local authorities and municipal agencies, policy makers, responsible businesses, philanthropists and innovators to understand the paradigm of ageing shifting away from older age dependence to contribution, and to encourage them to respond to the needs of ageing citizens and engage them in participatory decision making.

AFE Experience Handbook covers two domains:

1. Good AFE practices in two age-friendly cities, The Hague and Udine.
2. Experiential learning through study visits.

The first chapter provides an overview of the key aspects, the origins of the concept and developments of age-friendly environments. The second chapter highlights the educational aspects of study visits designed as experiential learning activity in addition to classroom training. Detailed descriptions of the projects observed in age-friendly cities The Hague and Udine are given in chapters three and four. The final chapter five ends with lessons learned and implications for follow-ups.

The Handbook can be used as a repository of good AFE practices and as an educational resource for older adult organisations e.g. U3A, seniors' clubs, Senior Councils, in planning informative educational trips or exchange visits for their members. The educational aspects described in AFE Experience Handbook are complementary to the pilot training of older learners described in AFE Advocacy Handbook.

All the AFE Activists project details are available on the project website: <https://afe-activists.eu>

# CHAPTER 1. WHAT ARE AGE-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENTS?

The ageing process requires changes to the environment which reflect the mental and physical competencies of older people.

The influence and importance of environmental conditions tend to increase with age. Age-related increases in environmental influence may be due to a reduction in an older person's activity space, as a result of restricted mobility associated with physical limitations combined with built environments designed for younger persons<sup>1</sup>. The amount of time spent at home or nearby is likely to increase, as the spatial distribution of regular destinations narrows<sup>2</sup>.

The environment includes not only the physical setting but also the activities that are made possible thereby, as well as the perception of those activities. Individuals, moreover, bring to their environments a unique set of competencies, intentions, and needs, based on their lifetime experiences<sup>3</sup>. From this perspective the environment is simultaneously a physical space (e.g., neighbourhood, built environment) and a social space (e.g., community).

An age-friendly environment generally refers to a community in which ageing people are valued and respected. They are involved and supported in both basic daily activities, such as moving around and shopping, and accessing and receiving all kinds of public and private services. World Health Organization (WHO) defines an age-friendly city and community as "one in which policies, services, and structures related to the physical and social environment are designed to support and enable older people to age actively – that is, to live in security, enjoy good health, and continue to participate fully in society" (World Health Organization 2007).<sup>4</sup>

One important consequence from the realization of age-friendly environments and age-friendly housing is the fact that it supports ageing in place, i.e. the possibility for older people to continue living in their own homes and communities. Older persons in general much prefer "to age in place" – in their own

home and thus be integrated in the local community and in close contact with the people they know and on whom they eventually can rely.<sup>5</sup> In these situations, housing, outdoor spaces and communal provisions are adapted to the needs and demands of the ageing populations. Adaptations can be accessible housing, adjusted lighting, meeting places and personalized care.

Information and Communication Technology (such as Internet of Things, eHealth, telecare, robotics) additionally provide ambient assisted living to older adults. Technology helps older adults to accommodate and adapt to occurring needs and demands.

More than half of the European population lives in urban or suburban areas and this number is increasing. The populations of cities and towns are subject to ageing, but also the trend occurs that older adults from rural areas tend to move to cities where more activities take place and better health and social care provisions are available. Cities and towns have to adapt their physical and social environments and communal provisions to the ageing population to address urban ageing.

WHO launched the Age-friendly Environments Programme under the scope of the active ageing framework to help cities and communities to become more supportive and adaptive to the needs of their ageing population. According to this programme, cities and communities should focus on eight main dimensions to achieve this goal: the built environment; transport; housing; social participation; respect and social inclusion; civic participation and employment; communication and community support and health services. These eight domains can be grouped into three clusters of supportive local environments: physical environments, social environments and municipal services. Such environments foster participation and health across the life course, including in older age.



Figure 1 Eight dimensions of age-friendly city/community/environment, 2020 Dufferin County©

Since the launch of WHO Age-friendly cities programme in 33 cities in 2007, 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 (GNAFCC) to improve their physical and social environments to become better places in which to grow old. The goals of the Network are to connect cities and communities that share the commitment to improve the quality of life of their older populations, facilitate the exchange of information and good practice, inspire, share innovative solutions and stimulate thinking and research on age-friendly cities.

Members of the network can be reached through the network website <https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/network/>



## CHAPTER 2. STUDY VISITS TO AGE-FRIENDLY CITIES

Learning may happen in many different places outside the formal classroom setting. AFE Activists project arranged study visits to age-friendly cities as a form of experiential learning so that participants could observe good AFE practices first-hand and gain inspirations for their pilot activities at home. The aim of the study visits was to reinforce the knowledge of age-friendly environments, improve intercultural competencies, enhance team working and communication skills, and develop observation and reflection skills.

The Hague in the Netherlands and Udine in Italy were chosen as the learning destinations due to the experiences and networks of the Dutch and Italian partners with age-friendly cities. Five-day study visits were planned according to the programmes prepared by AFEdeMY in The Hague, the Netherlands, and by Lunaria in collaboration with Udine Municipality, Italy.

The following learning outcomes of the study visits were envisaged:

- enhanced team working and communication skills
- improved intercultural competencies
- ability to empathise and understand new perspectives
- increased aspirations and motivation
- broaden the understanding of the European society and the European Union values.

Two or three participants from learner groups in partner countries were selected for each study visit, in total four to six learners per partner organisation. The selection criteria were knowledge of English, communication skills, ability to discuss related learning issues with the hosts and the international group, and readiness to leave home for five days.

Preparation for the study visit involved designing participants' presentations on their activities in local communities and relevant AFE issues, analysing the programme and information about the host organisations and initiatives to be observed, and planning the trip. A pre-study visit questionnaire (Annex 1) was designed to identify the learning needs and expectations of the participants, to assess their skills and knowledge of age-friendly environments.

The task during the study visit was to critically observe the surroundings on the way to and at the showcased projects, participate in group activities and discussions, fill in observation sheets (Annex 3) and write reflective journals. Observation sheets were designed and handed out to participants to

keep their focus on the items of age-friendliness and to develop critical observation skills. Reflection sessions were held at the end of each day for participants to critically reflect, analyse and synthesise their thoughts and perceptions, and to make connections between what they were learning in the training course at home and the reality in practice. Participants also gave feedback to the organisers of the visit.



Back at home the participants filled in the post-study visit questionnaires (Annex 2), made presentations to peer learners, and discussed the visit highlights with the group. Both educational and social aspects were discussed and illustrated by photos.

The study visit to The Hague was planned at the beginning of the pilot training in October 2019. AFEdeMY was the lead partner and the organiser of the visit. The visit took place on 7 -11 October 2019. 15 older age learners from Austria, Germany, Italy, Lithuania and the Netherlands were engaged in transnational learning activities.

The study visit to Udine was planned at the end of the pilot training in spring 2020. Lunaria was the lead partner of this activity. Due to extraordinary circumstances caused by COVID 19, the study visit to Udine scheduled for 2-6 March 2020, following the Italian Government lock down decisions, had to be cancelled a week before departure. Nevertheless, the programme was planned in detail and age-friendly initiatives selected for showcasing are included in the Handbook.

# CHAPTER 3. STUDY VISIT TO THE HAGUE



The Hague is a city on the western coast of the Netherlands on the North Sea and the capital of the province of South Holland. It is also the seat of government of the Netherlands and hosts the International Court of Justice, one of the most important courts in the world. With a metropolitan population of more than 1 million, it is the third-largest city in the Netherlands, after Amsterdam and Rotterdam. The Rotterdam /The Hague metropolitan area, with a population of approximately 2.7 million, is the 13th-largest in the European Union and the most populous in the country.

