Megatrend Ageing: Opportunities and Challenges for Cities

Vieillissement de la population, une mégatendance : chances et défis pour les villes

Alana Officer, Unit Head, Demographic Change and Healthy Ageing Unit

World Health Organization

What I will talk about

- Population ageing

- Opportunities and challenges

- Implications for cities and countries around the world

- The WHO Global network for age-friendly cities and communities

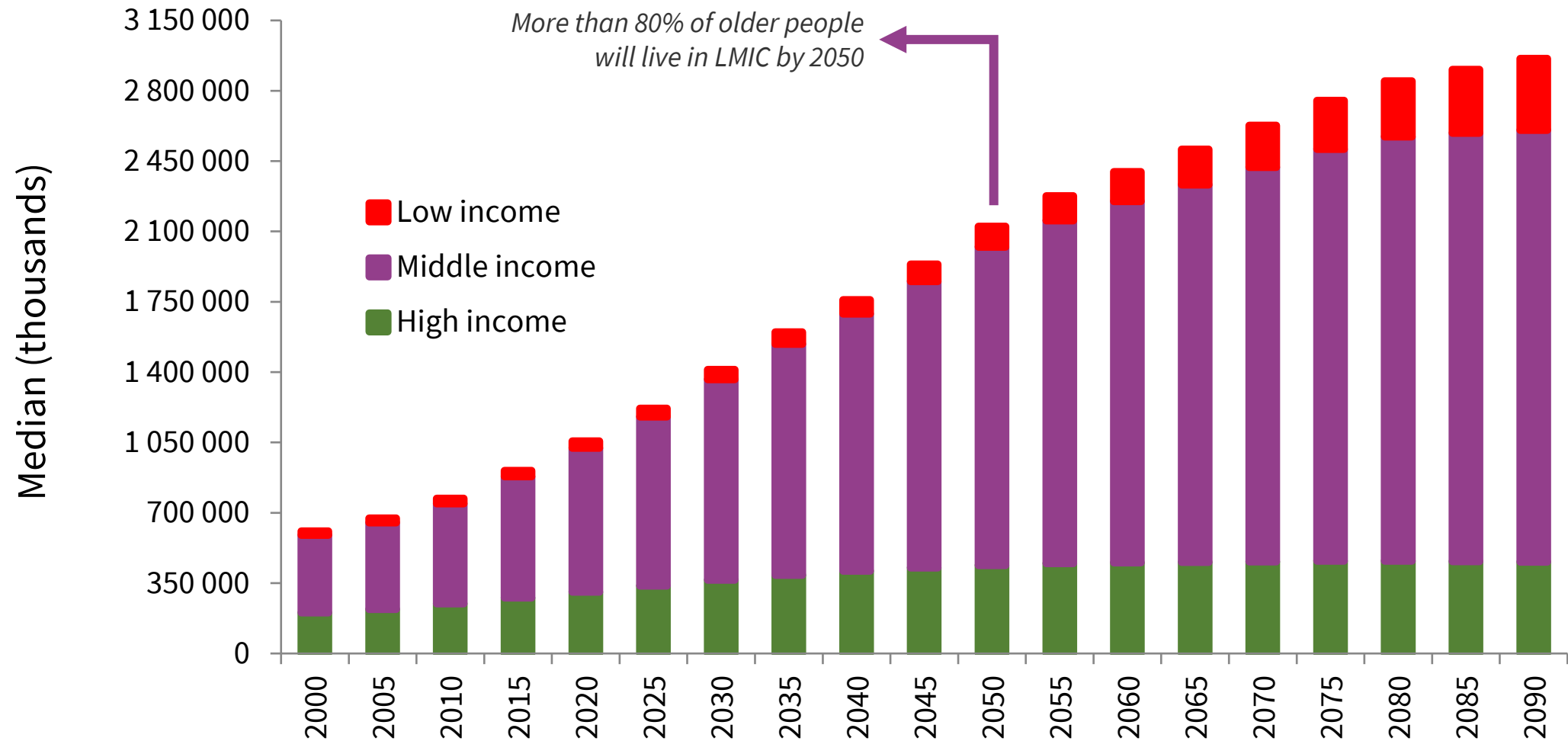- How all this connects with Switzerland

Across the world, more people are living longer than ever before.

