Welcome to INNOVAGE

Welcome to the second newsletter of the INNOVAGE project, which includes updates on not just our activities over the last year or so, but on the burgeoning environment of social innovation for active and healthy ageing across the EU.

This issue of the newsletter provides updates from three of our own social innovations and our work on engagement with end users. We report from the first of the INNOVAGE Stakeholder Forums on Social Innovations for Healthy and Active Life Expectancy, which took place in Sweden in September 2013, and provide a full review from a recent European Science Foundation Exploratory Workshop on Ageing and Social Innovation. This was run in close collaboration with the INNOVAGE project to examine the wider research environment informing the development and evaluation of social innovations which support healthy and active ageing.

An increasing number of projects and initiatives are also exploring the role of social innovation to support an ageing population to stay healthier, active and independent for longer. We include summary reports from two related projects – AFE INNOVNET and SiforAGE – as well as news about recent and upcoming events which will be of interest. The next newsletter will include a report on our social innovation targeting management of problematic obesity and further news on our survey of social innovations.

We look forward to welcoming many of you to our next INNOVAGE Forum meeting in Riga, Latvia, and if you are unable to join us, we hope you will explore our website (www.innovage.group.shef.ac.uk) and keep updated via our Twitter feed (@INNOVAGEEp7).

Alan Walker
INNOVAGE Coordinator

About INNOVAGE

INNOVAGE is an ambitious three-year project dedicated to developing and testing, as well as surveying and cataloguing, social innovations that will have a solid impact on improving the quality of life and well-being of older people. It will develop and test, as well as survey and catalogue, social innovation that will have a solid impact on improving the quality of life and well-being of older people. In particular, the project aims to make a major contribution to the EU Horizon 2020 goal of extending healthy life years. The project’s objectives directly address the current major barriers to innovation and to the achievement of the extension of healthy life years across the EU.

INNOVAGE has four specific objectives:

- Online support for informal carers (INRCA, Italy and Eurocarers, Luxembourg)
- Reducing problematic obesity in old age (Newcastle, Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam Universities, UK)
- Enhancing physical fitness in long-term care (Heidelberg University, Germany)
- To create a brand new social innovation web-based platform, consisting of model, state-of-the-art, innovations from anywhere in the world that have been evaluated to have real potential to contribute to extending HLE.
- To tackle head-on the critical barriers to the implementation of social innovations in this field by drawing on state-of-the-art research and experience in SI development.
- To emphasise knowledge exchanges to and implementation especially in the New Member States, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe.

- Accessibility assessments for housing (led by Lund University, Sweden)
European Forum on Social Innovations for Healthy & Active Life Expectancy

The first INNOVAGE Stakeholder Forum 1 took place in Lund, Sweden in September 2013. Formally titled “European Forum on Social Innovations for Healthy and Active Life Expectancy” the aims of the Forum were to:

- Introduce participants to the INNOVAGE project
- Examine the initial outputs from the project
- Develop understanding of the contribution of social innovation to active ageing, healthy life expectancy and wellbeing

Participants included policy makers, practitioners, older people and their representatives, companies and NGOs with experience or interest in social innovations for ageing.

Chaired by Prof Vappu Taipale the Forum included presentations from the INNOVAGE coordinator and from each of the social innovations which are part of the INNOVAGE project. Complementary presentations came from:

- Dr Liz Mesthenios (Age Platform Europe, EU/ Fiftyplus Hellas, Greece) who commented on the user perspective
- Mrs Sylvia Wyatt (Young Foundation, UK) who discussed social innovation
- Prof Asghar Zaidi (University of Southampton, UK) who presented the Active Ageing Index

At the core of the event were the four social innovations being developed by INNOVAGE partners. Each of these innovations – relating to housing, support for carers, obesity outcomes and mobility in long-term care – was presented to the audience who then split into discussion groups. The discussion groups were asked to respond to a set of questions, reflecting on the specific aims and achievements of each innovation and to provide feedback to shape their future plans. Almost 60 people from across Europe contributed their expertise and ideas during the Forum meeting, and provided substantial recommendations to help the research teams develop their activities over the next year.