As of 1 January 2014, The Hague counts 509 779 inhabitants, making it the third largest city of the Netherlands. Between 1800 and 1960, the city saw a considerable growth from 40 000 in 1800 to 200 000 in 1900 and eventually 600 000 in 1960. The growth following 1900 was partially caused by the housing act of 1901, which stimulated the expansion of cities such as The Hague. In the period between 1960 and 1980, The Hague saw a shrinkage from 600 000 to 440 000 inhabitants, caused mostly by the spatial policy, demographic processes and lack of space. After several annexations and housing constructions, The Hague has since grown again, celebrating its 500 000<sup>th</sup> inhabitant in 2011. The municipality expects the growth to continue to 513 000 inhabitants in 2020.

## Inwoners naar migratieachtergrond

Den Haag

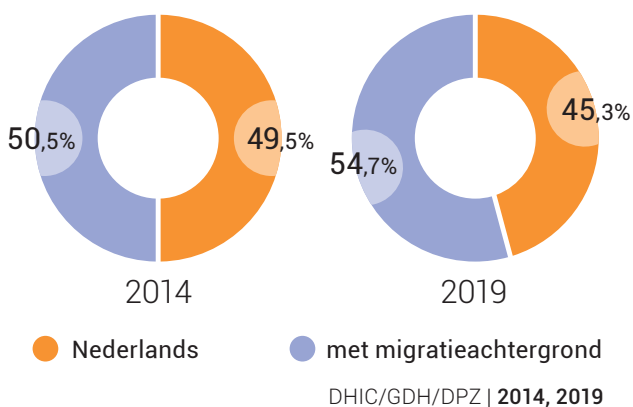
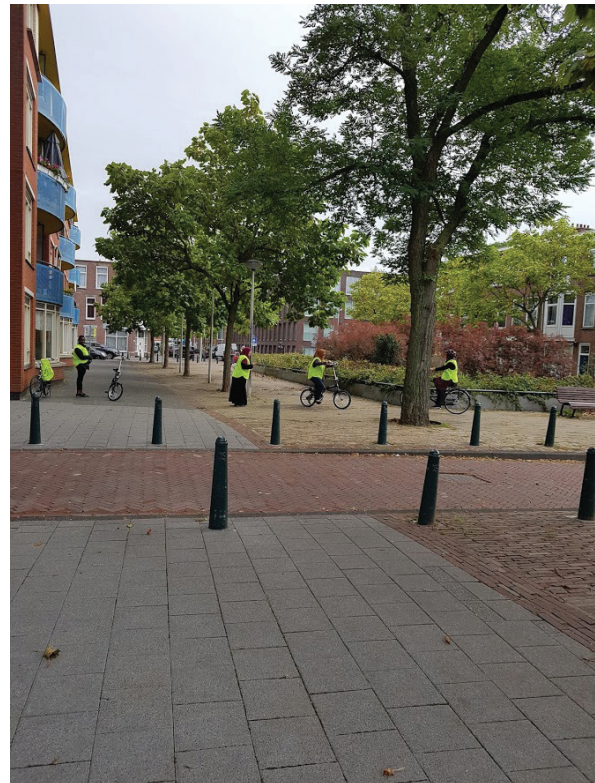


Figure 2: Diverse population of The Hague. Source: open data platform Municipality of The Hague

The municipality of The Hague has more inhabitants with a migratory background than of Dutch origin. The same trends are also reflected in the ageing population of The Hague. Therefore, the age-friendly environments policies demand a different approach. Diverse ageing measures is part of the Hague policy measures.



## *Towards an age-friendly city*

The Hague is striving to create in its new alliance with the WHO, a city for everyone: the young, the elderly and all ages in between. It strives for a lively, vibrant and safe city. This is why, together with network partners, the city encourages active ageing in the urban environment by optimising opportunities for healthy activities and social participation and promoting security in order to enhance the quality of life as people age.

In 2014, The Hague was the first Dutch city to join the WHO's network of age-friendly cities. Shortly afterwards, the city launched a qualitative study to investigate how senior citizens experience their neighbourhoods and since then has used the findings from that research to continuously improve its policies for senior citizens and life in the city.



With over 70 000 inhabitants over the age of 65 – a number that is likely to double within the next two decades – and a growing population, The Hague is taking the lead in creating a future-proof city. A city, where senior citizens can live a self-reliant, active and purposeful life.

The Hague inspires its citizens to remain active and vital. It provides social support to combat loneliness and to promote social participation and a sense of community. The city works closely together with organizations and communities to keep neighbourhoods accessible and safe. The Hague Age-Friendly City Policy is targeted at senior citizens (over-65s) and is designed to encourage them to play their part in implementing the programme of the city's governing coalition. That programme is based on three priorities:

1. Improving vitality
2. Reducing loneliness
3. Encouraging and facilitating self-reliant living

The city addresses these issues and priorities by motivating and activating citizens and through cooperation with other organisations and enterprises. Citizens are encouraged to take the initiative and share responsibility for achieving the goals of the programme. With funds from the city and its partners, alliances are formed to meet the needs and wishes of senior citizens in The Hague.

## *Age-friendly city developments 2014-2020*

The Hague wants to be an inclusive city, where everybody feels at home. It is the first Dutch city to join the WHO-network of Age-friendly cities. Since 2014, the policy of The Hague has focussed on participation, support and care of older citizens in particular. The participation element has been particularly successful in ensuring that more older people continue to take part in society, by helping them to enjoy meaningful activities and generally engaging with 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. 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 WHO's eight domains of age-friendly city life. An infographic for The Hague Age-Friendly City (<https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Infographic-The-Hague-Age-friendly-City.pdf>) 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.

In 2017, The Hague hosted the Age-Friendly City Conference (<http://www.thehague-agefriendlycity.com/conference>), the view of the city's residents on what The Hague means to them as an age-friendly city is presented:

- **Outdoor spaces and buildings:** An Age-friendly city is pleasant and clean.
- **Transportation:** An Age-friendly city has suitable transport for everyone. Public transport is easily accessible and affordable, and there is special transportation for those who need it.
- **Housing:** An Age-friendly city has well-built and accessible housing for the elderly.
- **Social participation:** An Age-friendly city involves the elderly in leisure, social and cultural activities.
- **Civic participation and employment:** An Age-friendly city includes its citizens and offers sufficient possibilities for senior citizens to be involved.
- **Communication and information:** An Age-friendly city provides good communication and information.
- **Respect and social inclusion:** An Age-friendly city treats everyone with respect and encourages interaction between all age-groups.
- **Community and health services:** An Age-friendly city provides sufficient affordable care for everyone.

After local elections in March 2018, a new board of the City Council was elected and appointed. The new Board continues to implement age-friendly (or to be more specific senior-friendly) measures in the city.

In March 2020, the municipality of the Hague appointed a consortium consisting of The Hague University of Applied Sciences (professor Joost van Hoof, Urban Ageing), Hulsebosch Advies (Loes Hulsebosch) and AFEdemy (Willeke van Staalduinen) to develop and put in place a programme to make The Hague an age-friendly city. The consortium was charged with the task of monitoring the programme's progress using qualitative and quantitative research methods addressing specific themes. The consortium set up a platform whereby stakeholders involved in the care and welfare of older adults could come together and in partnership reflect on the progress of the programme. Eventually an advisory report based on the programme's results, together with global

national and local trends will be presented to the municipality. Specifically, the main tasks of the consortium will be to define the specific themes of age-friendly city The Hague in close cooperation with older adults and civil servants. The consortium will develop a methodological framework of indicators for research and will provide an additional questionnaire. Focus group meetings will be held and about 500 older adults from The Hague will be interviewed taking into account the diversity of the older population in The Hague. The initial planning is to deliver the report on the 30th November 2020.

