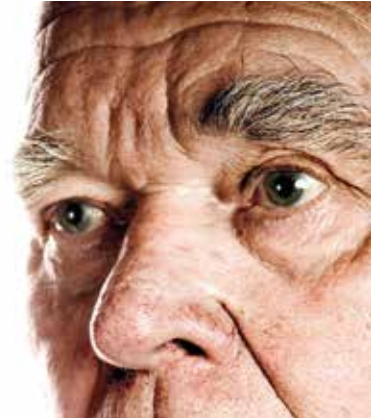


# *innov*Age

About the project ►

INNOVAGE is a major three year European project focused on social innovations which support active and healthy ageing.



The project will develop and test, as well as survey and catalogue, social innovations 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 aims to achieve impact in the public, private and third sectors and is built on the closest possible partnership with end users and stakeholders, including older people themselves.

Its key outputs will be four new major social innovations in different EU countries and a new European platform to promote the sustainable implementation of social innovations to promote well-being in later life.

INNOVAGE builds on the expert research team at the centre of the FUTURAGE project, which created A Road Map for European Ageing Research. In total nine partners from seven different countries make up the consortium, each bringing different disciplinary interests and expertise in ageing research. All partners share the following guiding principles:

1. A shared commitment to science applied to the improvement of human well-being
2. Ageing research requires a multi-disciplinary perspective
3. Europe is not presently maximising its considerable resources and not currently improving well-being and quality of life as rapidly as possible
4. A new vision of ageing is required which emphasises the positive potential of older people
5. The great potential for social innovation in this field has not been sufficiently exploited

# Objectives

The mission of INNOVAGE is to concentrate the highest possible quality of scientific expertise, the active participation of older people and stakeholders from policy, practice and product development fields. The collaboration will produce and identify major innovative approaches to better quality of life and well-being as people age. The project has four specific objectives:

1. To develop, implement and evaluate four potentially cost-effective social innovations focused on: social innovation, well-being and quality of life, and Healthy Life Expectancy.
2. 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 Healthy Life Expectancy.
3. 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 social innovation development and by adopting a novel approach based on the exploitation of recent technologies for addressing users' needs in an optimal way.
4. To emphasise knowledge exchanges to and implementation especially in the New Member states. The tools for implementation will recognise the very unequal experience of Healthy Life Expectancy across Europe and seek to prioritise the New Member States and especially those in Central and Eastern Europe.



# Active and Healthy Ageing

Though a widely supported concept, few countries have adopted a comprehensive model of active ageing. Many national and European policies focus narrowly on the labour market and working longer, which tends to exclude any older people not engaged in economic activity. Focusing on only the more active older people neglects frail older people and especially those in long-term care institutions. The emphasis on physical activity has also led to inattention to the importance of maintaining mental capacity and mental well-being.

There is also a need for a new vision of ageing. The present perspective is a relic of eras when retirement took place for a majority at state pension ages and post-retirement years were relatively short. Changes in the labour market and social behaviour coupled with a remarkable extension in longevity, combined in some countries with later onset of disease and disability, have transformed the experience of later life. The boundaries of frailty are being pushed back and, for a growing number of older Europeans, 70 is the new 50.

INNOVAGE will develop a new formulation of active ageing. Based on the work conducted throughout the project, the aim is to produce an inspiring and usable tool to encourage actions by actors at all levels. The focus on the operationalisation of active ageing will directly address the major barriers to social innovation and the achievement of healthy life years across the European Union.

## The active and healthy ageing model

A comprehensive strategy to maximise participation and well-being as people age. It should operate simultaneously at the individual (lifestyle), organisational (age management) and societal (policy) levels and at all stages of the life course.



# Social Innovation

Social innovation is not a new concept but recently it has been widely encouraged as a means to improve, expand and diversify innovation for the benefit of society. It is not an easy concept to define, but is broadly understood to mean new ideas meeting social needs and creating new relationships or collaboration.

For social innovation to be effective it needs to be tied more directly to the targeted populations and individuals – in this case the ageing population. However there is an absence of successful and sustainable social innovations in the field of well-being in later life, in contrast to civic entrepreneurialism or the public sector. The lack of clear definition and wide understanding of social innovation means many social innovators may not identify themselves so; many innovations remain small, immature and effectively hidden from view.

For example there is great potential for the use of ICT in this field, in support services for informal carers, smart home technology, the use of mobile phones for preventative health care and management of chronic conditions, but none of this is yet implemented on a large scale. In addition, there are few recognised instruments for ensuring the success of social innovations; outcomes are many and varied, making comparisons difficult.