World population
Number of persons aged 60 years and above

More than 80% of older people will live in LMIC by 2050

Median (thousands)

Legend:
- Low income (red)
- Middle income (purple)
- High income (green)

Y-axis: 0, 350 000, 700 000, 1 050 000, 1 400 000, 1 750 000, 2 100 000, 2 450 000, 2 800 000, 3 150 000

X-axis: 2000, 2005, 2010, 2015, 2020, 2025, 2030, 2035, 2040, 2045, 2050, 2055, 2060, 2065, 2070, 2075, 2080, 2085, 2090
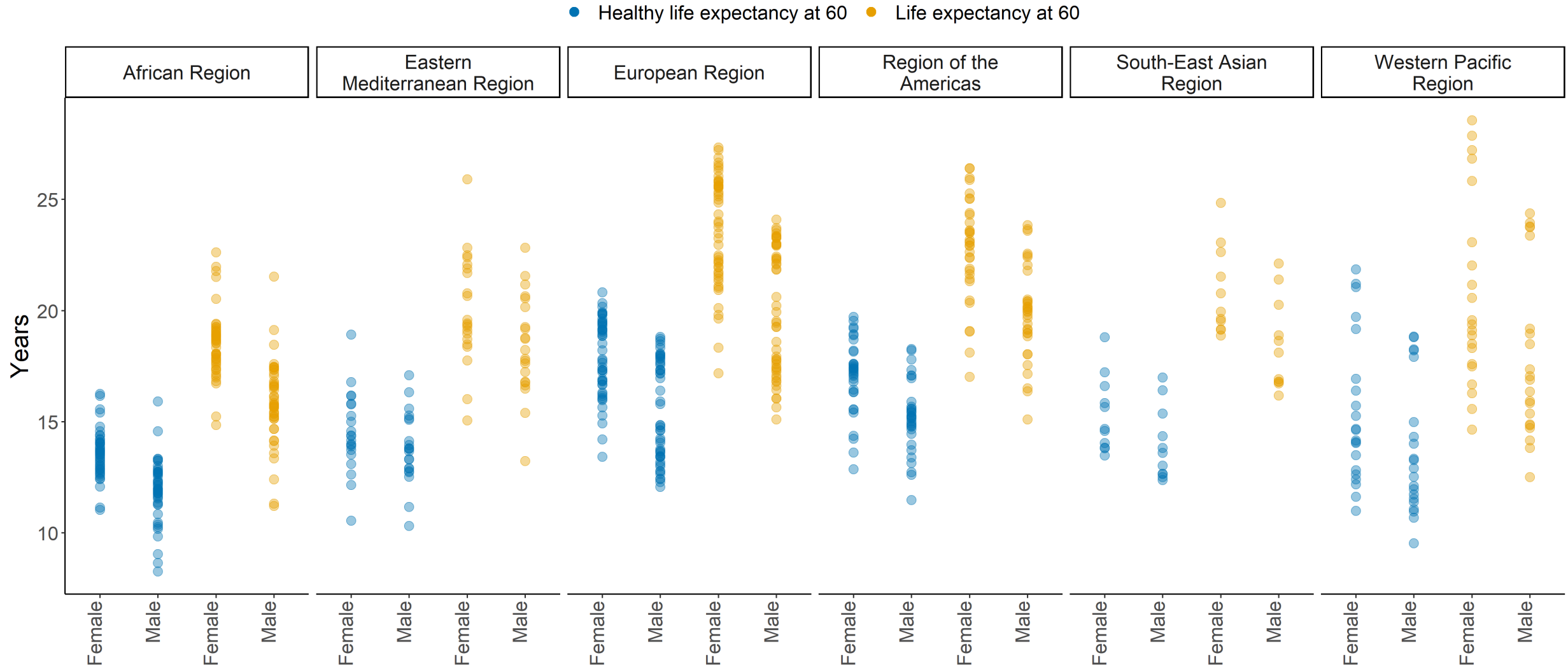
We don't want to just add years to our lives.

We also want to enjoy our extra years in good health and well-being.

But for many these extra years are not necessarily *healthy* years.

