



DELIVERABLE

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D6.2 – EU Covenant on demographic change: roadmap, work plan and key commitments

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2	03/09/14	Mireia Ferri	UVEG/Polibienestar	Review of the overall first draft with input on link with the EIP AHA and methodological tools to be developed by AFE INNOVNET.
3	05/09/14	Nhu Tram and Marlène Siméon	CEMR	Review of the overall first draft to clarify different points in relation to the work to be done by the Covenant, make it easier to understand for LRAs, etc.
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9	March 2015	Lisa Warth	WHO	Contribution to ensure alignment with WHO GNAFCC
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13	October 2015	Lisa Warth	WHO	Alignment of the registration form: comments and feedback to ensure that the on-line registration form of the Covenant is in line with the one of WHO for the GNAFCC.

Statement of originality:

This deliverable contains original unpublished work except where clearly indicated otherwise. Acknowledgement of previously published material and of the work of others has been made through appropriate citation, quotation or both.

This deliverable describes the roadmap, work plan and key commitments agreed by the consortium members for the new Covenant. It was developed by AGE in consultation with the SG and the consortium. All members of the Thematic Network were also invited to send comments and feedback, both via the private part of the website and via direct e-mails.

Work done to develop this deliverable built on D6.1 and served to prepare D6.5 on the long-term sustainability including to draft the Statutes of the Covenant and its documentation (leaflet, brochure).

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Abbreviations used

AAI: Active Ageing Index

AFC: age-friendly cities

AFE: age-friendly environments

EC: European Commission

EIP AHA: European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing

EU: European Union

LRAs: local and regional authorities

MoU: Memorandum of Understanding

MS: Member State

SME's: small and medium enterprises

TN: Thematic Network

WHO: World Health Organisation

WHO Europe: World Health Organisation Regional Office for Europe

WHO GNAFCC: WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities

Background

Already when joining the project, all consortium members had agreed that the AFE INNOVNET Thematic Network should launch a European Covenant on Demographic Change which should seek to become the political and technical framework that will bring together in a formal and long-term structure all local, regional and national authorities – and other stakeholders - across the EU who commit to cooperate and implement smart and innovative evidence based solutions to support active and healthy ageing as a comprehensive answer to Europe’s demographic change.

Discussions on how the Covenant should be structured, how it should be governed and how it should work together with its members, started a few months after the beginning of the project, first within the SG and then with the consortium, prior to being extended to the whole AFE-INNOVNET TN members.

The common vision was and still is that the Covenant should aim at fostering synergies between relevant stakeholders while connecting with existing initiatives such as the WHO Global Network on Age-Friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC), the WHO-European Healthy Cities Network and the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing.

One key issue was however not anticipated when the project application was submitted: the need for the Covenant to be established as an independent legal entity in order to be able to apply formally to become an affiliate programme of WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities as well as to be able to apply directly for EU funding. Having realised the difficulties that an informal status would bring to the future Covenant, the consortium decided in autumn 2014 that the Covenant should be established as an international non-for-profit association under the Belgian Law. Acquiring legal personality on its own was also perceived as useful to support a greater sense of ownership among Covenant members and to ensure greater visibility for the Covenant on the long-term. The roadmap was therefore developed in that perspective.

I. Defining the roadmap of the Covenant on demographic change

Based on the key objectives and common vision agreed by the AFE INNOVNET thematic network members (see D6.1), the Covenant’s roadmap was developed to set up and run a formal structure that will facilitate partnership between an open network of local, regional and national authorities and other stakeholders: civil society organisations, industries and service providers, research centres and universities, etc.

It was agreed that the Covenant’s added value should be to help the different levels of governance and the different types of stakeholders to link up and work together to implement environments supporting active and healthy ageing. In most countries, competences on age-friendly environments are shared between different levels of governance. To achieve a maximum impact, it was felt important to ensure an adequate coordination between the different levels of governance and to facilitate the engagement of all relevant stakeholders including cross-border.