Two further INNOVAGE Stakeholder Forums will take place in 2014 and 2015. At each Forum stakeholders will be asked to examine the interim outputs and progress from the project and decide how they can be best utilised to maximise Healthy Life Expectancy and wellbeing in old age.

The second Forum will take place in Riga, Latvia on 25 September 2014. For more information visit http://bit.ly/Iro3Q4e

Mrs Sylvia Wyatt introducing core concepts of social innovation
European Science Foundation Exploratory Workshop on Ageing and Social Innovation

In the two days immediately prior to the first INNOVAGE Forum a European Science Foundation Exploratory Workshop on Ageing and Social Innovation was held in Lund, Sweden. Convened by Professor Alan Walker (University of Sheffield, UK) and Professor Susanne Iwarsson (Lund University, Sweden), a total of 25 participants gathered from 11 ESF countries and 3 non-ESF countries.

The scientific aim of the workshop was framed around the larger topics which underpin the INNOVAGE project. Thus, the main focus of the exploratory workshop was on social innovations for healthy and active ageing; the extent of existing knowledge and the research agenda required to ensure the fullest possible exploitation of its potential. The sparse nature of the existing evidence-base, the absence of a concerted research framework in this field and the lack of a commonly agreed scientific definition of social innovation mean that this topic was ideally suited to an exploratory and participatory approach.

The workshop responded directly to the challenges set by HORIZON 2020 and, specifically, the European Innovation Partnership project on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP-AHA) to raise the average healthy life expectancy (HLE) in Europe by 2 years by 2020, as well as the overarching goal of increasing innovation within the EU. However, there is no general agreement about the definition and meaning of social innovation, and no discernible scientific research agenda behind it. Hence, there was an urgent need to scope the scientific and applied evidence base for social innovation by bringing together a range of scientists, policy makers, practitioners, business people and other end users. This was the first event of its kind and will serve as the benchmark for future developments in European research on ageing.

**Overall conclusions**

Understanding of the social innovation concept and process is poor and hampers dialogue; many potential stakeholders, including those already involved in social innovation but who do not recognise the relevance of the expression, may find the term exclusionary and not understand how their activities relate to the concept. In contrast, for non-specialists, there is no real difference between the concepts of "active ageing" and "healthy ageing".

The language used in the fields of both innovation and research is also a potential barrier to integrating effective research into social innovation. Also, it is clear that assessment of effectiveness requires rigorous evaluation but there is a dearth of flexible methodologies which reflect the transitional nature of social innovation. Consequently, researchers and innovators need to build a common understanding and recognition of the complementary nature of their skills.

Social innovation to support active and healthy ageing should not target only older people because interventions across the life course will support healthy ageing in later years, and the challenges commonly faced by older people, such as disability or caring responsibilities, are present in all ages. Small scale "micro" innovations have so far been missing from the dialogue on social innovation; they are judged to be very early stage innovations which should, if they are successful, grow. It is clear that there are many micro innovations which are successful in their specific contexts and should not be ignored.

Understanding the impact of social innovation has been recognised as a major challenge and one in which researchers can make major contributions; the INNOVAGE project is taking the first steps in this area. There was strong consensus that evaluation of social innovations should be informed by both objective and subjective measures and the innovation process needed both support from and participation of end users, especially older people. Indeed
the involvement of older people and stakeholders was considered essential to gain the best possible understanding of the structure, process and impact of social innovations.