Life expectancy and Healthy life expectancy at 60 years

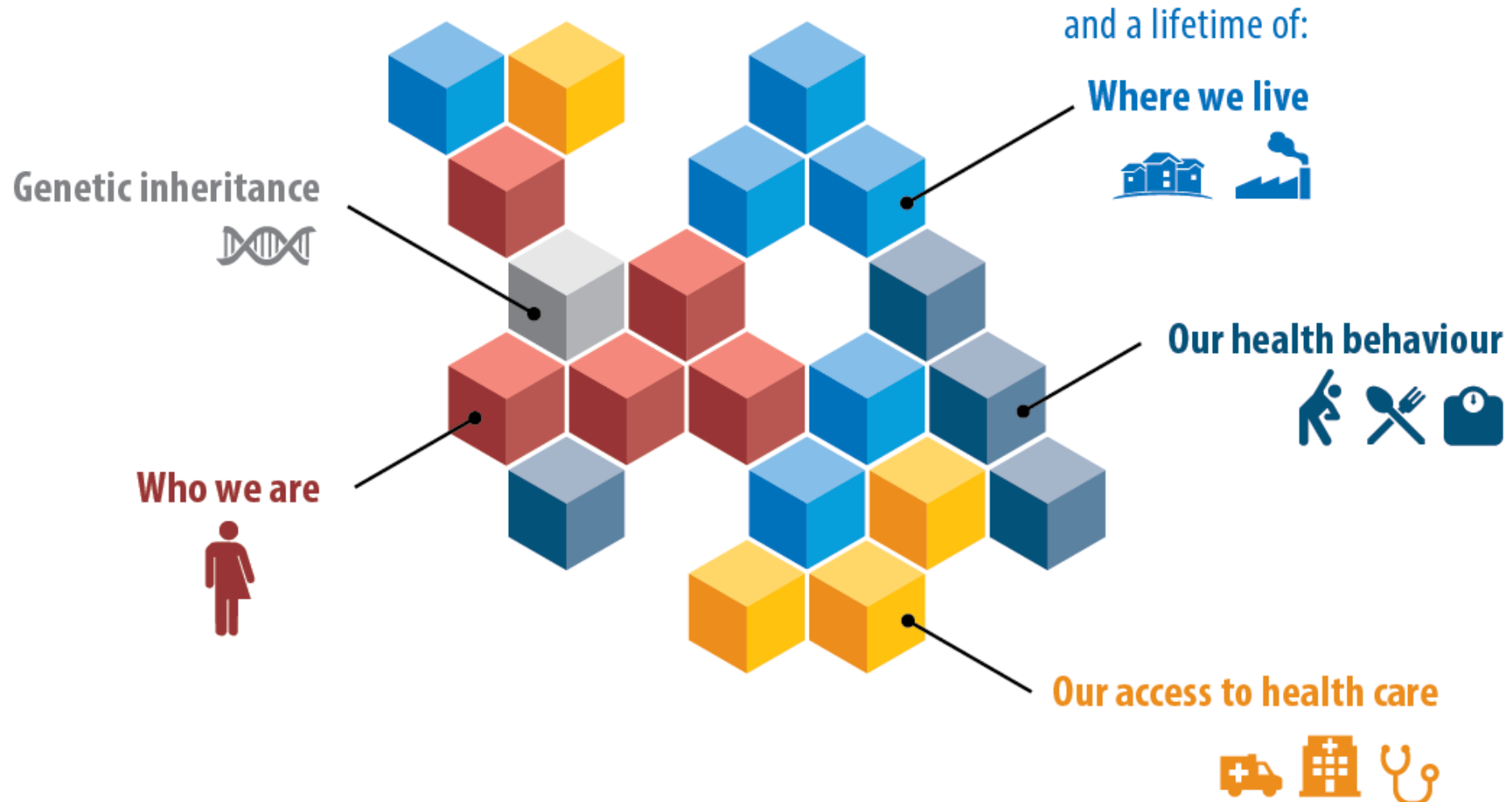Source: WHO Global Health Estimates (GHE), 2019

Healthy ageing can be a reality for many more around the world, if we work together.

Governments, civil society, researchers, businesses, international agencies, media – we all have something we can contribute.

Health in older age is not random

What makes us age differently?

Genetic inheritance

Who we are

and a lifetime of:

Where we live

Our health behaviour

Our access to health care
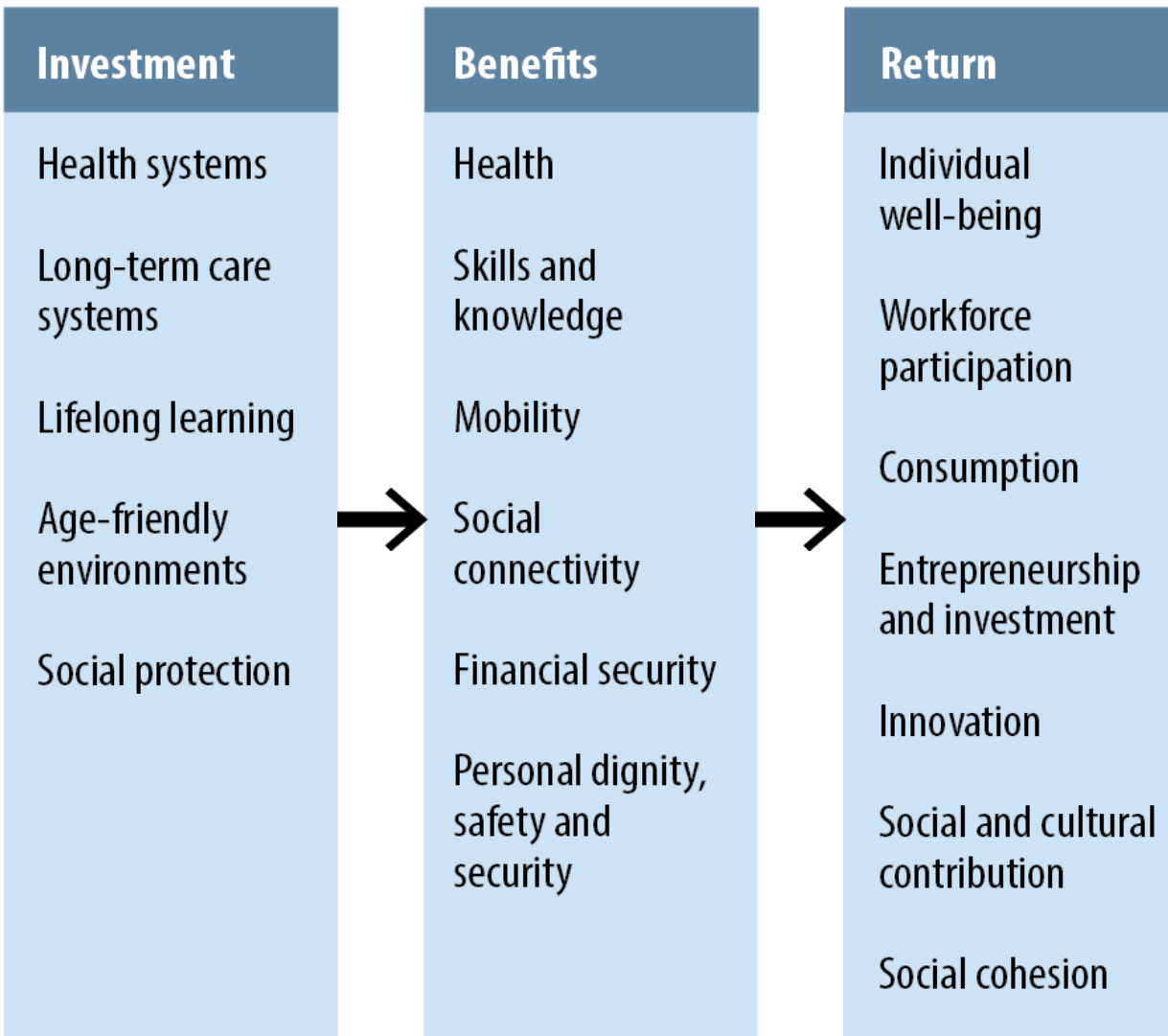
There is no "typical" older person