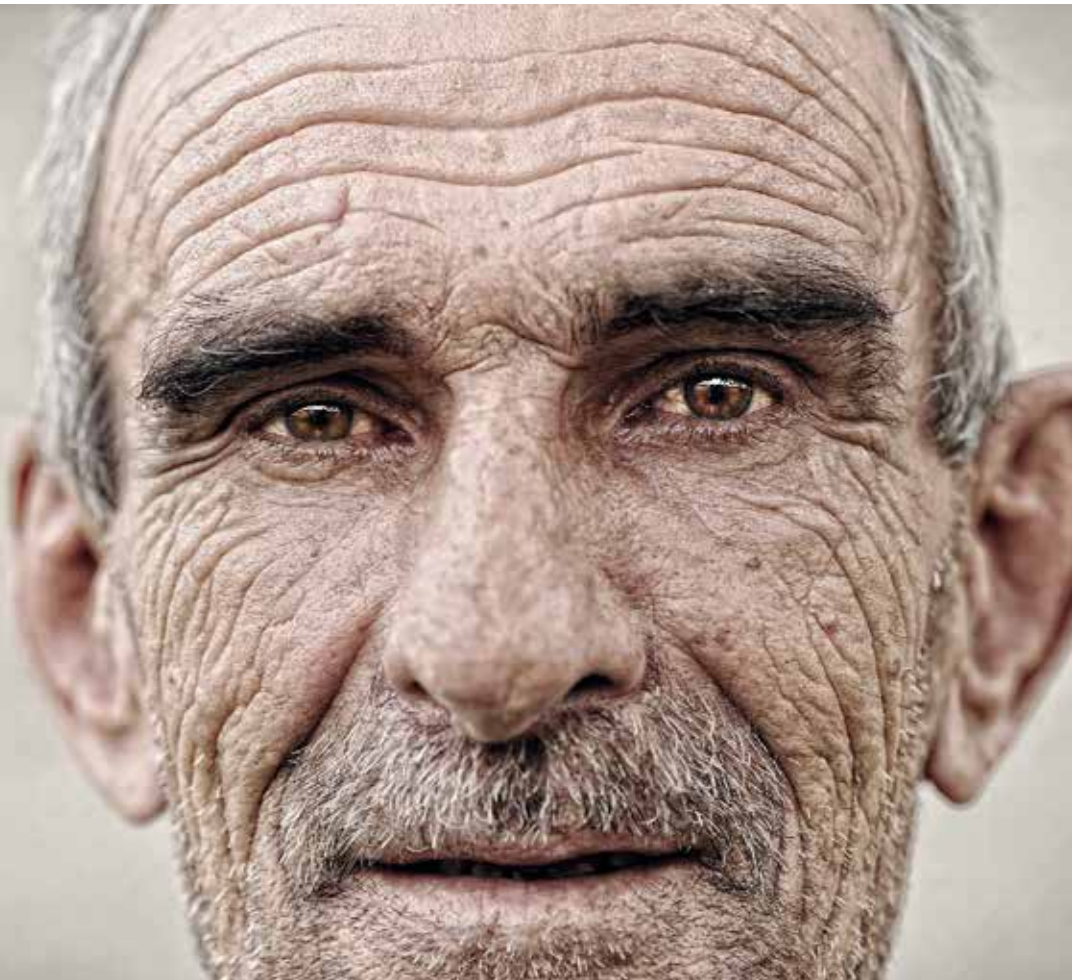
INNOVAGE will develop an evaluation process to assess the impact of social innovations on well-being in old age. Building on methods being developed as part of the Joint Action Healthy Life Years, INNOVAGE will develop a database of exemplars of social innovation, those with a proven track record or really obvious potential.

## What are social innovations?

Social Innovations are ideas, products, services or models that are new, or applied in new contexts, and which are designed to improve the well-being and quality of life of people as they age.

# Activities

- Four Social Innovations in the fields of housing (Sweden, Latvia, Italy and Germany), carers (Italy), obesity (UK), long-term care (Germany)
- 150 exemplars of social innovations designed to extend HLE and/or improve later life well-being
- A webportal 'The European Social Innovations for Healthy Life Expectancy' resource, supported by a touch-phone/tablet application
- A Stakeholder Panel
- Three meetings of the INNOVAGE European Forum on Social Innovations for Healthy and Active Life Expectancy
- Development of formal guidelines for the involvement of older people in the development of relevant Social Innovations
- European conference for Social Innovations and Active and Healthy Ageing





# Consortium

## **Coordinator**

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- University of Sheffield, UK

## **EU**

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- Age Platform Europe

## **Germany**

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- Heidelberg University

## **Italy**

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- National Institute on Health and Science of Aging (INRCA)

## **Latvia**

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- Latvian Council of Science

## **Luxembourg**

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- Eurocarers

## **Sweden**

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- Lund University

## **UK**

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- Newcastle University
- Sheffield Hallam University



# *innovAge*

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