In addition to evaluating social innovation, the research agenda for social innovation in active and healthy ageing should be framed in multiple areas:

• Further refining proposals for a model to map social innovations
• Identifying opportunities for potential social innovations from an evidence base showing which aspects of ageing affect health and activity levels the most, for example, preventing falls in older people, decreasing loneliness and isolation, encouraging people at younger ages to maintain a healthy weight to reduce risks of disease and disability
• Understanding the varied environments of localities, regions and nations to identify where successful social innovations may be effectively transferred
• Increasing the sophistication of implementation science by exploring the processes behind both successes and failures in the field
• Developing new and flexible yet high quality methodologies to bridge the divide between academic rigour and the changeable nature of innovation

Future actions
The substantial outputs gathered during the workshop will form the basis for sustained networking that will foster European research on ageing; the Convenors intend to apply for further funding - probably a COST Action – to sustain and expand the discussion.

Commitment has been made to a broad range of actions, including dissemination, theory development and exploration of attendees' local social innovation environments, and these actions will inform all our future activities in this field.

The Convenors judge the workshop to have been highly successful in both breaking new ground in the discussion of social innovations for active and healthy ageing and in building a solid foundation for further scientific work.
Update on our social innovations

User-driven housing for older people
One of the four social innovations of the INNOVAGE Project is an interactive software application intended to support accessible housing and empower senior citizens to be critical consumers regarding housing options. Based on desires and wishes expressed by older people themselves as well as core stakeholders in four countries, a specification of user requirements has been prepared. This specification guides the ongoing programming and implementation work by the team at Lund University, Sweden.

During autumn 2014, usability testing of a first test version of the Housing App will be effectuated in Sweden and Latvia. The ongoing Housing App development is being presented in fora targeting scientific as well as stakeholder and general public audiences. Recent and upcoming examples of such events are the 22nd Nordic Congress of Gerontology in Gothenburg in May 2014, the KOMMEK conference in Malmö in August 2014, and the INNOVAGE Forum in Riga in September 2014. With a progressive communication plan that encourages active user involvement in the research process, the development of the Housing App has a strong potential to influence future housing provision policies and practices across Europe.

A multilingual web platform for informal carers, care professionals and employers
Informal carers often overload their mental and physical capacity and as a consequence they are experiencing a chronic condition, the caregiving burden. Carers’ burden influences all different aspects of a carer’s life: psychological, physical, social and financial. Different kinds of interventions supporting informal carers have been developed, especially in terms of psycho-educational or therapeutic sessions. In recent years there is a growing attraction on the web-based support services that have been developed for this target population.

A new multilingual web platform supporting informal carers of older people is currently being developed and implemented in 27 EU Member States, as part of the INNOVAGE project, funded by FP7. The Italian National Institute of Health and Science on Aging (INRCA) and EUROCARES are participating by developing, testing and disseminating the web platform addressing informal carers’ needs. Additional national contents addressing employers of carers in paid employment and care professionals will be developed and implemented in certain EU countries.
At this phase, the services have been already tested to a sample of around one hundred users in 3 pilot sites: Germany, Italy and Sweden in a one-group pretest-posttest study for a period of 12 weeks. Main aim of the pilot study was to assess health status, quality of life, social support, and self-perception of carer’s role, as well as usability, usefulness and appropriateness of the web services.

In parallel the implementation period in 27 EU has officially started with the development on national specific information to all the other 24 countries.

The platform will provide to end-users a set of web based services:

• national information on care and support services
• legal and financial information
• information about the most common impairments of older people
• strategies and information about coping with caregiving
• suggestions on how to reconcile care with family and work

• interactive services for both peer and professional support via social network, forum, chat, video conferencing tools

The web platform core aims are the provision of appropriate web-based support services to informal carers, the availability of these services in countries with few or total lack of targeted services and the establishment of an active network of carers’ organisations. The involvement of EUROCARERS member organisations has been a key part in the implementation process and will play a fundamental role in the dissemination phase.