## DESIGN OF THE AGE-FRIENDLY THE HAGUE STUDY TOUR

Making use of the experience and feedback from the participants of the Age-friendly cities conference in The Hague in 2017, AFEdeMy prepared a draft five-day programme for the visit of foreign older adults to The Hague.

AFEdeMy's request to receive older age Erasmus+ learners from project partner countries was very well received by every professional and every organisation approached. The organisations were very much willing to host AFE activists and introduce themselves. They were helpful in finding the best locations and providing lunches/coffee and tea. Sometimes the timing of the visit was problematic so that, for example, the programme on Tuesday (the second day) was very full compared to the other days.



## PROJECTS AND LOCAL INITIATIVES

During the Age-friendly Cities Conference of 2017, the conference participants paid visits to several locations in The Hague. These locations were included in the 2019 study tour too.

of the study visit with contact details of host organisation is available at the project website.

## Living Room Laakse Lente

More than fifty percent of older people in The Hague experience some degree of loneliness. Laakse Lente is a foundation started by Netty and Leo Olffers in 2012 in response to The Hague Executive Board's decision to close most community centres in local neighbourhoods in 2011. Netty came up with the idea for the Laakse Lente after the Lipa community centre was closed due to budget cuts. "Where should we go now?", many older people wondered. Netty then suggested using their living room as a meeting space. They hope that other residents of The Hague will take over their initiative. "Loneliness is enormous in our society. I think people should look at each other more", says Leo.

Leo and Netty have their living room open to older people from all over The Hague from Monday to Friday between 10 AM and noon. The initiative has been alive already for eight years. "It is as regular as a bus," says Leo. People can come here for a cup of coffee with something tasty and a chat. "The regular visitors know that they can remain seated after twelve o'clock to talk in private," says Leo. That often happens, but seniors can also turn to Leo and Netty at any other time of the day. Even in the middle of the night, for example. Leo was able to prevent attempts of suicide on three separate occasions. Monday, Tuesday and Thursday are the busiest days. The living room is sometimes full of as many as twenty elderly people sharing joys and sorrows with each other or just chatting about cows and calves. One of them is Albert Huisman. "If you have a problem, you can always knock on the door." Alie van Ruiten agrees: "I'm not lonely, I have nice children. But I meet lovely people here and it is fun".



The office hours of the couple in The Hague are immensely popular. On this weekday, the living room is packed, but every time the doorbell rings, Netty still pulls a chair from somewhere. In the meantime, the coffee maker simmers non-stop. They go through gallons of coffee each week, which is why the residents of The Hague are asked for a five euro contribution per month for the coffee and cakes.

In addition, they organize activities in the neighbourhood for six consecutive weeks during the summer holidays. Leo does notice that professional organizations sometimes look at the living room consultation hour with suspicion.

Some videos about the activities in the Living Room Laakste Lente are available on youtube:

<https://www.facebook.com/Fonds1818/videos/319060488655240/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAhK8gFqLz0>

*“We visited a family in a Dutch row house. The residents had a great idea years ago by making their house open to the public. Older people from the neighbourhood come here regularly. They all sit together in the rather small living room, sometimes up to 40 people at the same time, they are served by the house owners with coffee, cake and other delicacies. Lonely people can at least temporarily get away and maintain contacts and have discussions with people of the same fate. The house owner and initiator of this event has already been awarded a high order of the Dutch Royal family.”*  
Jörg, participant from Hanau.

## **ICT for independent living, smart living and housing at IZI house**

The majority of older people, even if they become vulnerable, want to continue living in their own homes. Technology can help with this by enabling them to remain self-reliant and to stay in contact with the people they know and can rely on. The municipality therefore works together with partners and residents on the development and implementation of innovative healthcare technology. This technology helps older people to live healthily and independently for longer, and to stay in touch with their environment: family, friends, and informal carers. Examples of innovative healthcare solutions can already be found in abundance in The Hague:

- Social robot that brings structure to the lives of people with dementia
- Robot cat to provide company
- Smart walker with customized fitness exercises and built-in video calling

- Lifestyle sensors that register daily movements, and report trends and incidents to the social network or care providers of the user

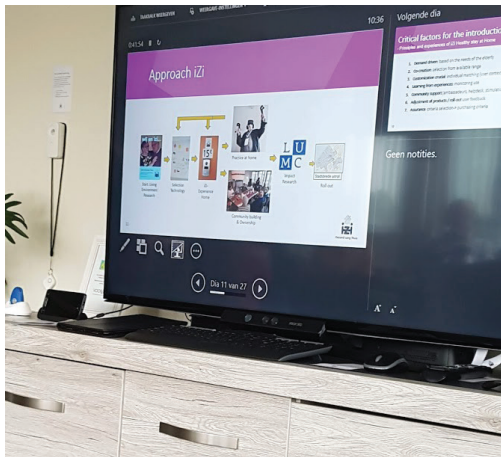


In the iZi Livinglab residents and technology developers test whether new applications work well and whether they meet their needs. In this way they make an important contribution to the improvement and further development of applications.

Residents can also take a look at the iZi canal house. In this 3-room apartment on the Steenhouwersgaarde in The Hague, there are over 90 smart solutions that can make the lives of the older people easier and more pleasant. Consider the beneficial effect of having sensors in the house measuring the occupants' lifestyle, social and care robots, tablets specifically designed for older people, or personal alarms.

iZi is an initiative of the municipality of The Hague. In November 2018, the iZi Healthy Long Home program won the international Smart City Award 2018, in the Inclusive & Sharing Cities category.

*“We were welcomed very nicely in a model apartment, where a lot of interesting and handy electronic gadgets and other helpers had been installed, which were all demonstrated and explained to us very helpfully. There was also coffee and we could ask a lot of questions.”*  
 Jörg, Participant from Hanau



## ***Dementheek at Schroeder: community centre of the future***

More and more people have to deal with dementia. Close relatives, informal carers and local residents often do not know how to spot the early signs of dementia and how to deal with people with dementia. Florence residential care home Wijndaeler-center came with an idea of Dementheek – advisory and lending centres providing support and information on dementia, giving lectures, lending books and CDs, and distributing leaflets. In February 2019 a second Dementheek was opened in The Hague in cooperation with Schroeder, a private business retail chain. The aim of the Dementheek is to provide support to people with early dementia and to family, informal carers and professionals.



The space for activities is provided by Schroeder in a thrift store, whilst services are rendered by social workers from the municipal organisation Haags Ontmoeten. They organize workshops on the theme of loss of control and dementia. They also hold peer and informal care meetings, lectures, activities such

as memory training, talks about healthy food, short trips, and information exchange. Everyone is welcome to drop in at Dementheek.

*“A commendable synergy between private and public sectors, volunteers working along with professionals to support old people and their families.”*

Edita, participant from Kaunas

## **Haags Ontmoeten – Het Zamen**

“The Hague Meeting” are places in the city districts where all independently living older people and their caregivers can walk in freely. It is a place to meet, share experiences and relax. You can have a drink together and / or participate in all kinds of activities from eating together, playing games, practising daily activities to memory training. Such meeting places in the neighbourhood are close to older people’s homes, they are familiar and safe. Carers can get information and support here. A lot of work is done by volunteers and interns, but a professional is always around. Training, information, and instruction is provided for older people and their informal carers so that older people can remain independent for longer and informal carers can continue caring for longer. The activities are focused on giving meaning and structure to the day, learning in a group, feeling the pleasure of life and self-reliance. Haags Ontmoeten was set up on the initiative of the Municipality of The Hague as part of The Hague Senior Friendly City and the Informal Care action program.