Barriers to Healthy Ageing

- Outdated and ageist stereotypes
- Inadequate policies
- Lack of accessibility
- Inadequate or absent services
- Lack of consultation & involvement

Healthy Ageing is an investment, not a cost

Investment	Benefits	Return
Health systems	Health	Individual well-being
Long-term care systems	Skills and knowledge	Workforce participation
Lifelong learning	Mobility	Consumption
Age-friendly environments	Social connectivity	Entrepreneurship and investment
Social protection	Financial security	Innovation
	Personal dignity, safety and security	Social and cultural contribution
		Social cohesion

What does that mean for cities?

Our cities are key to closing the gaps

If cities are age-friendly they can enable all people to:

- ✓ age well in a place that is right for them
- ✓ continue to develop personally
- ✓ be included
- ✓ contribute to their communities
- ✓ enjoy independence and good health

Our environments are key to healthy ageing

Housing

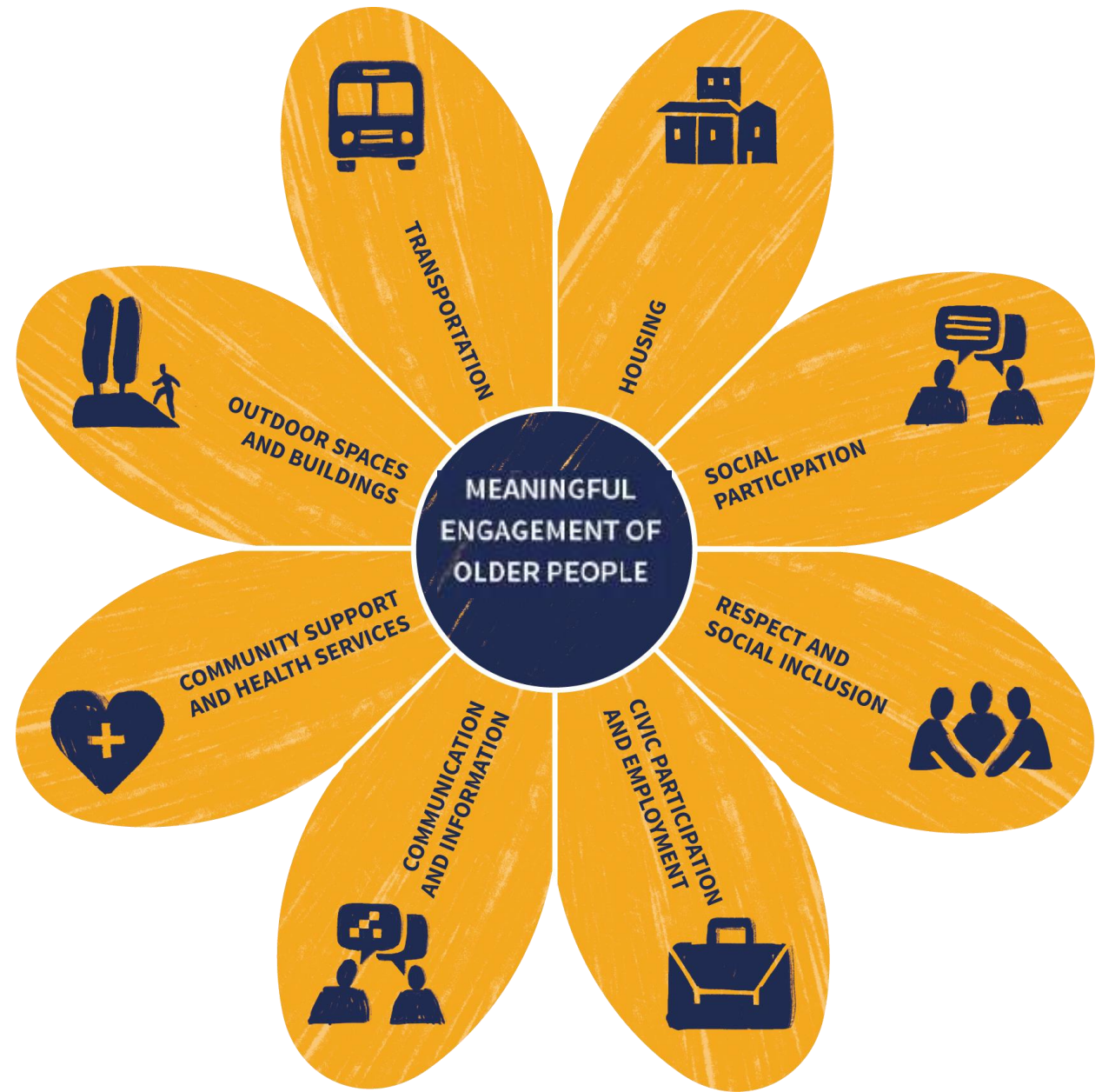**Assistive technologies**

Transport

Social facilities

Environments comprise all the factors in the outside world that form the context of an individual's life.

These include home, communities, and the broader society. Within these environments are a range of factors, including the built environment, people and their relationships, attitudes and values, health and social policies, the systems that support them, and the services that they implement.

What is an age-friendly city?

➤ Recognize and responds to the wide **range of capacities and resources** among older people

➤ Addresses **physical and social determinants** of healthy ageing

➤ **Anticipate and respond** flexibly to ageing-related needs and preferences

➤ **Respect older people**'s decisions and lifestyle choices

➤ **Reduce inequities**

➤ **Protect** those who are **most vulnerable**; and

➤ **Promote** older people's **inclusion** in society

Developing age-friendly cities and communities requires action across 8 domains.

TRANSPORTATION

HOUSING

OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT OF OLDER PEOPLE

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND HEALTH SERVICES

RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Assistive technologies or support services ?

Shop keeper helpful and friendly?

Any benches to rest on, public toilets ?

A

B

Accessible housing?

Pleasing and safe neighbourhood?

Footpaths, pedestrian crossings, available throughout?

Accessible buses or taxis?

IRELAND: Walkability audits at Ennis Age-Friendly Town

- **Walkability audits** were carried out with the Older Persons Council, wheelchair users, and people with limited abilities to assess the streetscape and access **safety** and **accessibility** of services.

- Based on the findings, a **strategy and action plan** were developed, leading to the introduction of measures such as:
  - Enhanced shared-surface public spaces
  - Drop kerbs
  - Additional pedestrian crossings
  - Age-friendly seating and parking
  - Accessibility upgrades to recreational areas
  - Age-friendly business accreditation
  - Physical activity programmes for older people

# BRAZIL: Project 60+ Connected to the Digital World, Veranopolis city

- **Digital inclusion courses** for older people, promoting autonomy and independence through self-care and health education.
- Training on **smartphones and tablets**: basic functions (Wi-Fi, volume/font settings), apps, and websites for older adults.
- **Main challenge**: overcoming fear and lack of confidence in using new technology.
- **Solution**: peer encouragement from motivated, participatory older adults.
- **Support from**: Municipal Council of Older People, Municipal Secretariat of Social Development, Housing.

AUSTRALIA: City of Melville Age Friendly Accessible Business (MAFAB)

- **MAFAB Network**: initiative to implement age-friendly, accessible measures for older adults, people with dementia, and people with disabilities.
- Supports businesses to meet community needs as part of Melville's **accessible, inclusive, age-friendly** strategy.
- Opportunities for local businesses to:
  - Share and showcase innovations
  - Staff training
  - Access research updates
  - Network with peers
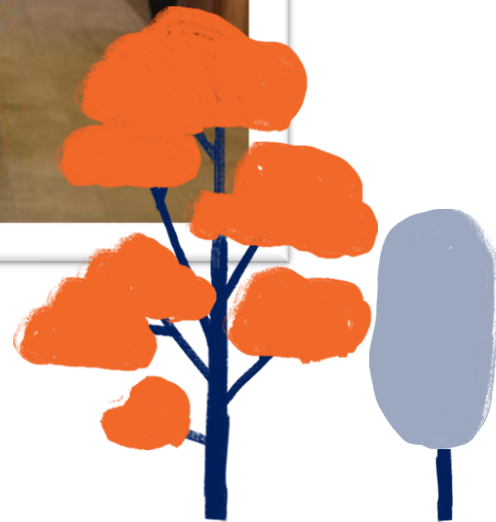
SPAIN: Martorell and the Good Neighborhood – Bon Veïnatge (GN-BV)

Established March 2018; part of the Municipal Action Plan for older people.

