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Enhancing the Social and Digital Participation of Older People

Digital Training

Module 1

Module 1

Age-Friendly Environments

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In this module you will:

(**explore** what „Age-Friendly Environments" are all about

(**learn** about domains and essential features of age-friendly neighbourhoods,

(**reflect** about the age-friendliness of your own living environment/neighbourhood,

(**learn** about some practical guidelines and more inspiring learning tools.

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Age-Friendly Environments

An **age-friendly environment** generally refers to a community in which all 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. Age-friendly environments are one of the most effective ways to promote healthy and active ageing.

"Age-friendly environments foster health and well-being and the participation of people as they age. They are accessible, equitable, inclusive, safe and secure, and supportive. They promote health and prevent or delay the onset of disease and functional decline. They provide people-centred services and support to enable recovery or to compensate for the loss of function so that people can continue to do the things that are important to them." (*WHO, 2021*)

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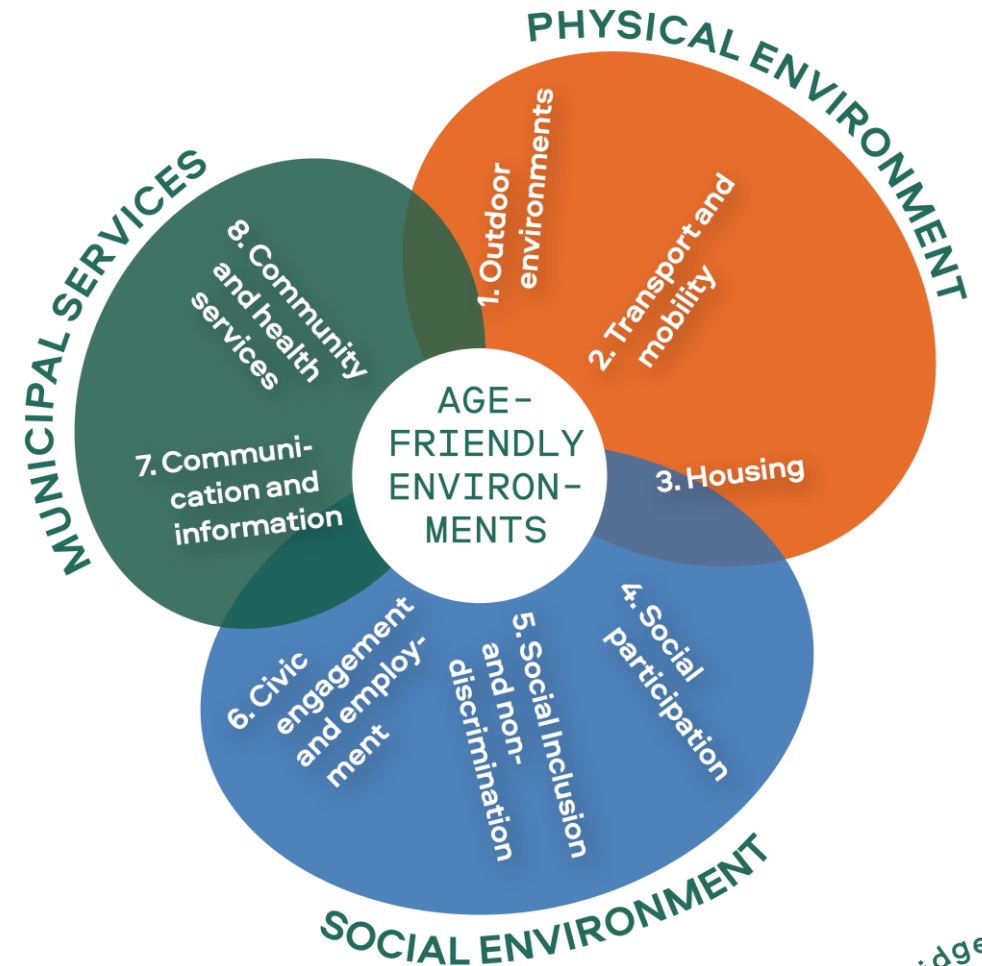Older People

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Introducing the domains of age-friendly environments

According to the Age-friendly Environments Programme, cities and communities should focus on eight main dimensions to achieve this goal.