The Hague Meeting location Het Zamen is part of residential care home Het Zamen, a cooperative initiative from Foundation Eykenburg, Humanitas DMH, housing company Staedion and the municipality of The Hague. Het Zamen was founded in 2013. It contains 132 houses for independent liv-

ing, a nursing home the Hospice “Claude Monet” and a diagnostic centre for people with memory problems. On the ground floor Het Zamen offers a restaurant that is open the whole day.



## **Projects with older residents in ESCAMP LIBRARY**

Story Tables are organized by Escamp Library in association with The Hague Municipal Archive and The Hague Memories working group of the Historical Museum of The Hague. Older people living in The Hague reminisce about the city and its residents and then make a story from that. In 2012 these tales were published as a book together with an audio CD. Subsequently the memories have been recorded on film as Digi-tales. So new media and stories are used to record the cultural heritage of The Hague.

Each Story Table round results in ten stories from which Digi-tales can be made. At first people often find it difficult to tell their story. They don’t know each other and are hesitant to speak. But over time and as they see each other more often – they meet seven times altogether – people start to relax and open up more. They help each other to remember, sometimes unpleasant memories too. In no time they become a close-knit group. Volunteers help the storytellers to write their story, find illustrations and carry out the filming. Pieter Sekeris, one of the volunteers, says that he always enjoys the meetings. For him it is wonderful to hear what other people have experienced in their lives, and he has also made new friends and acquaintances as a result.



*“There we were invited to lunch, consisting of sandwiches, snacks and other little things like coffee, milk, buttermilk and tea that the Dutch like to have for lunch. In the library we listened to two lectures given by two librarians, who explained how the modern library works in Holland. There, the idea of a library where the employees, visitors and users have to be quiet, no longer applies. Instead there is a vibrant feel to the place. There are also a lot of children or parents with their children. There is a large selection of children’s books, and of course there is also an electronic connection for computers, tablets and e-books.”*

Jörg, participant from Hanau



*“There was a biographer, and two librarians working on the projects with older persons using computers. Among the volunteers there were also retired people, an impressive example of social participation of citizens over 65 years old (older citizens assisting their peers).”*

Janet, participant from Vienna

## LECTURES AND PRACTICES

### Urban ageing

A lecture on urban ageing was given by Professor Joost van Hoof at The Hague University of Applied Science on 7 October 2019.

Urban ageing is an emerging domain in social and health sciences. It deals with both ageing of the population and living in cities, with implications for architecture, building, urban planning and real estate management.

Professor Joost van Hoof presented the educational project “Age-friendly cities in the Netherlands: An explorative study of facilitators and hindrances in the built environment and ageism in design” done by university students guided by professors from the research group on Urban Ageing. A qualitative photoproduction study based on the Checklist of Essential Features of Age-Friendly Cities was conducted in five neighbourhoods of The Hague and Zoetermeer. Both municipalities have a large number of visual age-friendly features, which are manifested in five domains of the WHO model, namely Communication and information; Housing; Transportation; Community support and health services; and Outdoor spaces and buildings. Age-stereotypes, both positive and negative, can be observed in the domain of Communication and information, especially in the depiction of third agers as winners. At the same time, older people and age-friendly features are very visible in the cityscapes of both municipalities, and this is a positive expression of the changing demographics.<sup>6</sup>





*“The points highlighted in the presentation were clearly visible in reality on the ground. Safety and better facilities for the elderly begin with easy-to-reach railways and buses, good ways without barriers to shops, and stairs with well-placed handrails. Then the footpaths were sharply demarcated from the bicycle paths, which may also be used by mopeds, electric scooters and vehicles for the disabled. The discipline of the road users also made a very good impression on me. At all crosswalks we passed, all drivers automatically stopped without extra traffic lights being installed at all.”*

Jörg, participant from Hanau

*“As older persons we are often referred to as a burden for society. As we have learned, it is finally time that we be given more social space and visibility.”*

Argentina, participant from Rome

## **Age-related public health issues: fall prevention, elderly abuse**

Short interactive lectures on age-related public health were given to the participants at the Sport Campus Zuiderpark. During the day the sports facilities are used for education by The Hague University of Applied Sciences and ROC Mondriaan International Hotel and Management School, and for performance training by a variety of elite sports organisations. During the evening and at weekends the facilities are made available to anyone wishing to engage in one of the many activities on offer.

A team from The Hague Region municipal health service gave a presentation on the programmes run by the Public Health Office. The programmes are based on **themes suggested by the municipalities**. The following topics were covered in the presentations: loneliness, informal care, elder abuse, safety

at home, malnutrition, changing law (live longer at home, live with others, other indications for medicines or admission to nursing home).

The health promotion programmes are based on the concept of vital ageing and on the revised definition of health. The topics highlighted: positive health, fall prevention and elder abuse prevention.

### Department health promotion

**=> aim = vital ageing**

**life line:**  
start healthy -> grow up healthy -> stay healthy -> vital ageing  
= healthy older person

---

### Old ⇔ new definition of health

**Old:**  
'A state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.'

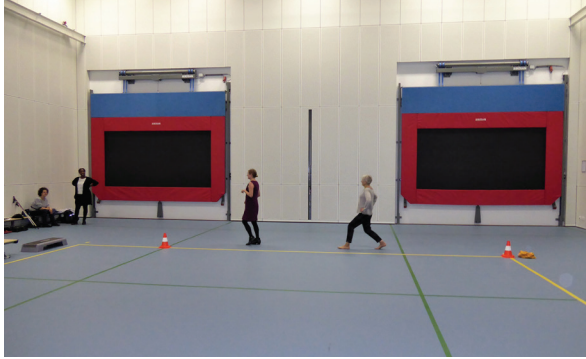
↑↓

**New:**  
'Health as the ability to adapt and to self manage, in the face of social, physical and emotional challenges' (Machteld Huber)

Figure 3. Slides from the presentation by Bernadette Bos, Fatima Nur, Paul ter Wee, Ellen Boszhard, © GGD Haaglanden

*“We met in an almost new, two-year-old, huge sports arena, which was a multi-system with various playgrounds for all kinds of ball and basket sports with partially changeable hall walls. There we also received several interesting lectures. We were also invited to do some exercises led by students, who plan and deliver exercise sessions to older people as part of their training curriculum.”*

Jörg, participant from Hanau



“The Sports Campus is a place for collaboration between education, sports, sport science and the community. Sport students from the Haagse Hogeschool have classes here. The importance of sport and exercise is emphasised through learning and engagement.”  
Jurgita, participant from Kaunas

## MEETINGS

### Meeting at Community Centre Transvaal

Participants of AFE Activists training and Dutch volunteers hosted the reception of the adult learners of the study tour in the community centre Mandelaplein where AFE Activists training took place. The building also houses Shanti Transvaal – the organisation of Surinam-Hindustan people in The Hague.

In the municipal policy of The Hague, Transvaal is labelled as a deprived area. In 2019, the neighbourhood counted 16 257 inhabitants. 9.4% of them were older than 65 years of age. 92.7% of the population of Transvaal have migratory background. There are living in Transvaal approximately 4 300 people with a Turkish background, 2 200 persons from Morocco, 3 100 from Surinam and 1 100 people with an original Dutch background. Other non-Western inhabitants

are about 2 000 people. The educational level in the neighbourhood is low in comparison with the average in The Netherlands and The Hague. 60% of the population has a low educational level. The average income level in Transvaal is also lower than the average income in The Hague.

