

User-driven Housing for Older People

The innovAge Housing App

What is the social innovation?

Building upon a scientific methodology based on the notion of person-environment fit, the innovAge Housing App is a tool making it possible for older people to overview and make predictions about housing accessibility in their present or future dwellings.



Who will benefit from this innovation?

Senior citizens will:

- Gain increased knowledge and awareness of environmental barriers that might induce housing accessibility problems, supporting them to be critical housing consumers.
- Get support to adapt their current dwelling for their current or future accessibility needs.
- Get help to match their current or future functional ability with dwellings in the available housing stock.

Housing accessibility is one out of several aspects that can be experienced as beneficial in decision making concerning where and how to live.

Stakeholders in the housing sector will:

- Get valid and comparable accessibility inventories of multi-family housing.
- Be alerted to environmental barriers that generate housing accessibility problems for older people.

How has the social innovation been tested?

Screenshot of the innovAge app interface showing a barrier explanation screen. The screen displays the title "Barrier explanation" and the location "Indoor - Kitchen and laundry room". The main text reads: "Wall-mounted cupboards and shelves placed high (lowest shelf more than 50 cm above the working surface)". Below this, it says: "The barrier can be resolved for example by refurbishing or installing height adjustable cupboards." A question is posed: "Is this a problem for you in the current dwelling?" with two buttons: "YES" (red) and "NO" (blue). At the bottom, there is a section for "Apply for housing adaptation grant" with a "WEB LINK" button. The app logo "innovAge" is visible in the top left corner.

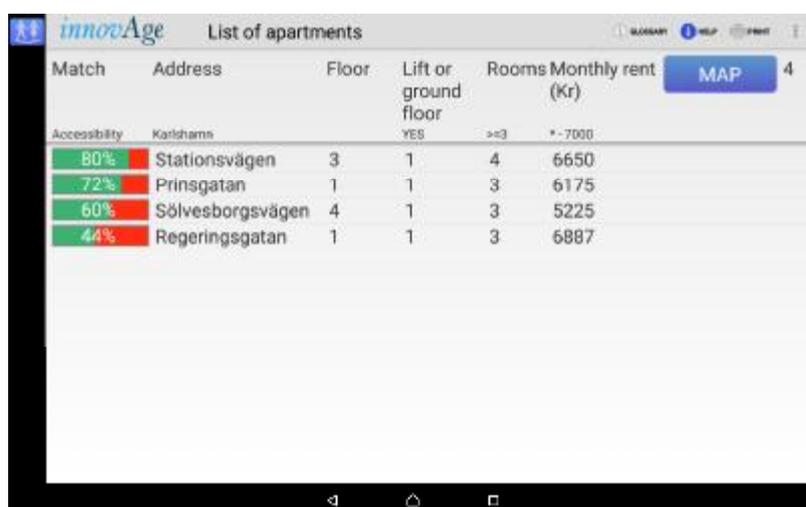
Reviewing potential accessibility problems in current dwelling.

Older people and stakeholders in the housing sector in Sweden, Germany, Italy and Latvia have been actively engaged in the development and evaluation process. Research circles in the four countries produced a list of priority ranked user requirements for the app, subsequently synthesized to a core set of minimum requirements. A first prototype

was developed and iteratively tested for usability with two panels of older people (+65) in Sweden and Latvia. After further development based on these results, a second version of the app was tested by one panel of older people in Sweden. During the process of usability testing, several group forums were arranged to allow discussions and get additional feedback from those who completed individual test sessions.

What were the findings?

Different national contexts and conditions make it difficult to develop a single app that is optimal for use among older people in all EU member states. For example, older people in Latvia are more interested in getting advice about how to optimize their present dwellings, while in Sweden searching for an apartment with the best possible accessibility based on the individual user's functional abilities is the preferred function. Moreover, the users asked for app functions beyond the accessibility prediction. That is, they would like to see an extended version including information on type of housing, local neighborhood characteristics, public transportation and other services.



Match	Address	Floor	Lift or ground floor	Rooms	Monthly rent (Kr)
80%	Stationsvägen	3	1	4	6650
72%	Prinsgatan	1	1	3	6175
60%	Sölnesborgsvägen	4	1	3	5225
44%	Regeringsgatan	1	1	3	6887

Searching for a new apartment with best possible match in terms of accessibility

What is required to implement the social innovation?

Based on the second prototype of the app, further optimization is needed prior to market release. In addition to the development of a solid business plan, collaboration with housing companies is needed for large-scale feasibility testing and evaluation, in different countries across the EU.

Where can I learn more?

- Principal investigator: Professor Susanne Iwarsson, e-mail susanne.iwarsson@med.lu.se
- Project leader: Dr. Björn Slaug, e-mail bjorn.slaug@med.lu.se
- Usability test moderator: Dr. Oskar Jonsson, e-mail oskar.jonsson@med.lu.se

Department of Health Sciences & Centre for Ageing and Supporting Environments (CASE)
Box 157, SE-221 00 Lund, Sweden <http://www.med.lu.se/case>