EUROCARERS member organisations have already participated in short surveys for the selection of web services (carers’ needs, appropriate web tool, sustainability of the web platform) and the majority of the organisations have become members of the INNOVAGE network to facilitate the development of country specific information. In 2015, the members of INNOVAGE network will coordinate the dissemination and training of the web platform in national level.
The dissemination network is:

- Austria - European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research (European Centre)
- Belgium - Thomas More Kempen vzw (Thomas More)
- Bulgaria - Alzheimer Association in Bulgaria
- Cyprus - Cyprus Alzheimer Association
- Czech Republic - Gerontologicke centrum
- Estonia - Estonian Carers
- France - Association Francaise des Aidants
- Germany - Wr Pflegen
- Greece - Athens Association of Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Disorders
- Hungary - Magyar Máltai Szeretettszolgálat Egyesület - Hungarian Maltese Charity Service (MMSZ)
- Italy - Italian National Institute of Health and Science on Aging (INRCA)
- Ireland - Care Alliance Ireland
- Latvia - Atvieniba „Apeironas”
- Lithuania - Lithuanian Multiple Sclerosis Union
- Luxembourg - RBS-Center für Altersfroen (RBS)
- Malta - SoS Malta
- Netherlands - VILANS
- Poland - European Care Foundation (EFO)
- Portugal - Jose Alves / Ana Ribas Teixeira
- Romania - Ana Aslan International Foundation (AAIF)
- Slovakia - Civic Association for Sustainable development of Regions in Slovakia (CASDRDS)
- Slovenia - Slovenian Federation of pensioners’ organisations (ZDUS)
- Spain - Confederación Española de Asociaciones de Familiares de Personas con Alzheimer y otras demencias (CEIFA)
- Sweden - The Swedish Family Care Competence Centre
- UK - CARERS UK
- UK - Scotland-VOCAL

Negotiations are taking place with organisations in Finland and Denmark.

**Publication of intervention guidebook for long-term care in motion**

This INNOVAGE project, run by colleagues at Heidelberg University in Germany, sets out to investigate social innovations for the enhancement of quality of life and well-being—especially the healthy life expectancy—for older people. The project acts on the assumption that despite strong evidence for activity promotion in elderly people in institutional settings, increased and diversified activity is currently only implemented at a rudimentary level. Therefore, the primary objective is to increase and systematically promote the implementation and understanding regarding various aspects of activity patterns, physical fitness, and social participation of nursing home residents; staff members and environmental setting will also be addressed.

The first stage of the project has now been completed, with publication of a guidebook to the intervention. Instead of a rigorous design such as a randomised, control-trial intervention study, the project has pursued an innovative, partially controlled pilot project accounting for content and methodology. This innovative approach is now outlined in a report which describes the intervention components. The program which has been developed and is being implemented is meant as a social innovation in the nursing home setting and should enable professionals working in this context to enhance the physical activity of residents. To download the guidebook please visit [http://bit.ly/2SAIEv](http://bit.ly/2SAIEv).
INNOVAGE partner Age Platform Europe has led on the development of a new report, aimed at facilitating involvement of older users in the social innovation process. The “Guidelines on involving older people in social innovation development” have been developed based on literature findings and also on their experience of working with older people in the framework of INNOVAGE and other European research projects. Since its foundation in 2001, AGE Platform Europe has participated in many European-funded research projects aiming to promote a society of all ages, to foster active and healthy ageing and to protect the wellbeing and dignity of older persons.

Involving older users in the planning and development of innovative approaches is essential when developing new goods and/or services. Transforming users into partners ensures relevance and adequacy of new approaches and will help them to be implemented and adapted to different contexts.

Therefore, these guidelines aim to present a strong recommendation for involvement of older people in the planning, development and implementation of social innovations, new ideas meeting social needs and creating new relationships or collaboration. They also provide social innovators with practical tips to incorporate users’ perspectives in the social innovation processes.

The guidelines have been conceived to present some common practices and suggestions for allowing the genuine participation of seniors in the social innovation process. The document highlights the complexity of dealing with users and of engaging with them, while suggesting useful methodologies for user involvement, taking into account the inter-disciplinary approach needed when discussing and implementing social innovation.