The meeting was opened by Gerben Hagens, director for Social Support, Youth and Health of the municipality of The Hague. He welcomed the international group and introduced the city policy on age-friendliness and senior-friendliness. Director of Community Centre Mandelaplein Marije Talstra explained how the community centre operates and what social participation and education activities are held there. After the official presentations AFE Activists project participants from five countries had the opportunity to socialise, to listen to Surinam-Hindustan music, to learn about different cultures and traditions.

*“Participation in this musical event was a highlight of the tour as we actually got to have direct contact with the people/clients from the community centre. We met them and also shared some laughter and dancing.”*  
Janet, participant from Vienna





## ***Meeting with Older People's Council's Chair Gert van Capelleveen at Het Zamen***

The Older People's Council The Hague (SOC) has a 30-years' history as an independent advisory body financed by the municipality. It is one of the most successful multicultural consultative bodies for seniors in the Netherlands. It is the point of contact and the voice of the elderly in the city of The Hague. SOC provides solicited and unsolicited advice to the alderman of The Hague (city-executive).

SOC focuses on three age-friendly city domains: Housing, Participation and Health. In other AFE domains, SOC seeks support from other stakeholders, including professional bodies, to give substance to those areas.

(i)**Housing.** The Dutch Government's policy is aimed at creating opportunities for older people to live in their own homes for as long as possible. To this end SOC conducted a study into the feasibility implementing this policy. The survey findings showed that one in eight seniors will not be able to continue living in their own home. More than 30% of the surveyed seniors indicated that certain adjustments at home are required for independent living at home in old age. Another finding revealed the need for targeted and clear information. SOC wants to organise a wide-ranging meeting with different partners, where various stakeholders can present their visions, plans and opportunities for older citizens. This can be done in the way of a housing information exchange on information boards, for example in the Atrium of the Town Hall, followed up by several smaller meetings that suit the information needs of various city districts. SOC wants to improve information and communication in collaboration with other organizations and the municipality.

(ii)**Participation.** SOC sees participation as a very important objective. In general, active older people feel better, are healthier and happier. In 2018 SOC came up with an idea to publish a Participation Handbook in collaboration with the Haagse Hogeschool (HHS). The Handbook will present objectives, instruments, methods and solutions for and by older people that are necessary for good civil and social participation. The Participation Working Group of SOC will provide assistance in the preparation of this Handbook.

(iii)**Health.** The Municipality of The Hague in partnership with Leiden University Medical Centre (LUMC) believe that healthcare and welfare should be inextricably linked, but in practice this is not always the case. The Hague seeks to become one of the most innovative regions in the Netherlands achieving improved health and happiness among its residents

whilst eliminating any disparities caused by poverty, thereby ensuring that:

1. Residents live healthy, happy and safe lives at home for as long as possible
2. Less care is needed
3. Vulnerable residents are more satisfied with the support / care they receive
4. Stakeholders in the care and welfare sectors work together to meet the needs of each individual patient residing in Haaglanden rather than independently of each other

The following strategic goals have been formulated:

1. From "professional in the lead" to "resident / patient in the lead"
2. From care, illness and disability to behaviour and (positive) health
3. From acute deployment of care to prevention and early identification
4. From chronic care in a hospital or mental health facility to chronic care in a neighbourhood network
5. Making use of data and future customer wishes to set up and evaluate targeted interventions for subgroups.

SOC will contribute to this by collecting input from citizens.

*"In Het Zamen, we also met the head of the "Older People's Council The Hague" – a body comparable to the Senior Advisory Board in Hanau. This organization has existed for almost thirty years."*  
Jörg, participant from Hanau

## ***Meeting with public servants at the City Hall***

The civil servants of the municipality, especially the workers involved in the development of policies related to older people, housing and transportation, give shape to the age-friendly policy of The Hague. They prepare age-friendly policy and action plans and are in contact with the citizens and relevant organisations of The Hague.

The civil servants hosted a meeting with the international group of learners on the study tour and prepared interactive sessions to discuss elements of an age-friendly policy and local solutions on housing, health, and transportation.

The group of AFE Activists project participants from Austria, Germany, Italy and Lithuania was split into two smaller groups to discuss real-life AFE issues currently dealt with in The Hague. Both groups participated separately in two sessions with urban planners and communication specialists.



Urban planners discussed the new arrangements in a shopping street which was closed to cars and transformed into an area for pedestrians only. A second issue was the area in front of the municipality building, where all forms of mobility exist: pedestrians, tram, bus, cars and motorcycles, bicycles. City planners are looking for solutions to increase the safety of pedestrians, especially the older ones, and involved the AFE activists from the international group in brainstorming for new ideas. All personal opinions and experiences of the study visit participants were noted.

The session with communication specialists brainstormed the issue as to how to reach older age citizens with a lower profile in terms of education, migration background (not speaking Dutch or English), low income, poor or absent IT skills, absent or very narrow social networks (loneliness).

*“I was able to record a lot of interesting points. As an outside observer, I found out that the Dutch “tackle” many problems differently and “more lightly” than we Germans and Austrians do in view of the aging society.”*

Jörg, participant from Hanau

*“Experiencing how an age-friendly city functions has convinced me that a lot still needs to be done to make my own city age-friendly. An inspiring study visit, it gave me a lot of ideas.” –*

Teresa, participant from Rome

## CHAPTER 4. STUDY VISIT TO UDINE

The study visit was planned to take place in March 2-6, 2020, however it was cancelled due to the ban of all meetings and visits decided by the Italian Government following the outbreak of COVID 19.

The programme was designed together with the Udine Municipality WHO Healthy Cities Office. Its response to the request for cooperation within the AFE Activists project was very positive and included the sharing of key age-friendly city's data, documents and materials produced by the Municipality and by the Regional Government of Friuli Venezia Giulia, the region to which Udine belongs.

The envisaged meetings and visits aimed, on one hand, to present to the European colleagues the main policy guidelines, programmes and activities developed in Udine and their interactions at an international level, while on the other, to foster the exchange of experiences and information of the partners from Austria, Germany, Lithuania and the Netherlands for possible follow-ups in the future.

Although the study visit did not take place, the programme planned for this AFEActivists project is now set out in this Handbook.

### Age Friendly City Udine

**Stefania Pascut and Riccardo Riva, WHO Healthy Cities Office at the Municipality Udine**



Udine with the total population of 99 377 is a city in north-eastern Italy, in the Friuli Venezia Giulia region. Located between the Adriatic Sea and the Alps, it is less than 40 km from Slovenia and 90 km from Austria.

In the last decades Udine has experienced a steady growth of its elderly population with older people (over 60) representing 31.6% of the population. Nowadays senior citizens in Udine are therefore a very important segment of the population. Since healthy life years have not increased in parallel to life expectancy, elderly people often require greater care and social assistance.

However, provided ageing is conceived as still an active phase in life, senior citizens can become a truly valuable civic asset in developing a sustainable, responsible, and morally resilient society.

For this reason our city has been very much committed to promoting active and healthy ageing, by being part of European and international networks and by raising awareness about this theme at the local and regional level. The result has been a series of actions and activities which have been included in a systematic and strategic policy aimed at promoting older people's healthy ageing and at better meeting their needs. Taking the older age group as a priority area, different approaches were combined to raise awareness on demographic ageing.