The following roadmap was developed in close cooperation with the AFE INNOVNET partners, WHO GNAFCC, WHO Europe and the Advisory Board members.

a. Covenant’s main aim

Building further on work done earlier under WP6 and deliverable D6.1, work on the roadmap started in September 2014 under the leadership of AGE, with early discussions taking place first inside the Steering Group (SG) followed with an extensive discussion with the Consortium in October 2014 and March 2015 and email exchanges with WHO, the consortium and TN members during the spring and summer 2015. This led to a decision by the Consortium that the upcoming Covenant should aim to:

1. Promote a comprehensive and integrated approach to demographic change through the promotion of active and healthy ageing based on:
 - the 2013 Dublin Declaration on age-friendly Cities and Communities;
 - the World Health Organization methodology on age-friendly cities and communities;
 - the outcomes of the 2012 European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations; and
 - the objectives of the European Innovation Partnership for Active and Healthy Ageing.
2. Allow all members to share their experiences and support each other in their research on - and implementation of - innovative responses to demographic change at local, regional, national, European or international level;
3. Create synergies between its members' initiatives and the processes and actions of the European Union, the World Health Organization and the Economic Commission for Europe of the United Nations (UN-ECE), to better support local, regional and national initiatives seeking to adapt the living and working environments to the needs of the ageing population;
4. Assist in particular local and regional actors to enrich the debates and initiatives taken by national and European decision-makers by contributing their grass-root experience in the field of active and healthy ageing and;
5. Foster open exchange between public authorities and civil society organisations at all levels, encouraging appropriate environments and spaces for such exchange.

b. Relationships between the Covenant and existing networks

The Consortium agreed that the Covenant should not seek to develop its own vision and work but rather to build synergies and to align with the existing global movement on age-friendly environments promoted by the World Health Organization (WHO) and other related initiatives.

• WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities

The AFE-INNOVNET TN had identified the WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities as a key network to link up with. The Consortium decided on 1st October 2014 that a formal request should be sent to WHO for the AFE-INNOVNET thematic Network to join the GNAFCC as a affiliate programme. WHO replied that since the AFE-INNOVNET partners formed an informal group and the project was limited in time, they would rather welcome AGE – a legally established entity - to apply on behalf of the AFE-INNOVNET TN and prepare the ground to ensure that the upcoming Covenant on Demographic Change would be fully aligned with the GNAFCC and would be in a position to apply in due time when it would have acquired legal personality.

On 17 October 2014, AGE Council of Administrators authorized AGE to apply to become an institutional affiliate of the GNAFCC to build further on our common understanding and interest and share AGE's work on age-friendly environments while preparing the ground for the future Covenant to join the GNAFCC and build synergies with the members of the GNAFCC.

In the following months AGE and WHO developed together a joint agreement which was formally signed by WHO on 2 February 2015, WHO Europe on 16 February 2015 and AGE on 24 February 2016. Beginning of March 2015, AGE work in relation to the AFE-INNOVNET Thematic Network and upcoming Covenant on Demographic Change was posted on WHO GNAFCC network:

<https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/network/age-platform-europe/>

As a result of this close cooperation with WHO GNAFCC and WHO Europe, admission criteria for local authorities joining the Covenant as Full Members are now fully aligned with those of the WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities, and on this basis local authorities which join the Covenant as Full members are automatically eligible to join the WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities with no further administrative requirement, if they so wish (they only need to tick the relevant box in their online application form).

- **WHO Age-Friendly Environments in Europe**

In addition, all along the Project the SG worked very closely with WHO European region (Manfred Huber and his team) to build synergies between the AFE-INNOVNET TN and WHO Europe project called AFEE (Age-Friendly Environments in Europe) which was funded by DG EMPL and sought to support the Covenant by funding WHO to adapt their age-friendly environments methodology to the European context.

Several members of the SG were involved in the AFEE Advisory bodies and this close cooperation led to a decision to organise the end events of both projects together in December 2015 to maximum their impact. As a result, workshops were organised jointly by the AFE-INNOVNET SG, WHO Europe and the European Commission on 8-9 December 2015, back to back with the official launch of the Covenant at the Committee of the Regions (7 December 2015).

- **The 2013 Dublin Declaration on age-friendly Cities and Communities**

The Consortium also identified the 2013 Dublin Declaration on age-friendly cities and communities in Europe as another initiative with which the Covenant should build synergies to ensure that there would be no competition between the two networks which would on the contrary support each other.

Contacts were established early 2015 with Age-Friendly Ireland which runs the network of signatories of the Dublin Declaration, and a meeting was organised between AGE – representing the AFE-INNOVNET – Age-Friendly Ireland and a high level representative of the Dublin City Council in Spring 2015. It was agreed then that

the Covenant and the network of signatories of the 2013 Dublin Declaration should join forces and the best way to reinforce synergies between the two networks would be for the Covenant to request from its members to “accept the Dublin Declaration on Age-Friendly Cities and Communities in Europe 2013 as the shared values and principles of action”, thus as the Covenant’s vision. The Covenant Statutes adopted by the Consortium in October 2015 and signed on 29 January 2016 by the 68 Covenant Founding members, include this requirement for all membership categories.