Approach: create a **network of contact points** with shops, pharmacies, optical clinics, senior centers, and associations to provide essential services for older adults.

Objectives:
- Mobilize the community to reduce social isolation and loneliness.
- Support older people to remain at home as long as possible, improving well-being.

Participants: health social workers, mental health professionals, social services, and other organizations.

Age-friendly cities are good for *older people*, but because they remove physical and social barriers, they fostering inclusiveness for everyone – *people with disabilities*, *parents with young children…..* - strengthening equity, and community resilience.
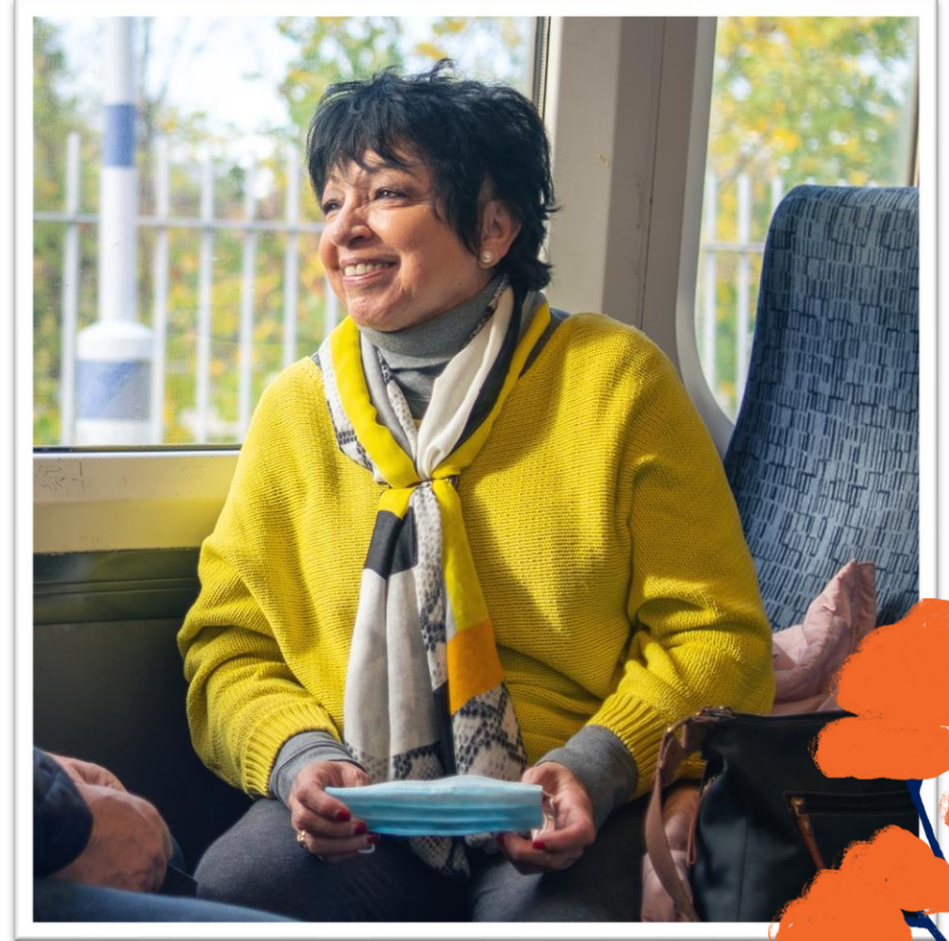
Cities need the skills, tools and networks to create policies that enable people to live long and healthy lives.

WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities, 1739 members across more than 57 countries all committed to becoming more age-friendly.
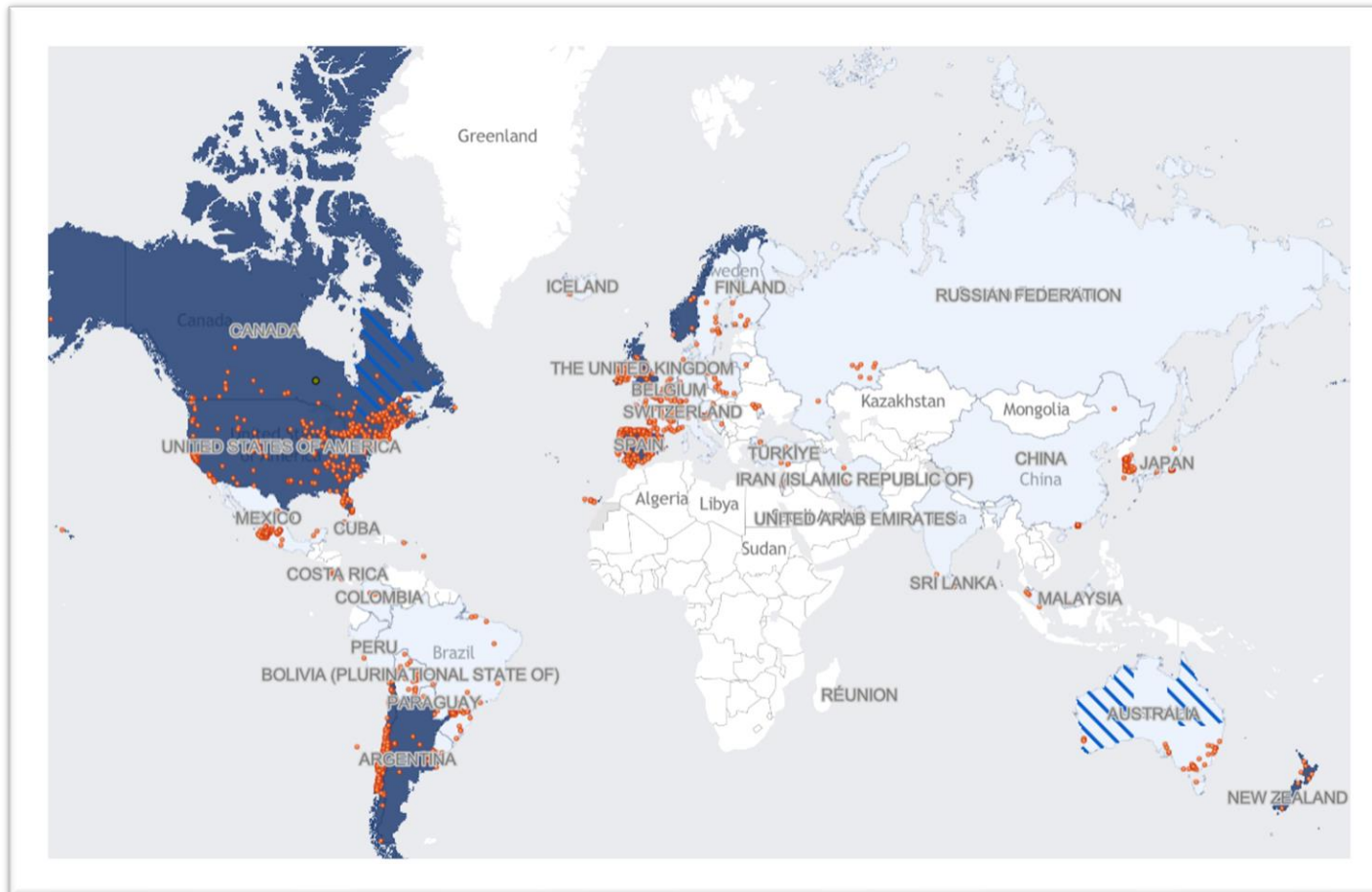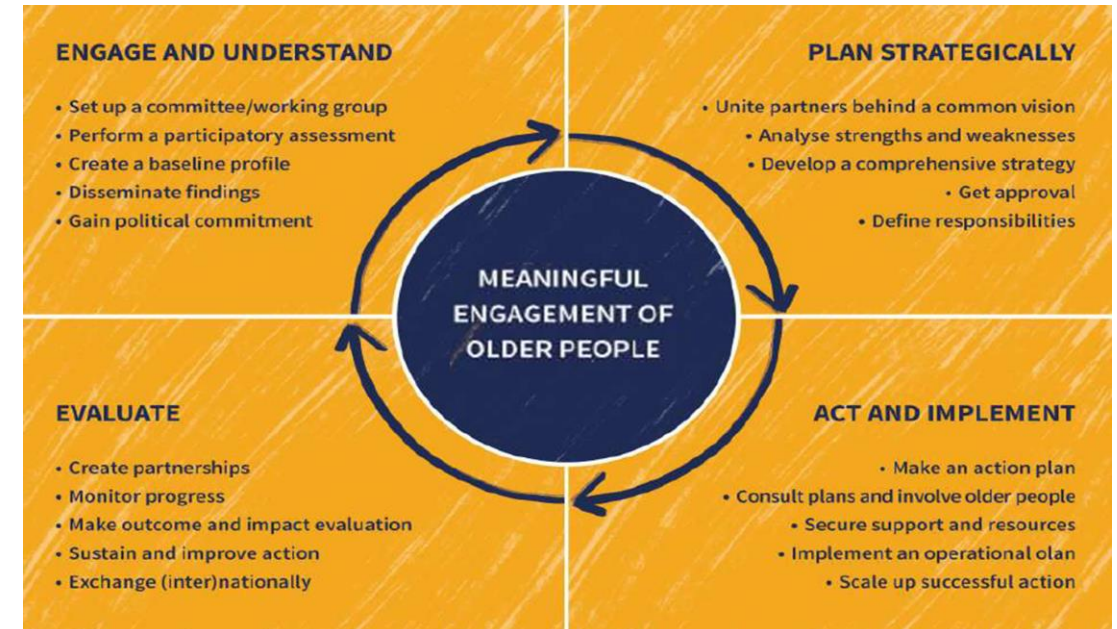

Learn more about the Global Network here:

Who can join the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities?