To download a copy of the report please visit http://bit.ly/lj4MvH
Invitation to join the AFE-INNOVNET community on age-friendly environments

Since February 2014, AGE Platform Europe has been coordinating the Europe-wide Thematic Network on Innovation for Age-Friendly Environments AFE-INNOVNET. The network aims to create synergies and collaboration among the local and regional authorities, companies, civil society organisations, universities and other actors committed to finding innovative solutions that positively address demographic change.

A growing community
More than 110 organisations, public authorities, businesses, universities and research centres have already joined the AFE-INNOVNET network. They will have a great role to play to draft effective guidance and tools to measure the socio-economic impact of age-friendly initiatives, better engage end users, and to help us design the future EU Covenant on demographic change.

Register to AFE-INNOVNET events
AFE-INNOVNET hold regular webinars throughout the year; with the next one, focusing on ‘Age-Friendly Environments Meet Business: Perfect Match?’. It will take place on 22 September, 11.00 CET. The webinar will be the opportunity to give the floor to various speakers of the industrial sector that are working on age-friendly solutions. Join the newsletter mailing list for regular updates.

The same day, a roundtable on “Promoting large scale deployment of smart ICT solutions that support healthy ageing through age-friendly environments” will take place at the EU Marketplace for eHealth & EIP on Active and Healthy Ageing (http://bit.ly/1ql6MFq) organised as part of the Growing the Silver Economy in Europe (http://bit.ly/1YUIIF).

Join the Network!
Your support is essential if we want to create an Age-Friendly EU. All interested stakeholders are welcome to join the Network for free and contribute to the ongoing work. Being a member of the Network give access to:
- Webinars on age-friendly related issues
- A repository of innovative and evidence-based solutions
- A toolkit to assess the socio-economic impact of age-friendly environments (ready in 2015)
- A methodology involving older people in the co-production of age-friendly solutions (ready in 2015)
- The discussions on the future EU Covenant on demographic change and the collaboration with WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities.

For more information, visit www.afeinnovnet.eu, subscribe to AFE-INNOVNET newsletter, or contact Julia Wadoux at julia.wadoux@age-platform.eu.
The Science in Society project “Social Innovation for Active and Healthy Ageing” is working to strengthen cooperation among the stakeholders working on active and healthy ageing. The project aims to put together, through a diverse range of activities, scientists, end-users, civil society, public administrations and companies in order to improve the competitiveness of the European Union regarding the promotion of research and innovative products for longer and healthier lives.

One key strand of activity so far has focused on “Technology Experience Cafés”, events which give the opportunity to older people to test both new and existing technology which is specially designed for them. Participants have the opportunity to explore technologies, discuss how they could be used and feedback their suggestions of improvements and alterations. Three Technology Experience Cafes have taken place: in France with a focus on prototypes; in Italy examining digital enablement and independence; and, in Denmark to break ageism misconceptions about technology readiness of older people and also de-mystify the current technologies. A fourth and final Café will take place in Germany in autumn 2014.

In addition to the outputs from the Cafes themselves, the event organisers have collaborated to develop a blueprint for this format of event which will form part of the outputs of the SIforAGE project. The blueprint will, when complete, be available on the SIforAGE website. For more information on the project please visit http://www.siforage.eu/
Europe’s Ageing Demography - An ILC-UK Population Patterns Seminar

Date: 5th November 2014, 14:00 (for 14:30 start) – 17:00.

Location: European and Economic and Social Committee, TRE 7701, 7th floor, Trèves Building, 74 rue de Trèves, 1040 Brussels.

Throughout 2014, ILC-UK, supported by specialist insurer, Partnership Assurance Group Plc (Partnership), has been undertaking a series of events to explore the relationship between our changing demography and public policy. This event, as part of the Population Patterns Seminar Series, will explore Europe’s ageing demography.