- **The European Innovation partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing**

From its inception the AFE-INNOVNET was built to support the EIP-AHA’s key objective of extending by two additional years the Healthy Life Year Indicator. Synergies were pursued with the EIP-AHA other AGs and all AFE-INNOVNET TN members who are also partners of the EIP-AHA helped bring strong links between the two initiatives mainly through the coordinators of the AG D4 who were also members of the AFE-INNOVNET SG.

The roadmap and later on the Covenant Statutes refer clearly to the EIP-AHA and will ensure that synergies remain in the long-term, including in terms of shared membership (see below).

c. Membership

Building on the AFE-INNOVNET TN, it was agreed from the beginning that the Covenant should be an open network and should encourage in particular members of the following existing networks to join:

- The thematic network AFE-INNOVNET;
- The European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy aging;
- The WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities;
- The WHO European Healthy Cities Network; and
- The signatories of the 2013 Dublin Declaration on age-friendly Cities.

Beyond members of these existing networks, it was agreed that the Covenant should also be open to all legal entities, associations, corporations, individual firms, public authorities at different levels of government, civil society organisations, research centres, universities, businesses and service providers legally established in the European Union or a country associated with the HORIZON 2020 programme, or composed of members legally established in the European Union or a country associated with the HORIZON 2020 programme, and which adhere to the purpose of the Covenant.

To reflect the particular role that public authorities play in the promotion of age-friendly environments, the Consortium decided to divide members into 3 main categories with different levels of commitments, rights and role in the governing bodies:

Full members: this category is open to public authorities only, i.e. local, regional and national authorities, or networks of public authorities that commit to:

- Accept the Dublin Declaration on Age-Friendly Cities and Communities in Europe 2013 as the shared values and principles of action;
- Implement a formal action plan for the promotion of age-friendly environments within two years of accession: in line with WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities, applicants for Full membership are not required to have achieved age-friendliness at the time of joining the Network. However, they must commit to preparing within two years an action plan based on their own assessment of needs and priorities and to working towards this objective. To join as Full members, public authorities must have the commitment by the political leadership to engage in this process. They are welcome to remain in the Network as Full member for as long as they stay engaged and share their experience with fellow members.
- Share information about its action plan with other Members of the Association; and
- Submit annually a progress report on its action plan to the Secretariat.

Only Full members are entitled to nominate candidates for the positions of President and first Vice-President. They may also nominate candidates for the positions of Treasurer, Secretary General and Directors.

Ordinary members: this category is open to local, regional or national authority feeling they are not ready yet to implement a formal plan of action on AFE (a requirement to join as Full member), or any other non-for-profit entity that is committed to:

- Accept the Dublin Declaration on Age-Friendly Cities and Communities in Europe 2013 as the shared values and principles of action;
- Support the objectives of the Association; and
- Share information about its activities on age-friendly environments and cooperate with other Members of the Association.

Only Ordinary members are entitled to nominate candidates for the second Vice-President. They may also nominate candidates for the positions of Treasurer, Secretary General and Directors.

Associate members: this category is open to any for-profit entity, SME, large company that is committed to:

- Support the objectives of the Association; and
- Share information about its activities on age-friendly environments and cooperate with other Members of the Association.

To protect the non-for-profit character of the Covenant, Associate members are not entitled to vote at the General Assembly nor to nominate candidates for any position in the Board of Directors.

d. Affiliation process

A key recommendation of the Consortium was to keep the affiliation process simple (online form) while at the same time ensuring that applicants would understand the requirements and genuinely commit to take action on AFE, participate actively in the network and help build commo, knowledge on age-friendly environments by sharing information on their own initiatives.

Registering to become a member of the AFE-INNOVNET TN was easy and in many instances did not require a formal approval of the highest legal representative of the entity, while joining the Covenant means a more formal process and commitment, in particular for public authorities.

Upon request of some local public authorities, it was decided that for local authorities joining as Full members, joining the WHO GNAFCC should remain an option that applicant cities and communities would opt for rather than be automatic. Asking applicant local authorities to tick a box to confirm that they want to join the WHO GNAFCC was perceived as a good way to raise awareness of the WHO global network and of the opportunity for them to join the global network. It was also a way to ensure that they are aware and agree for their data to be sent by the Covenant secretariat to WHO GNAFCC for publication on WHO Age-Friendly World Platform.

