

WELCOME TO OUR SECOND NEWSLETTER

Co-funded by the European Union, the European Seniors Friendly Communities (ESFC) project aims to build inclusive and age-friendly communities across Europe.

ESFC Focus Group Report Findings

In March and April 2025, 21 seniors, 26 local citizens, and 21 service providers across Ireland, Italy, and Spain shared their experiences and expertise on creating age-friendly communities. Aligned with the World Health Organization's (WHO) six key areas of age-friendly design, the discussions highlighted systemic barriers and actionable solutions:

1. **Healthcare Access:** Participants emphasised challenges like long waiting times, doctor shortages, and the digitalisation of services, which exclude seniors unfamiliar with online booking systems.
2. **Transportation:** Limited rural mobility, inaccessible public transport information, and digital-only ticketing systems were flagged as major hurdles to independence.
3. **Housing:** Many seniors live in homes lacking age-friendly modifications (e.g., lifts, stairlifts), with long waits for government adaptation grants exacerbating isolation.
4. **Social Participation:** While community programs exist, poor outreach and COVID-19 hesitancy limit engagement. Intergenerational initiatives, like Spain's proposed mixed-age workshops, were suggested to bridge gaps.

5. Outdoor Spaces & Safety: Uneven pavements, poor lighting, and a lack of seating or shade make public areas unsafe and unwelcoming for older adults.


6. Respect & Inclusion: Ageism in healthcare and daily interactions, coupled with seniors' exclusion from urban planning decisions, undermines their dignity and voice.

These insights underscore the urgent need for policies that prioritise seniors' needs while fostering cross-generational solidarity.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ Digital Inclusion: Tailored training programs + non-digital service alternatives.
- ✓ Transport Solutions: Senior-friendly ticketing + expanded community transport.
- ✓ Housing: Co-housing models + increased adaptation funding.
- ✓ Social Inclusion: Senior-led projects + intergenerational activities.

Download the Full Report

 Access the ESFC Focus Group Report 2025 here to explore detailed findings and recommendations.

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As the project progresses, we will have exciting updates and innovative results to share — stay tuned!



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