Europe is currently facing unprecedented changes - by 2050 it is predicted that more than a third of the European population will be over 60 years old as a result of rising life expectancies and low birth rates. These changes pose major economic, budgetary and social challenges. In the EU, age related spending is projected to rise from an annual cost of 25% to 29% of GDP between 2010 and 2060. At the same time, there are set to be far fewer people of working age to support European ageing populations- by 2060 the dependency ratio is predicted to drop to under two working-age people for every person aged over 65. At this event we will seek to inform further this critical debate by launching our first ‘European Factpack’ of demographic statistics. This Factpack will provide statistics on a range of topics from life expectancy to housing supply, and pensions to the use of new technologies amongst today’s older generations.

The ‘European Factpack’ builds on our UK Factpack initiative, by providing the public, private and third sectors with the most up-to-date information on Europe’s changing demography. During the discussion we will explore:

- What are the ramifications of Europe’s changing demography, both for individual countries and Europe as a whole?
- What policy changes will need to be enacted to ensure Europe’s economic sustainability?
- How the public, private and third sectors react to findings of the ‘European Factpack’?
- Which areas of the Factpack might be expanded to help policy-makers, journalists and opinion formers?

A full agenda will be available closer to the event date. To register for the event please visit http://bit.ly/1r6Dkbj
Winners of the Social Innovation on Ageing European Award
http://www.changemakers.com/innovationinageing

Led by the King Baudouin Foundation, the Social Innovation on Ageing European Award aimed at mapping and analysing European social innovations in the field of active and healthy ageing. On 25 March, the winner were awarded in Brussels.

The event highlighted how social innovations can bring wealth and wellbeing to local communities, as well as foster the cooperation between universities, local authorities, citizens and other stakeholders. A short presentation of the winners is available http://bit.ly/Tc4Yoh

Final event of DAA – Design-led Innovation for Active Ageing
http://daaproject.eu/news/thank-you/

On April 24-25 2014, Barcelona hosted the Final event of DAA – Design-led Innovation for Active Ageing, an Interreg IVC project that brought together 8 cities determined to define sustainable solutions for demographic change and contribute to social innovation through service design.

The conference allowed the participants to brainstorm and interact around design thinking for Ambient Assisted Living. After having share challenges and solutions, the conference investigated how to tackle societal challenges through the use of design. For more information, please visit http://bit.ly/lpl37eM
**Saxony Innovation Forum on Active and Healthy Ageing**

http://www.s4s.ue.wroc.pl/index.php/2-uncategorised/63-news-social-innovation

On 22 May 2014, Marshall Office of Lower Silesia organised an international conference on active and healthy Ageing in Wrocław. The event highlighted initiatives and innovative approaches that enable older people to stay in their homes for as long as possible and support chronically ill patients. The conference also aimed at enhancing the cooperation between regions and institutions.


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**Home Sweet Home publication “ICT for Ageing Well- Listen to what older persons think!”**

As part of the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP AHA), a new report was released in May, which examines the state of the art of the use of new technologies (ICT) to promote age-friendly environments and better identify older people’s needs.

The Action Group “Innovation for Age-friendly buildings, cities & environments” (so called Action Group D4) of the EIP AHA brings together regional and local authorities which focus on improving physical and social environments to support active and healthy ageing throughout the EU. The participants of the Action Group D4 undertake joint initiatives to promote age-friendly environments by increasing the effectiveness of targeted solutions based on Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) products, applications and services.

The document provides a review of best practices and detects gaps about older adult users’ needs in relation with outdoors activities, from the point of view of ICT based solutions. The deliverable focuses on the solutions available in fields strongly related to ageing such as: neurodegenerative diseases, dementia, social inclusion, accessible tourism, ambient assisted solutions.

This document presents information provided by members of the Action Area D4 and has been produced thanks to the contribution of Polibienestar Research Institute, UPIM-LST, ISOIN & CBIM. Download the report from [http://bit.ly/1CrnSW3u](http://bit.ly/1CrnSW3u).
**Consortium**

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**EU**
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- Heidelberg University  
  www.uni-heidelberg.de/index_e.html

**Italy**
- National Institute on Health and Science of Aging (INRCA)  
  www.inrca.it/inrca/home.asp

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- Latvian Council of Science  

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