These eight domains can be grouped into three clusters of supportive local environments:

○ **physical environments,**

○ **social environments and**

○ **municipal services.**

These environments foster participation and health during the life course, including older age.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

MUNICIPAL SERVICES

8. Community and health services

7. Communi-cation and information

1. Outdoor environments

2. Transport and mobility

AGE-FRIENDLY ENVIRON-MENTS

3. Housing

6. Civic engagement and employ-ment

5. Social Inclusion and non-discrimination

4. Social participation

SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

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This is an example of an outdoor environment. Let's look at the age-friendliness of this place.

In your opinion, which two features make this place age friendly?

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Learners in our project have noticed the following things...

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Sitting opportunities; however, benches with armrests would make it easier to get up again

The pavement is all on one level and suitable for a walker, a wheelchair or a stroller

This is the same photo you have looked at before, however, now the focus is on features that make this place not so age-friendly.

In your opinion, which two features make this place <u>not</u> age friendly?

Learners in our project have noticed the following things...

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A pedestrian crossing or traffic light would make it easier to navigate traffic (with cars and cyclists) coming from two directions

There could be more benches in the corners

Provision of cooling places: there is enough space to install a (drinking) water dispenser

○ What in your social or physical environment is age friendly according to your opinion?

○ What immediately comes to mind?

○ These can be positive aspects, but also hurdles or suggestions on what should be improved or provided.

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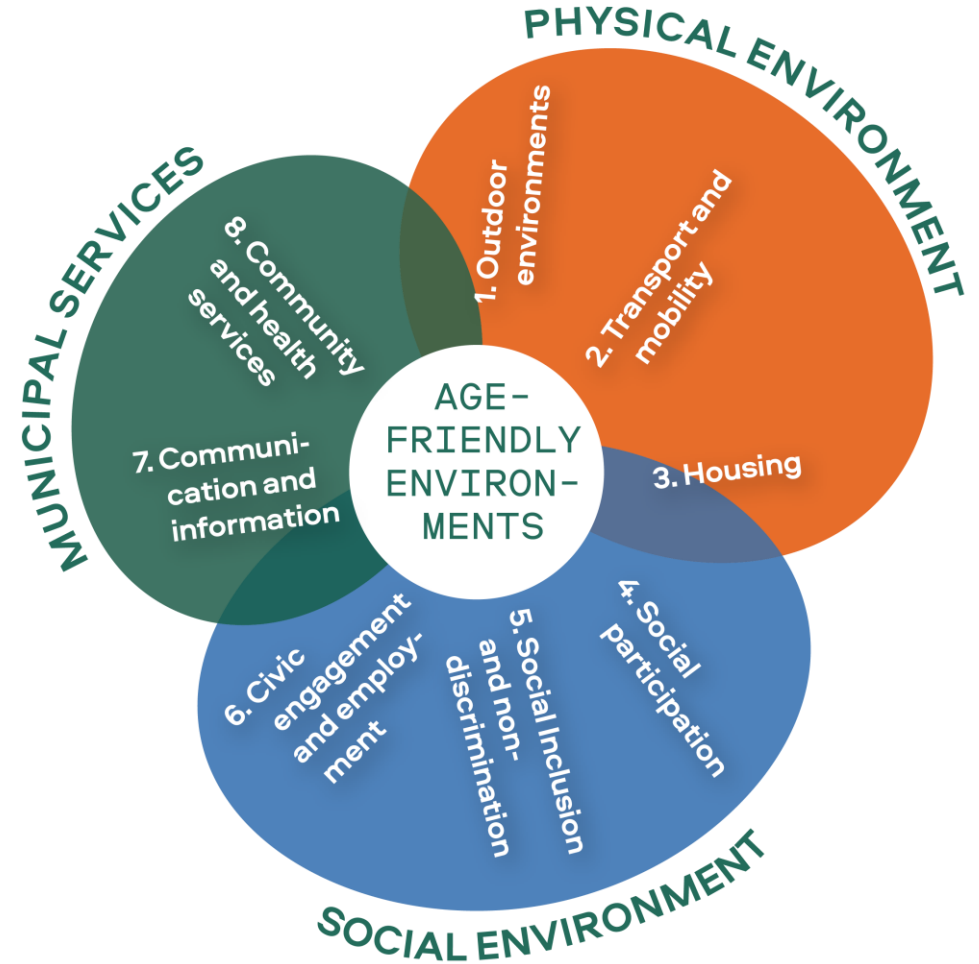
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☑ Quiz

Click the **Quiz** button to edit this object

Please match these four examples to the Age-friendly Environments domains:

Public benches and seating areas	Outdoor environment
The bathroom is accessible for walkers	Housing
Local adult day centres	Communication and information
Information on neighbourhood activities	Community and health services

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Interested in checking the age-friendliness of your neighbourhood/city?

