

## GUIDELINES FOR CO-PRODUCING AGE-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENTS WITH OLDER PEOPLE

### Why?

The AFE-INNOVNET Thematic Network is gathering local and regional authorities, research institutes, civil society organisations, industries and service providers that share the same ambition: work together to find smart and innovative evidence based solutions to support active and healthy ageing and develop age-friendly environments across Europe. A way to ensure that the solutions really meet the needs of the ageing population is to **strengthen the involvement of older citizens and relevant stakeholders in the development of ageing policies**. Together with policy makers, citizens should co-produce the policies that affect them as recommended by the Global Age-friendly Cities Guide published by the World Health Organisation.

### What is co-production in age-friendly environments?

By a co-production process, we mean a **partnership between local and regional authorities, older people and older people's organisations, working together** to exchange perspectives, co-design and deliver opportunities, support and services that improve wellbeing and quality of life.

	Older citizens	Policy makers
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Expressing their concrete needs and demands to be considered in the design process;</li> <li>✓ Being recognised as main end-users of the policy;</li> <li>✓ Their needs and demands are better incorporated and understood;</li> <li>✓ ÷</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Creating an inclusive society;</li> <li>✓ Building a broad consensus;</li> <li>✓ Enabling a better understanding of the needs of older citizens;</li> <li>✓ Using the knowledge, experience of older people and their organisations for the benefit of society as a whole;</li> <li>✓ ÷</li> </ul>
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Feeling unheard or not at ease expressing themselves;</li> <li>❖ Having difficulties in identifying their needs;</li> <li>❖ ÷</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Engaging older people to participate;</li> <li>❖ Offering a trust environment;</li> <li>❖ Identifying the older participants;</li> <li>❖ Facilitating participation;</li> <li>❖ ÷</li> </ul>

# What is the process?

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## Before starting:

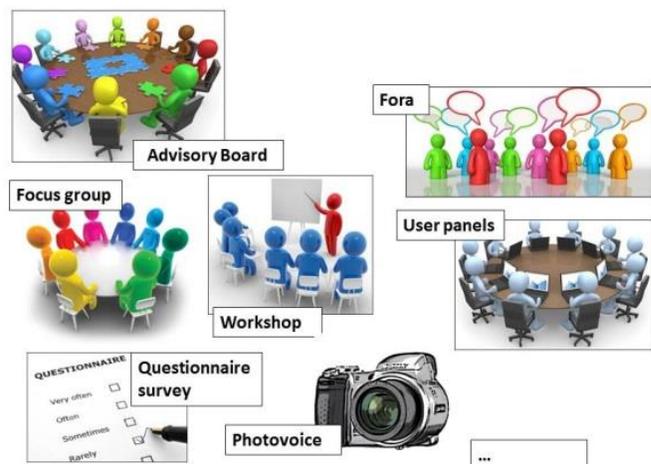
1. **What are the objectives? Reasons** for undergoing the co-production approach.
2. **Who is responsible for the process?** Define the **team**: coordinator, ethical advisor, contact point, administrative officer, politicians, technical officers, etc.
3. **Who should be involved?** Define the **participants**: policy makers, older people (end-users), non-profit organisations, service providers, and other interested stakeholders.
4. **What are the technical issues to be considered?** Take into account the following:
  - Older people should be **fully informed** about the objectives, the work plan, etc.
  - They should **be able to withdraw** from the process at any time.
  - They should sign an **informed consent before** their participation.
5. **What are the potential risks?** Identify potential **risks** and related **solutions**.
6. **What are the resources needed?** Define the **human resources**, the **time** and the **budget** you need.
7. **How to communicate the targets?** Define your **communication strategy**.

## Implementation:

In order to reach your audience it is important to use **different channels** (emails, local newspapers, etc.) and to define your **recruitment strategy** (advertising, building relationships with older people's networks and groups, etc.). When recruiting it is important to:

- ✓ Pay attention to the representativeness of the people involved;
- ✓ Be aware of the high possibility of withdrawals and adopt a strategy to ensure sufficient participation of citizens during the whole process (recruit at least an extra 20%);
- ✓ Inform citizens in accessible language about the basic aims of the project;
- ✓ Enable citizens to understand how they can benefit from their engagement; and
- ✓ Give citizens the sense that their participation is valued and necessary.

Then you should select the appropriate **tools** to involve participants in the co-production process and to develop an **Action Plan** (goals, activities, indicators and responsibilities). The choice of the tools will vary according to the objectives, participants' time and budget available (see the pictures for tools examples).



## Monitoring:

After every activity, you should measure the level of participation and the achieved objectives. This will help you assess your on-going Action Plan and adapt it if necessary. It can also help you ensure a regular feedback to the involved citizens and stakeholders. It is important to provide them with the minutes/feedback of the meetings/activities including the summary of the decisions taken, reports on objectives achieved and/or progress of the process, etc. **Participants need to feel that their contribution has an impact** - they need feedback on how the organisation has listened to them, and what results and/or actions are being taken.

## Evaluation:

The evaluation will help you to assess the results of the process: **what you have successfully achieved and what you need to improve**. At the end of the process, you need to measure the **indicators** that you foresaw in the Action Plan in order to assess your results. For this task you can consult the Social, Economic and Environmental Impact Tool developed available in the website of the AFE-INNOVNET project\*.

## Dissemination:

The outcomes of the evaluation and the lessons learned through the process should be promptly and clearly **communicated to the participants and community**. You can highlight: the lessons you have learnt, the good practices you want to share with other organisations, and the impact of the co-produced AFE.

There are several organisations that can help you to disseminate the results of your co-production processes to other stakeholders and at the same time provide European LRAs with examples of good practice, as through the [AFE-INNOVNET website](http://afeinnovnet.eu).

This is a summary of the Deliverable 4.3. *Participatory method to involve end-users (older people): in co-production of AFE solutions by LRAS and older people, to be used for the future Covenant* developed in the framework of the AFE-INNOVNET project by M. Ferri, J. Garcés, C. Vidal, E. Durá, F. Ródenas, and I. Monsonís from Polibienestar Research Institute . UVEG; A. Sinigaglia from Age Platform Europe; and W. van Staalduijn from TNO.

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\* [http://afeinnovnet.eu/sites/default/files/AFE-INNOVNET\\_D4.2\\_FINAL\\_0.pdf](http://afeinnovnet.eu/sites/default/files/AFE-INNOVNET_D4.2_FINAL_0.pdf)