The most important actions undertaken have been:

- Becoming a member of the Age-Friendly Cities Network and of the Healthy Ageing Task Force within the WHO Healthy Cities Programme with the aim of sharing knowledge, tools and experiences with cities and developing new actions to face the demographic change.
- Producing a Healthy Ageing Profile (HAP) with the aim to get the overall understanding of the local context and to provide evidence as a basis for setting priorities and taking decisions. HAP 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 Observatory following the idea of matching HAP indicators and Active Ageing Index.
- Mapping the distribution of the elderly on the city's territory (using GIS) and matching with the provision of public, health and social services offered to the community (such as general practitioners, post offices, recreational facilities, care centres, chemists, bus stops, etc.), and designing "health maps" of the urban environment.
- Pioneering the 'Vancouver Protocol' which asked citizens, caregivers and service providers to evaluate 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 deter-

mine investment priorities. Udine also participated in a pilot study on measuring the age-friendliness of cities that fed into a new guide on using core indicators developed by the WHO Centre for Health Development.

- Carrying out a European project on healthy ageing within the URBACT programme, aimed at sharing, improving and transferring good practices among cities (Edinburgh, Brighton & Hove, Grand Poitiers and Klaipeda).
- Joining the Covenant on Demographic Change (December 2015) and participating in the activities of many European Organisation and programmes, such as AFE-INNOVNET, the European Innovation Partnership, the Joint Programming Initiative (JPI) Urban Europe, the AGE Platform Europe, the AFEE – Age Friendly Environments in Europe.
- Promoting opportunities for older people to remain physically, mentally and socially active as long as possible through actions and initiatives at the local level. 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 population in later years as a very effective way of preventing and lowering the high costs associated with health and social services and fostering intergenerational relationships.
- Fostering city health diplomacy initiatives within the Friuli Venezia Giulia region, nationally and within the WHO European network.

## PROJECTS AND LOCAL INITIATIVES

### *Toy / Game Library*

The Municipality of Udine has developed an urban practice focusing on the use of games as flexible, innovative place-making paradigm for fostering an equitable and democratic society. Games are used as vehicles for addressing healthy lifestyles and energy awareness. Games foster the inclusion of migrants, the involvement of elderly people and promote a better relationship between parents and children. "Games offer unique opportunities for engaging stakeholders in contemporary cities", says Ileana Toscano, an urban planner with first-hand experience in developing innovative and sustainable urban projects and *URBACT* expert of the Playful Paradigm transfer network. Games in Udine have be-

come an urban policy priority that enables citizens' participation and a peaceful civic environment. The *'Playful Paradigm'* initiatives are part of a comprehensive strategy that the Municipality has been implementing for years under the umbrella of the *Healthy Cities Project (World Health Organization)* and the *European Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy*.

Paolo Munini, Chief Officer for gaming activities of Udine Municipality: "Games are essential for child development. Games are also important for elderly people because they maintain the physical and cognitive activity and prevent mental cognitive decay. Playful activities are powerful tools when applied in cities. Games can be used for working in deprived neighbourhoods with local community or in schools with students. They can trigger the participation of civil society, engaging citizens and local associations."

In 2012 the Municipality of Udine launched a Ludobus initiative, which grew into a permanent service – a public Toy Library in the city centre. Since 2013, 40.000 people have visited it. It is fully accessible and there is no age, gender or language restriction. It has become the emblem of social inclusion, cognitive stimulation, entertainment and lifelong learning in the city. During these years, the Municipality has invested about EUR 150,000 a year for the maintenance and equipment of the infrastructure and staff.

Since 2010 the City of Udine has been the leading city of the Italian Playful Cities Movement (GIONA), coordinating and sharing knowledge and experience with about 30 cities in Italy willing to implement 'gamification' strategies. Udine is also a member of the national association "Ali per Giocare" (Wings to play) which unites private and public organisations at national level.

On 25 November 2017, Udine launched the Italian National Games Archive aiming to establish the first Italian classification of traditional and modern games. Moreover, Udine has a rich yearly calendar of events where games and 'gamification' strategies are meaningfully put into practice. The events are very popular across the region and bring many visitors to Udine. For example: Cammina Menti (Move your minds) run in community centres for dementia prevention and inclusion of elderly people, as well as the Energy in Play annual Fair, the World Games Day, Pi Day, Darwin Day and the library of living books.

## Lettori volontari (Reading volunteers)

The V. Joppi public library, in collaboration with the Healthy Cities and the Social Services offices of the Municipality, organizes training courses, which include:

- One introductory meeting and presentation of the project.
- Four mandatory two-hour training sessions on reading aloud techniques; tools for critical evaluation; and book choice.
- The necessity to be available 30 hours per annum, for reading at the homes of the elderly.



The aim of the project is to train reading volunteers to read to elderly people in long-term care settings and at home. The training is given by the members of creative expression association Dramatra and social workers from residential care facility La Quiete. The reading volunteers do not need to have any acting skills, only the motivation to dedicate their time for reading to people with motor or visual impairment, in situations of hardship, loneliness or illness.

Reading volunteers' initiative has many benefits. These include fostering intergenerational relationships and alleviating disabilities affecting long-term care home residents. Volunteers benefit from access to free public services such as libraries. The main advantage is consolidating social networks in areas of the city where historically it has been more difficult to do so.



## *No alla Solit'Udine (No to solitude)*



The project involves 23 non-profit NGOs in Udine. Across the spectrum, these include the time bank, the third age university, and the providers of social assistance. In cooperation with the Municipality they join efforts to help needy older persons in their daily tasks and facilitate their social participation.

Beneficiaries of the services are Udine residents over 65 years of age who live alone, have no family connections, and have frailty issues of varying degrees due to low income or other critical conditions.

### **The objectives** of the initiative are:

- To satisfy personal daily needs.
- To reduce solitude while avoiding the feeling of being abandoned.
- To listen, to inform, to accompany and mediate with the public social services.
- To create relevant social relations hips, taking advantage of all the available local resources and contacts.

### **The Services** offered are:

- Collection and home delivery of medical check-up results.
- Collection and home delivery of medicines.
- Food and other daily needs, shopping and home delivery.
- Small home fixing and repair works.
- Company at home and outside the home (walks, conversation)
- Transportation services.
- Booking for and accompanying to medical and health facilities
- "Supplying information on disabilities.
- Information about active ageing courses and initiatives.

### **How services are activated:**

There are two designated offices and a call centre with the number 800 2019 11 – both open from Monday to Friday between 08:30 and 13:00. During other times and days the calls are received an answering machine and answered in person as soon as possible.

## *Misura il tuo respiro (Measure your breath)*

The "Measure your breath" campaign, created by the non-profit Association of insufficient respirators (AIR) Friuli Venezia Giulia, promotes respiratory disease prevention and raises awareness among the population to respect their health.

Every third Wednesday of the month, from 09:00 to 12:00, a service is offered, in an ad hoc venue, publicised through local media and third sector groups and associations, to carry out free respiratory tests. The visits performed voluntarily by lung specialists and respiratory technicians are free and take place without the necessity of prior appointments.

The service is open to everyone, including non-AIR members and is aimed, in particular, at smokers. Given the great success of the initiative and the system of no prior reservations in the days preceding the test, interested people are invited to report to the via San Valentino 20 medical district between 08:00 and 08.30 a.m. Access to the first 20 people is guaranteed by 12:00 noon.

The AIR initiative is carried out in collaboration with the Udine health authorities, the Healthy Cities office of the Municipality and the Centre for Social Pneumology.



## The Friuli Venezia Giulia regional dimension

The study visit programme included a visit to the Trieste Friuli Venezia Giulia Regional Government headquarters, with meetings with Gianna Zamaro, Regional Health Department Director and Furio Honsell, currently a member of the Friuli Venezia Giulia Regional Parliament, a former Udine University Dean (2001-2008), Mayor of Udine (2008-2018), who during his mandate has considerably developed the city's age-friendly policies.

Italian Regions, like the German Laender, have legislative powers and, therefore, it is relevant to share the bottom-up impact which the Udine Municipality has achieved, by multiplying the effects of its involvement in age-friendly policies at regional level, but also with the areas bordering Austria and Slovenia.

The meetings, in addition to the regional law on active ageing and the regional health diplomacy initiatives, were focused on the **Friuli Venezia Giulia Rete Città Sane** (Healthy cities network), currently with 55 member Municipalities in the region.

The network has the following objectives:

- To foster multi-level health-for-all and sustainable development governance, locally and regionally, supporting Mayors' proactivity towards the Regional Government.
- To enhance the regional exchange of

knowledge, experiences and best practices to improve, in an age-friendly perspective, the citizens' quality of life.

- To support the expansion of the WHO Healthy Cities project approach in the small Friuli Venezia Giulia Municipalities.

An example of a successful two-year action plan implemented by the network is the project **ADESSO - Salute e Sicurezza** (Now – Health and Security), developed by the Regional Health Department, with all the network's Municipalities and the Universities of Udine and Trieste.

And in COVID-19 times: **Distanti 1 metro, vicini 1 secondo** (Distance 1 metre, Close proximity 1 second)

During the COVID-19 emergency, as an alternative to several meetings and conferences which had been planned, the Udine Municipality has launched weekly video conferences, taking place in the months of April and May 2020. These set out to oppose solitude and isolation, exploring the various dynamics involved and offering a virtual space for being together.

Participation has been made possible through the YouTube channel link:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC08E65Q4\\_c4002ZB5bz\\_wtg/featured](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC08E65Q4_c4002ZB5bz_wtg/featured)

The project has been created by **ARTESS** (Association for Research and Training on Emotional Support Skills) and **IFOTES** (International Federation of Telephone Emergency Services) and is part of the Municipality's **Solitudini e No** (Solitudes and No) campaign.

## CHAPTER 5. LESSONS LEARNED AND GENERAL ADVICE FOR THE FUTURE

### Preparation of participants

To ensure people attending get the most out of the study visit experience, it is vital to plan pre-departure preparation with participants in the study visit. A description of activities and organisations to be visited as well as a detailed time schedule helps participants to prepare themselves for the meetings (e.g. collecting concrete questions, dealing with the issues in advance) and learn about specifics of the city (e.g. "Please take your credit/bank card with you, a lot of shops and restaurant are cash-free"). Special needs of participants (e.g. mobility limitations, languages skills) should be discussed with the study visit organizers in advance and the strategies of coping should be developed via direct communication.

### Orientation meeting

As participants are going to spend an intensive time and work together during the whole study visit,

it is important that they know each other, especially as regards developing mutual respect and trust and recognising the diversity within the group. Therefore, it is recommended to schedule a couple of hours for a joint welcoming session at the beginning of the study visit (e.g. the first half day) that may include:

- a brief set of initial icebreaker activities to support the group in getting to know each other
- an overview on the whole study visit (who we are going to meet, timetable, etc.)
- information on specifics of the study visit city (e.g. where can I buy tickets for the public transport, restaurants nearby the hotel, possibility to pay cash vs. cash-free restaurants/shops)
- an agreement on the code of conduct: how we are going to work/interact/communicate with each other
- agreement on the objectives of the visit

- agreement on responsibilities (e.g. observation sheets, etc.)
- questions & answers

### **Information meetings**

Short information meetings are advised at the start or end of the day to review the schedule timing, transportation, the actual logistics of the day, weather, last minute changes, etc.

### **Official study visit dinner**

Participants might be happy to have some leisure time after an intense study visit day and may prefer individual dinners. However, at least one joint dinner proved to promote the exchange between participants and support the group building process.

### **Sharing responsibilities and contacts**

Responsibilities should be shared between all partners (e.g. who is guiding participants from A to B, who is responsible for taking pictures, who gets in contact with hosting organisations/restaurants, who has a special eye on the well-being of participants). It is important to discuss different tasks and agree on responsibilities in advance. Considering a participatory approach, also participants could be asked for taking over some tasks (according to their talents, interests and wishes). To support the possible joint follow-up initiatives with the hosts and/or visited projects and organisations, it is wise to exchange contacts at the end of meetings / visits.

### **Coming from A to B**

Certain organizational tasks during the study visit can be delegated to the participants. It might be helpful to identify one or two persons who would guide the participants from A to B. Preferably the guide is familiar with the place and public transport at the study visit location. Furthermore, it is important to consider the weather and the mobility of participants. Consider that taxis might be needed at short notice if participants are too tired to use public transport or it starts raining.

### **Preparing participants for the specialities of organisation**

Some organisations might require a special behaviour. For example, in case the meeting with the manager and staff takes place in an open space, there might be other people talking and making noises. It might be helpful to raise awareness among the visitors that they are guests and do not want to disturb routines and practices in the organisation.

### **Hand-outs**

Be aware that there might be much diversity among participants in terms of language skills. Furthermore, people differ in their information-seeking

tendencies. It might be easier for them to follow presentations when written material is provided. Notes can be made directly on the hand-outs.

### **In-between sessions**

Schedule some time for short and informal “in-between-meetings” of the team to make sure that every team member is informed on next steps and visits. Furthermore, possible disagreements and tensions in the group can be discussed and solutions can be found together.

### **Final Reflection**

We recommend scheduling some time (approx. 2 hours) for a final reflection session at the end of the study visit. Some interactive methods support participants to share their experiences and encourage learning in the group. Have a list of the group members contact emails or addresses to hand out with data sharing consent obtained in advance so that participants can be encouraged to keep in touch after the visit.

### **Accommodation**

When choosing a hotel make sure that it is accessible and barrier-free. It is very helpful if staff are made aware of the special needs of older people. It might also be helpful to choose a hotel, which also includes a restaurant or a bar. Participants might be tired in the evenings and prefer to stay in the hotel for dinner. A hotel lounge with a bar services may help to build informal social interactions between the participants in the evening.

*“A lot of interesting, thought-provoking and useful information has been shared during this visit: keeping informed and updated makes the difference!”*  
Angela, participant from Rome.

## **Implications for follow ups**

Visits to age-friendly cities are an attractive option for:

- organisers of educational visits
- exchange programmes (e.g. <https://www.ageing-better.org.uk/news/learning-about-culture-and-heritage-age-friendly-cities>)
- tourism sections U3As
- organisations planning mobility projects under Erasmus+ programme
- specialist visits for representatives of municipal agencies and/or care and welfare organizations
- researchers into ageing (e.g. <http://www.maak-deburgermeester.com/studiereizen>).

This Handbook highlights the various features and points of interest arising from a variety of case studies related to the later stages of life. Centres of education and culture for all citizens are now found in public libraries as well as other venues run in both the public and private domain.

The Global Age-friendly Cities Network at <https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/network/> is a good place to start looking for an age-friendly destination. Expert consultations on organising a study visit are also available from the project partner AFEdemy.





# ANNEXES

## Annex 1 PRE-STUDY VISIT QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear participant of the project "Age-friendly Environments Activists"!

You will go on a study visit to the age-friendly city The Hague, which will result, as we hope, in a positive learning experience.

We have developed a pre- and post-study visit questionnaires to assess the study tour and its outcomes.

Please fill in this questionnaire before your tour and return it to your coordinator.

Thank you for your time, and enjoy your tour in the age-friendly city The Hague!

**Study visit place: The Hague Dates: October 7–11, 2019**

**1. Please let us first know some personal details.**

Gender:  female  male  diverse

Age:  below 60  60-69 years  70-79 years  80+ years

Country:  Austria  Germany  Italy  Lithuania  Netherlands

**2. What are the three things that you would most like to learn during the study visit?**

• \_\_\_\_\_

• \_\_\_\_\_

• \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Do you have concerns as regards the study visit? If so, please list them below.**

• \_\_\_\_\_

• \_\_\_\_\_

• \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Have you already been active in promoting age-friendly environments?**

yes  no (please proceed with question 8)

**5. In which areas of age-friendly environments have you been active?**

<input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor spaces and buildings	<input type="checkbox"/> Civic participation and employment
<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Communication and information
<input type="checkbox"/> Housing	<input type="checkbox"/> Community support and health services
<input type="checkbox"/> Social participation	<input type="checkbox"/> Others, please specify:
<input type="checkbox"/> Respect and social inclusion	_____

**6. What did you do to promote an age-friendly environment?**

- Launching or participation in a public debate
- Giving advice to decision-makers
- Campaigning
- Working as a member of a committee
- Working in a voluntary association
- Joining a political party
- Initiating or promoting a survey on age-friendly environment issues
- Participating in on-site inspections
- Others, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**7. What did you do to promote an age-friendly environment?**

- Knowledge of age-friendly cities and communities  1  2  3  4  5
- Knowledge of urban planning  1  2  3  4  5
- Knowledge of lobby-work by older citizens  1  2  3  4  5
- Knowledge on utilities for people with dementia  1  2  3  4  5
- Knowledge of ambient assisted living technologies  1  2  3  4  5
- Skills to apply smart age-friendly technology  1  2  3  4  5
- Skills in cross-cultural communication  1  2  3  4  5
- English language skills  1  2  3  4  5

## *Annex 2*

### *POST-STUDY VISIT QUESTIONNAIRE*

**Study visit place: The Hague Dates: October 7–11, 2019**

**1. Please let us first know again some personal details.**

- Gender:  female  male  diverse
- Age:  below 60  60-69 years  70-79 years  80+ years
- Country:  Austria  Germany  Italy  Lithuania  Netherlands

Please answer the following questions using the rating scale from 1 to 5. 1 is the lowest rate and indicates strong dissatisfaction, while 5 means that you consider the item excellent.

**2. How do you assess the organisation of the study visit?**

- Information you received before the study visit  1  2  3  4  5
- Organisation of the study visit  1  2  3  4  5
- Duration and timing of the study visit  1  2  3  4  5

**3. How do you assess the contents and methods of the study visit?**

Activities to raise awareness of age-friendly environments	1	2	3	4	5
Age-friendly environments observation tasks	1	2	3	4	5
Activities to raise cross-cultural awareness	1	2	3	4	5

**4. How do you assess your own involvement?**

My own interest in age-friendly environments	1	2	3	4	5
Contribution of my own knowledge and expertise	1	2	3	4	5
Possibility to express my doubts and remarks	1	2	3	4	5

**5. How do you assess the travel, accommodation and catering arrangements?**

Travel arrangements	1	2	3	4	5
Accommodation	1	2	3	4	5
Catering arrangements	1	2	3	4	5

**6. What did you do to promote an age-friendly environment?**

Knowledge of age-friendly cities and communities	1	2	3	4	5
Knowledge of urban planning	1	2	3	4	5
Knowledge of lobby-work by older citizens	1	2	3	4	5
Knowledge on utilities for people with dementia	1	2	3	4	5
Knowledge of ambient assisted living technologies	1	2	3	4	5
Skills to apply smart age-friendly technology	1	2	3	4	5
Skills in cross-cultural communication	1	2	3	4	5
English language skills	1	2	3	4	5
Please add other skills gained (e.g. time management, adaptability, empathy, diversity, innovation, networking, etc.)					
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5

**7. What are the three most important things that you learned during the study visit?**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**8. What are the three things you enjoyed most of all the study visit?**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

9. What did you miss completely?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

10. Back at home, will you promote the idea that your city or community becomes a member of the WHO Age-friendly Cities Network? Please explain your answer.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

***THANK YOU FOR YOUR ANSWERS!***

## ***Annex 3***

### ***AGE-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT OBSERVATION SHEET***

Dear participant of the project "Age-friendly Environments Activists".

Welcome to the age-friendly city The Hague.

We have developed these observation sheets to involve you as an active observer of essential features for an age-friendly city.

During the study tour we will visit some organisations, institutions and facilities to learn more about age-friendliness of the city environments. Basing on the activities planned in the study tour, four domains, namely **Outdoor spaces and buildings, Transportation, Communication and information**, and **Social participation**, were picked for you to observe. Each domain has a list of attributes that influence the health and quality of life of older people in the city. Please read the attributes in advance and pay attention to them on the way to and from the places we will visit and during our activities there.

The description of the attributes is preceded by a circle. You are asked to cross the circle in green, yellow or red, or white, if you had not observed the attribute, as follows

- Well-developed age-friendly practice
- Some positive areas along with some barriers
- Real and absolute barriers to age-friendliness
- Not relevant

We would also like to know more about your personal impressions, so please add some comments in the space provided under the list of attributes. We advise to use the possibility of asking the local people about age-friendly environment issues of interest to you.

We will collect the sheets of your observations of the previous day in the morning of the next day before starting the activities planned.

Enjoy your study tour in age-friendly city The Hague!

Observation date: 7 October 2019

**Outdoor space and buildings**

- Green spaces in the neighbourhood
- Neighbourhood aesthetic
- Neighbourhood street connectivity
- Safety in the neighbourhood (adequate lighting, police patrols, surveillance cameras)
- Availability of benches with handlebars
- Quality of pavements (cracks and holes, dropped curbs to road level)
- Width of pavements (enough for a wheelchair, a motorized scooter or a walker to fit, clear of obstructions)
- Pedestrian crossings (sufficient in number and safe for people with different levels and types of disabilities, visual and audio cues, adequate crossing times)
- Buildings are well-signed outside and inside
- Services are situated together and are accessible
- Accessibility to public toilets outdoors and indoors
- Design of buildings (easy orientation, elevators, ramps, stairs, railings, sufficient seating)

Your personal observations:

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**Transportation**

- Facility accessible by public transport
- Distance from the bus stop to the facility
- Bus stops (conveniently located, accessible, safe, clean, well-lit and well-marked, with adequate seating and shelter)
- Information about fares, routes, schedules (easy to find, clearly displayed, understandable, fares affordable)
- Public transport availability (frequent, schedules observed, direct lines, transit convenience)
- Drivers' service mindedness (stop at designated stops, beside the curb, wait for passengers to be seated before driving off)
- Culture of public transportation (bus priority lanes observed, drivers give way to pedestrians at intersections and pedestrian crossings, traffic flow is well-regulated, vehicles are clean and well-maintained, priority seating is available and respected)
- Cycle paths are separate from pavements and other pedestrian walkways

Your personal observations:

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## Communication and information

- Printed information (large lettering, clear headings, bold face type, easy to understand signs and pictograms)
- Service counters (height, access by wheelchair or with walking aid)
- Communication of support staff (eye level contact, speak slowly and loudly enough)
- Printed and spoken communication (simple, familiar words, short, straightforward sentences)
- Access to computers and the Internet (no charge, used by older people)
- Distribution of information (notice boards, leaflet racks, posters with information about events of interest to older people)
- Dedicated information desk/line for older people
- Media broadcasts of interest to older people
- Visuals are used in parallel to text messages

Your personal observations:

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## Social participation

- Activities and events appealing to older people are organised
- Events are held at times convenient for older people
- Costs of activities the cost for transportation to get there are affordable
- The city has a centrally located Seniors Centre
- There are dedicated centres for seniors to engage in activities in the city districts
- Activities are specialised according to physical and cognitive functioning levels
- Public spaces and facilities, such as parks, libraries, schools, etc. are used for activities where older people feel welcomed
- Facilitators of activities make older people without a companion feel comfortable

Your personal observations:

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