The Covenant application form was developed in close cooperation with WHO to ensure full alignment between the criteria applying to WHO GNAFCC local authorities and the Covenant's Full members. This alignment work took a Little bit longer than anticipated and explains why the launch of online application form was done just of few days prior to the official launch of the Covenant; However to deal with this technical delay, AGE launched a call for commitments to join the Covenant through emails and 77 entities had already reponded positively by 7 December 2015 and could be announced at the official launch at the Committee fo the regions.

Once the online form was launched most of them applied formally and are now members of the Covenant. Thirteen of them however have not yet done so for various reasons (initial decision needs to be formalised by a decision of the local city council, in the case of Polish cities they discovered that cities need to ask authorisation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs before they can join such international network and this takes time, the contact person has left, etc.).

e. Secretariat

To support the Covenant, it was agreed that:

- A secretariat should be established to perform the administrative tasks necessary for the proper implementation of the work programme and provide support to Covenant Members when necessary.

The envisaged tasks that the Secretariat will need to perform are:

- moderate and monitor the applications for membership,
- liaise with WHO, in particular the GNAFCC,
- support Full members in the development of their strategy and reporting process,

- coordinate the mobilisation effort to recruit new members,
 - coordinate the exchange of good practices: repository and dedicated events,
 - coordinate the communication: newsletter, website of the Covenant, press release, social media,
 - coordinate the effort to develop tools and methodologies to assess and monitor action plans
 - liaise with EU policy and initiatives, as well as EU funding programmes (including advocacy activities)
- A Secretary General should be appointed by the General Assembly to be in charge with the daily management of the Covenant, supervise the secretariat and ensure the daily management of the Covenant, report to the Board of Directors, assess applications for membership and decide on their eligibility, act as an intermediary between the Members, the governing bodies of the Covenant and the Secretariat and represent the Covenant vis-à-vis third parties

f. Branding

To raise awareness of the Covenant and ensure its visibility as the main outcome of the AFE-INNOVNET Project, it was agreed that the Covenant should develop its own branding building on the AFE-INNOVNET branding.

A new logo was developed in consultation with the consortium and agreed in October 2015. Consortium members insisted that the main focus should remain on the objective “Towards an Age-Friendly Europe” and include the reference to the Covenant on Demographic Change in smaller font (see below Covenant logo)



Other branding material was developed for the Covenant such as logo in black and White, hard copies of the Covenant brochure, leaflets, folders, pens and bags that were used for the launch of the Covenant.

g. Frequently Asked Questions

To help answer applicants usual questions, a FAQ was developed and posted on the website (<http://www.agefriendlyeurope.org/about/FAQ>).

What do we understand by age-friendly environments?

According to the WHO, making cities and communities age-friendly is one of the most effective local policy approaches to respond to demographic ageing. The physical and social environments are key determinants of whether people can remain healthy, independent and autonomous long into their old age. Older persons play a crucial role in their communities - they engage in paid or volunteering work, transmit experience and knowledge, and help their families with caring responsibilities. These contributions can only be ensured if they enjoy good health and if societies address their needs. See here for further information:

http://www.who.int/ageing/age_friendly_cities/en/

What is the synergy with the WHO programme on age-friendly environments?

The Covenant closely collaborates with the WHO, in particular the Europe Region Office, based in Copenhagen, since the purpose is to use the WHO age-friendly environments framework into the EU context.

Cities which become Full members of the Covenant have the right to automatically join the WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities.

Why do we need a Covenant on Demographic Change?

Many innovative solutions supporting active and healthy ageing have been developed as pilots across the European Union (EU), but they often remain isolated and do not get scaled up, not even in their own country. This means that their impact on addressing challenges of demographic change in Europe is limited.

A key barrier is the lack of an EU structure to network and coordinate local and regional authorities and other stakeholders willing to support ageing well and inclusion of older people through the deployment of innovative age-friendly environments and support to pilot projects.

Local or even national authorities do not have the capacity on their own to initiate an EU-wide movement to adapt their living and working environments to the needs of their ageing populations. This can only be done with EU support.

There is at present no open EU network which enables local and regional authorities and other stakeholders interested in promoting and supporting innovative solutions for age-friendly environments to join, link up, benefit from each other's experience and work together on shaping the EU agenda on active and healthy ageing.

Who can join?

The Covenant is open to all interested parties (i.e. local, regional and national authorities, as well as civil society organisations, industries, research centres and universities) that voluntarily commit to making age-friendly environments a reality in their communities and to share their experience with other Covenant members.