❖ Any city, community or sub national level of government : WHO's 194-member state. Apply directly on Age-Friendly World (FR, SP, EN).

❖ https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/application-form/

What does it take?

❖ Commitment from the highest political authority (e.g. Mayor)

❖ Use of a common methodology (engage, plan, implement and monitor)

❖ Sharing – including submission of age-friendly practices

ENGAGE AND UNDERSTAND
- Set up a committee/working group
- Perform a participatory assessment
- Create a baseline profile
- Disseminate findings
- Gain political commitment

PLAN STRATEGICALLY
- Unite partners behind a common vision
- Analyse strengths and weaknesses
- Develop a comprehensive strategy
- Get approval
- Define responsibilities

MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT OF OLDER PEOPLE

EVALUATE
- Create partnerships
- Monitor progress
- Make outcome and impact evaluation
- Sustain and improve action
- Exchange (inter)nationally

ACT AND IMPLEMENT
- Make an action plan
- Consult plans and involve older people
- Secure support and resources
- Implement an operational olan
- Scale up successful action

The Global Database of Age-friendly Practices features over 900 concrete activities implemented by Global Network members to make their communities better places to grow older.

Figure 11: Number of sectors targeted by country (n=568). Geneva, 2023.
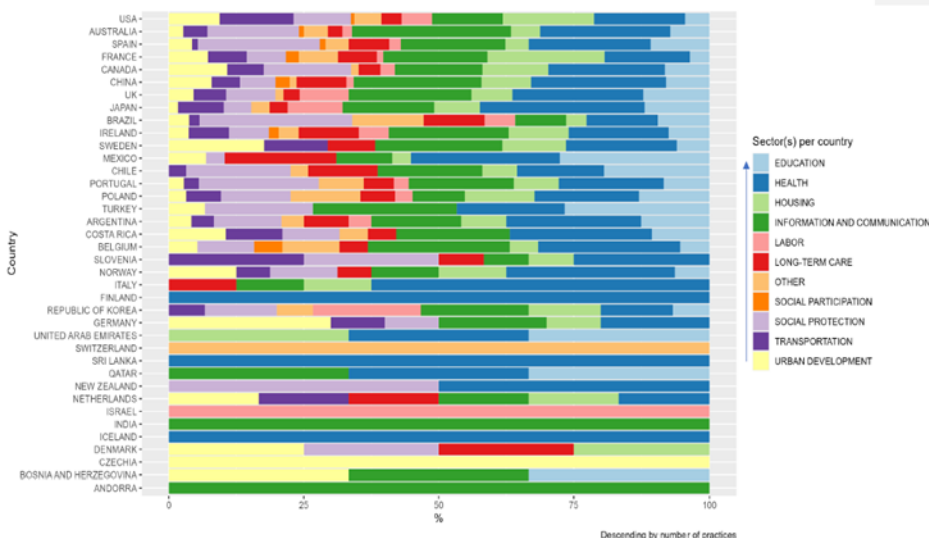
Search Results

Housing advisory service

We launched a new housing advisory service in 2022, which has proved very successful. We assist approximately 300 clients annually. Housing advisors assist all Vaasa residents or newcomers in need of housing advice. Many clients face challenging situations such as homelessness, rent arrears, or eviction. In the future, housing advisors will focus more on advising...
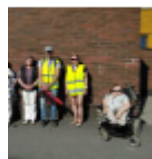
Read more

Started: 2022
Location: Vaasa, Finland
Desired outcome for older people: Meet their basic needs
Sectors: Housing

Mappings of the accessibility of the outdoor environment   ☑ Evaluated

During both the summer of 2020 and 2021 extensive mappings of the accessibility of the outdoor environment were conducted on a large area in different parts of the city.

The focus of the mappings was specifically on streets and crosswalks, pedestrian and bicycle lanes, as well as entrances of crucial public buildings. The mapping of the...

Read more

Started: 2021
Location: Vaasa, Finland
Desired outcome for older people: Be mobile
Sectors: Health

Search and Filter Age-friendly Practices

Search

Search ...

☐ Practices which have been evaluated

Filter by country

Finland

Filter by city/community

All communities

Filter by year started

197   -   202

Population Size

0 - 110,000,000

Filter by proportion of population

0% - 100%

Filter by sector

All sectors

Filter by desired outcome for older people

All outcomes

Filter by issue

All Items

Filter by government level

All levels

Why join?

Get support for your city to be a better place in which to grow older

- **Access to information**

- **Support from a global network of affiliates, practitioners, researchers, experts etc.**

- **Recognition and visibility in the Network`s activities**

- **Opportunities for collaboration**

- Population ageing and urbanization are two key megatrends
- Age-friendly societies are societies for all ages
- The Global network for age friendly cities and communities supports the development of societies for all ages
- All cities and communities in Switzerland are welcome.
- Let's work together for an Age-friendly world

For more information: Thiago Herick de Sa (PhD), Technical Officer – Age-friendly environments, World Health Organization

Thank you, Swiss Union of Cities,