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Interested in checking the age-friendliness of your neighbourhood/city?

A **checklist** of essential features of Age-friendly Cities by the World Health Organization (WHO) can be found here.

How do older people themselves evaluate the age-friendliness of their community, town or city?

The Hague University of Applied Science took the initiative to develop and validate the Age-Friendly Cities and Communities Questionnaire (AFCCQ). The questionnaire consists of 23 questions, is free of use and can be found here.

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Moving foward: Developing the AFE concept further

To foster the implementation and cooperation of the AFE concept and to include smart and healthy solutions, in 2017 the Smart and Healthy Age-Friendly Environments (SHAFE) network was launched.

SHAFE puts emphasis on combining

○ **built environments (housing, public spaces) with smart ICT applications,**

○ **social participation** and

○ **healthy solutions.**

SMART HEALTHY AGE-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENTS

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An example of what SHAFE can look like:

Neighbours in a street and volunteers in neighbourhoods may create and join a WhatsApp group to share community-related information, arrange and alert each other in case of emergencies, suspicious people or vehicles etc.
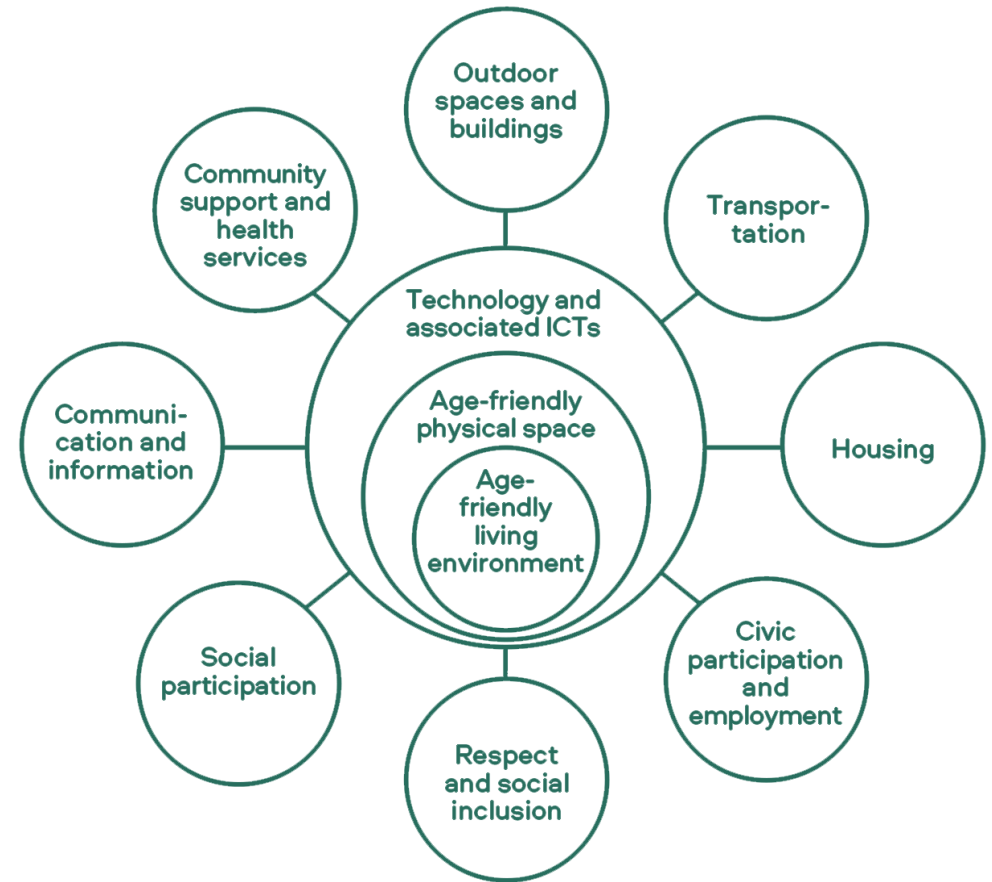
Can you think of a SHAFE example in your own neighbourhood/city?

Take a minute and look at the different dimensions of smart and healthy age-friendly environments on the right.

What immediately comes to mind? These can be positive aspects, but also hurdles or suggestions on what should be improved or provided.

Interested in learning more about SHAFE and many practical examples all over Europe? Have a look through the "SHAFE and me" free online course.

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☑️ Quiz

Click the **Quiz** button to edit this object

Please match the following four examples to one of the SHAFE domains:

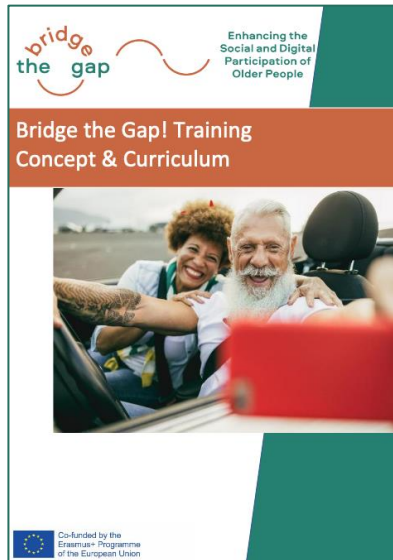|	
Online consultation with a doctor	Outdoor Spaces and buildings
Available online information on accessibility on public transportation routes	Transport
Sustainable energy housing	Housing
Barrier-free shopping/walking route (availability of benches, public toilets)	Community Support and health services

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Helpful resources and examples for further reading

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Training Concept and
Curriculum
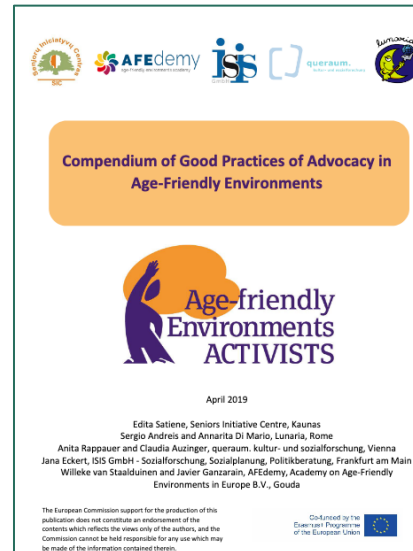
Compendium of Good
Practices of Advocacy
in Age-Friendly
Environments

Hands on SHAFE
Compendium

Helpful resources and examples for further reading
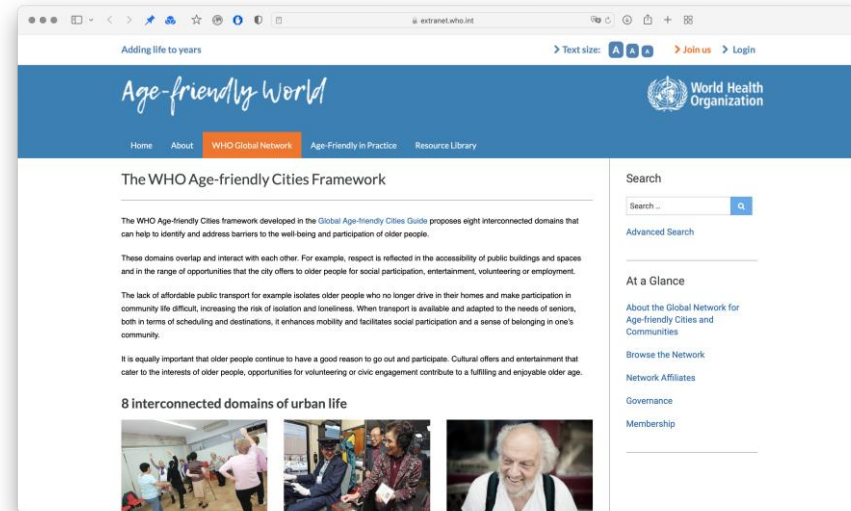
If you are interested in the **WHO "Age-friendly Cities" model** with eight fields of action, have a look.

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Congratulations! You have successfully completed the first module of our Digital Training!

Interested to join module 2 on „Ageing in an increasingly digital era"? You can click below to access it.

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