Why join?

The Covenant aims at gathering all European local and regional authorities and other relevant stakeholders across the EU who want to work together to find innovative solutions to support active and healthy ageing and develop age-friendly environments across the EU.

All members of the Covenant are given opportunities to exchange good practices and case studies, access information on innovative ICT solutions, receive a monthly newsletter, attend webinars and workshops, contribute and benefit from methodologies for impact assessment and indicators' definition, contribute to and use the online repository of notable practices and disseminate their relevant activities and events.

How can my organisation/public authority contribute?

All members of the Covenant are invited to contribute to the development of the Covenant. The objective is to ensure that the Covenant's activities are relevant to local and regional authorities, and that they offer opportunities to local and regional authorities to link up with successful business offer(s) in various EU regions.

What will be the link with the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing?

When the [European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing](#) (EIP AHA) was launched end 2010, AGE made a strong call to ensure that this initiative would not adopt a narrow perspective and made sure that it did not only look at "care and cure" for older people, but would also use the work done by the WHO to demonstrate that the overall environment, both physical and social, are crucial for older people to age in good health. Among the six action groups that were launched, one is dedicated to "Innovation for age-friendly buildings, cities and environments" (action group D4). The Covenant supports the D4 action group and the synergies will be facilitated since some of the Covenant's founding members are involved in the D4 Action group.

How can interested parties apply to join the Covenant?

They can join through an easy online application procedure, no formal paper signature will be needed. It will be up to each public authority to decide, in accordance with their internal rules, how they need to proceed to join the Covenant and who should be involved on their behalf.

Are there grants linked to it?

No, the Covenant is not a funding programme and cannot provide financial support. The Secretariat will, however, provide information about EU funding opportunities and will help Covenant members develop partnerships to submit project proposals to EU calls for projects.

Is there a fee to join?

In its recently adopted report on the outcome of the EY2012 on Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations, the European Parliament is calling on the European Commission to find sustainable funding to cover the core activities of the Covenant. Other funding options, including potential membership fees, will have to be explored with the Founding members. Meanwhile, the Covenant will function thanks to in-kind contributions of its Founding members. It will work mainly virtually and will seize opportunities such as the Committee of the Regions' Open Days or other events organised by the European Commission or national stakeholders to organise back-to-back events for Covenant members.

II. Work Plan

Since all attempts to secure subsequent EU funding for the Covenant have failed so far, the first work plan was developed to be feasible with the limited resources that members will be able to devote to the Covenant:

All Covenant members are asked to mobilise the necessary resources to support the Covenant and to propose activities such as peer reviews, field visits, etc. They are also committed to seek contributions in kind from their own organisations or other entities such as meeting rooms, catering, etc. The example of the workshops that were organised by the AFE-INNOVNET TN in cooperation with WHO and the EC and with the support of 7 regional representations showed that the Covenant has the potential to rally support from a great variety of actors directly or indirectly involved in the network.

Statutory meetings will be organised virtually or back-to-back with other key meetings organised by EU institutions or other stakeholders if enough Covenant members can participate. For ex. the Secretariat is trying to organise a meeting of the Board of Directors during the conference [Building the future of Health](#) that will be organised by the City of Groningen on 1-4 June 2016. Another opportunity which is explored is to organise a meeting meeting for the Covenant members who will participate in the Open days of the Committee of the Regions in October 2016. The first General Assembly will have to take place before June 2017.

The work plan includes also information and communication, webinars, etc. between members with the support of the Covenant website and social media, sharing of good practices between members, etc.

Additional activities will be envisaged depending on the funding the Covenant will manage to raise (see D6.5 for more details).

III. Key Commitments

The Consortium then agreed that through its future activities the Covenant should commit to help the European Union better respond to demographic change by

allowing local, regional and national authorities and other stakeholders - who wish to work together to promote innovative solutions to adapt the living and working environments to the needs of the ageing population in Europe - to improve life expectancy in good health, create an inclusive society for all ages, and create new synergies between interested stakeholders and governance levels.

They also confirmed that the Covenant should commit in particular to:

- enable cities and regions in Europe to commit to develop, implement and monitor measures reflecting the principles underlying the "Age-Friendly Cities and Communities" programme of the World Health Organization as an answer to the demographic challenges they face;
- promote networking among its members; and
- build synergies with existing initiatives such as the WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities, the WHO European Healthy Cities Network, the 2013 Dublin Declaration on age-friendly Cities and the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing.