

## Manifesto for an Age-Friendly European Union by 2020

### Stakeholders' Coalition for the European Year 2012 for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations

We are a growing coalition of stakeholders who promote a vision of a society for all ages where everyone is empowered to play an active part in society and enjoy equal rights and opportunities in all stages of their life regardless of age, sex, race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, social or economic status, sexual orientation, physical or mental condition, or need for care.

Achieving a society for all ages will require decision makers and all relevant stakeholders to take collective responsibility for designing new ways of organising our societies to ensure a fairer and more sustainable future for all generations. We believe that the current demographic change is a key opportunity for everyone to work together to **create an Age-Friendly European Union by 2020**.

#### What does creating an Age-Friendly European Union mean?

Creating an Age-Friendly European Union means fostering solidarity between generations and enabling the active participation and involvement of all age groups in society while providing them with adequate support and protection. Through an Age-Friendly European Union, every age and population group will benefit from:

1. A **positive attitude to ageing** that recognises the value of all age groups' identities and contribution to society;
2. An **inclusive labour market** that ensures the participation in paid work of younger and older people, including those with disabilities or chronic conditions, supports the intergenerational knowledge transfer and enables workers to both maintain their health and reconcile their work and private lives;
3. **Accessible outdoor spaces, buildings and transport as well as adapted housing and physical activity facilities** that promote independent living and participation in society for longer, while increasing opportunities for exchange within and across generations;
4. **Goods and services** that are **adapted to the needs** of all;
5. **Digital inclusion** to enable participation in the increasingly ICT-based society as citizens, employees, consumers, service users and carers, friends and family members;
6. The possibility to have a **voice in the decision-making and research processes** that affect them;
7. The opportunity to actively participate in **volunteering, cultural, sport and recreational activities**, thus creating and/or maintaining their social networks, gaining new competences and contributing to their personal fulfilment and wellbeing;
8. **Access to lifelong and intergenerational learning** to acquire new skills and knowledge at any age;

9. **Social protection systems based on intra- and inter-generational solidarity** that prevent and alleviate poverty, guarantee adequacy of old-age income and sustainability of pension schemes for both current and future generations, ensure access to quality social and healthcare services across the life course and support informal carers;
10. Conditions and opportunities to grow and age in **good mental and physical health** through disease prevention and the promotion of physical activity, a healthy diet, wellbeing and health literacy, as well as action on key social determinants of ill-health.

## Why now?

2012 will be the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (EY2012). Its objectives are to:

- Promote active ageing in employment;
- Facilitate active ageing in the community;
- Promote healthy ageing and independent living;
- Enhance solidarity between the generations.

In the context of the persistent economic and social crisis, amplified by demographic change, we believe that the Year is a unique opportunity to encourage national and EU policy makers, together with all relevant actors, to consider innovative solutions to address the impact of the crisis on our ageing societies. Now is also the time to make long lasting commitments to create an Age-Friendly European Union that empowers people to age in good health and to actively contribute to society in a way that is fair and sustainable for all generations.

## To international and European decision-makers: get involved!

The European Union should **mainstream** the promotion of an age-friendly environment in all relevant EU policy processes and funding programmes to support action at all levels.

The European Union, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and WHO-Europe should also pool their resources. They should coordinate their actions to adopt a “**European Strategy for Active and Healthy Ageing and an Age-Friendly European Union**” to help Member States achieve their Europe 2020 objective to create smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The Strategy should:

- **Build synergies** between existing EU policy processes and funding programmes and the UN policy instruments and implementation programmes on ageing to ensure that these processes will deliver better outcomes in the promotion of active ageing and solidarity between generations;
- Include the creation of an **EU Age-Friendly Environment Network** and other initiatives such as a **European Covenant of Mayors on Active and Healthy Ageing or Demographic Change** to gather and support local and regional public authorities committed to fostering active ageing and intergenerational solidarity in their communities;
- Seize the opportunity of a **renewed Social Open Method of Coordination to effectively involve civil society in social policy making** in order to achieve adequate, fair and sustainable social protection systems and enhance overall social cohesion;
- **Strengthen research** that evaluates and promotes solutions to respond to the needs of our ageing population in ways that are fair for all generations while contributing to sustainable and inclusive growth in a Europe free of poverty.



## To national governments: empower • involve • implement!

With the support of the EU, national, regional and local actors should develop plans to promote age-friendly environments in response to demographic change. Such plans should seek to facilitate the involvement of a wide range of actors in the EU Age-Friendly Environment Network. These plans should also foster the participation of all relevant stakeholders, including civil society organisations and citizens themselves, in the development, implementation and monitoring of adequate and sustainable solutions for our ageing population. In particular, policy measures and/or legal frameworks should be developed to:

- Implement active ageing strategies that take into account the outcomes of current and past **research** on ageing as well as the **specific needs** of vulnerable groups, e.g. migrants and ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, low-income workers and people with atypical working careers;
- Challenge ageism in all aspects of life and promote **non-discrimination and gender equality** in all aspects of active ageing and intergenerational solidarity;
- Create **accessible workplaces** and **age- and gender-friendly working conditions**;
- Implement urban and rural planning that ensure **accessible physical environments** and **access to information**;
- Strengthen social **cohesion, inclusion and participation** across the life cycle;
- Guarantee **adequate and fair health and social protection** systems for all ages and **access to quality services** in order to ensure that the most vulnerable older people can live dignified lives, free of poverty and social exclusion.

## To all stakeholders, including European citizens: make it happen!

Local authorities and actors, the business sector, public institutions, civil society organisations, social partners, service providers, town planners, researchers, education providers, the media and citizens all have a role to play. For more information on what can be done to achieve an Age-Friendly European Union, please read our leaflet "[European Year 2012 for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations: Everyone has a role to play](#)".

**Now is the time to move ahead quickly! Get involved and share your initiatives to help achieve a Europe for all ages!**

Our joint commitments to reach this goal will be detailed in the Stakeholders' Coalition Roadmap. This will be published on 18 January 2012 to mark the launch of the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (2012).

For more information on the Stakeholders' Coalition and its publications, please visit the AGE Platform Europe website: [www.age-platform.eu](http://www.age-platform.eu). AGE is the coordinator of the Stakeholder Coalition and can be contacted at: [info@age-platform.eu](mailto:info@age-platform.eu).







European Year for **Active Ageing**  
and **Solidarity between Generations 2012**



## List of partners who co-signed the Manifesto (in alphabetical order):

- AGE Platform Europe
- Association Internationale de la Mutualité (AIM)
- Association of Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA)
- Autism Europe
- Beth Johnson Foundation
- CECODHAS HOUSING EUROPE
- Confederation of Family Organizations in the European Union (COFACE)
- CSR Europe
- Eurocarers
- Eurochild
- Eurocommerce
- Eurodiaconia
- EuroHealthNet
- European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN)
- European Association of Homes and Services for the Ageing (EAHSA)
- European Association of Paritarian Institutions of social protection (AEIP)
- European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning (EUCIS-LLL)
- European Disability Forum (EDF)
- European Federation of Retired and Older Persons (FERPA)
- European Federation of Unpaid Parents and Carers at Home (FEFAF)
- European Foundation Center (EFC)
- European Health and Fitness Association (EHFA)
- European Institute of Women's Health (EIWH)
- European Network Against Racism (ENAR)
- European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation (ENGSO)
- European Parkinson's Disease Association (EPDA)
- European Social Network (ESN)
- European Union Federation of Youth Hostel Association (EUFED)
- European Volunteer Centre (CEV)
- European Women's Lobby (EWL)
- European Youth Forum (YFJ)
- Fondation Louis Bonduelle
- Fundación Academia Europea de Yuste
- HelpAge International
- International Diabetes Federation (IDF)
- Mental Health Europe (MHE)
- Provincia di Rovigo - Assessorato alle politiche sociali e alla famiglia
- Red Cross - EU Office
- The European League Against Rheumatism (EULAR)
- The European Network of National Civil Society Associations (ENNA)
- The International Sport and Culture Association (ISCA)

**Join us: sign the Manifesto for an Age-Friendly European Union by 2020!**

