

A BETTER ENVIRONMENT TO AGE IN

- Working towards age-friendly cities in the Nordic region



Nordens
välfärdscenter

A better environment to age in – *Working towards age-friendly cities in the Nordic region*

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Foreword

In the Nordic region, life expectancy is increasing, and the elderly population is growing. It is of course a positive development that more people are living for longer, but it also entails major challenges, particularly in the areas of housing, transport, urban planning, healthcare and social services. The answer is to create age-friendly communities, where we can still experience quality of life in old age.

Preventive work is needed to face what has been referred to as "the demographic challenge". We need to create communities in which everyone is included, involved, can live an active life and is able to postpone the need of old age care for as long as possible. This is important both for the individual and for the society.

The Nordic Welfare Centre has taken the initiative to start a project about quality of life for elderly women and men in the Nordic region. The project focuses on factors that often tend to arise in discussions about quality of life and good health – opportunities for physical exercises, good eating habits, social interaction, meaningfulness. These factors are just as important for a recently retired person as for a very old person.

Many municipalities in the Nordic region are working ambitiously to create a better environment to age in. In this publication, we have investigated in greater depth the Nordic cities that have chosen to connect to the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities. These are Oslo, Trondheim, Uppsala, Gothenburg, Tampere and Reykjavik. No doubt, much of the work being done there is also underway elsewhere in the Nordic region. The reason for choosing these cities is that they have committed to in-depth, structured work with these issues based on the eight thematic areas highlighted by WHO. We have also included Aarhus, which is not part of the WHO network but which is working extensively, in collaboration with various stakeholders, to create social interaction and counteract loneliness in all age groups.

This publication is based on information from meetings and study visits to cities, as well as written material. It is primarily intended for decision-makers on a local level and organisations of pensioners. We hope that this publication will serve as an inspiration in municipalities' work to become a better environment to age in.



Ewa Persson Göransson
Director
Nordic Welfare Centre







A LONGER AND HEALTHIER LIFE

In the early 1900s, almost 12 million people lived in the Nordic region. Today, some 27 million people inhabit the region.¹ The number of elderly people has increased faster than the general population, which has led to the elderly population in the Nordic region doubling within the past century. The over-80s segment has also increased. Today, roughly one in twenty inhabitants is over the age of 80. Prognoses indicate that 8.6 per cent of the population of the Nordic region will be over the age of 80 by 2040.²

The average life expectancy is the additional number of years a person at a given age can be expected to live, provided the mortality rate is constant. The average life expectancy in the Nordic region gives women an estimated 83.8

years and men 79.8. In a global perspective, we live relatively long lives in the Nordic region, longer than the average for both the EU and the USA.³ Greenland is an exception. Here, the average life expectancy is almost 10 years shorter than for other inhabitants of the Nordic region. It is estimated that the average life expectancy in the Nordic region will continue to increase in the five largest countries until 2080, reaching levels of around 87 to 88 years for men and 91 to 92 years for women.⁴ Some 5 million people in the Nordic region today are 65 or older. According to the main prognosis of Eurostat, the EU's statistical office, this group will grow to 7.6 million by 2050 and close to 10 million by 2080.⁵

1 Nordic statistics 2017

2 <http://www.nordregio.se/Publications/Publications-2016/The-impact-of-migration-on-projected-population-trends-in-Denmark-Finland-Iceland-Norway-and-Sweden-20152080/> Nordregio 2016. The impact of migration on projected population trends in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden: 2015–2080

3 Nordic statistics 2017

4 Eurostat file: Main scenario – Population on 1st January by age and sex [proj_13npms]. Downloaded 17 February 2017.

5 Ibid

Retirement in the Nordic region

The pension system in the Nordic region provides the statutory right to a basic pension; a type of minimum level compensation. In addition to the basic pension, there is a statutory occupational pension. There are also additional private pension schemes. Age and other conditions for gaining access for the various compensation systems vary from one country to the next. The basic condition under which a person can be granted a basic pension in the Nordic countries is that he or she must have had citizenship for at least three years. In order to receive a full basic pension, the person must have been a citizen for at least 40 years.⁶

The age limits for taking out pension vary from one country to the next. In Denmark, people can choose to take out their pension from the age of 60, and no later than from the age of 75. In the Faroe Islands, it is 67 and above; in Finland, 63-68, in Iceland, 67-72 and in Norway 62-75. In Sweden, pension can be taken out from the age of 61. No upper age limit applies in Sweden.⁷

Some choose to take out all or parts of their pension before they reach the labour market-regulated pensionable age. Others choose to wait as long as possible, which can be advantageous as several of the systems pay

out a higher pension the longer a person waits before commencing.

The statutory age for leaving the labour market is 65 or 67 in the Nordic countries. In an international perspective, this age limit is relatively high. However, the age that people are actually leaving differs somewhat. Iceland has the highest actual age for leaving the labour market. Men retire at 69 and women at 68. In other Nordic countries, the exit age for men is 65 (Norway and Sweden), 63 (Denmark) and 62 (Finland). The equivalent figures for women are 64 (Norway and Sweden), 62 (Finland) and 61 (Denmark).⁸

In the Nordic countries, around five to ten per cent in the age group "65 and over" are still working. The exception is once again Iceland, where 40 per cent are still in work at this age.⁹

Many people reduce their working hours to part-time as an intermediate stage before retirement. Some choose to continue to work alongside their pension. When this was investigated in 28 EU countries plus Norway, Iceland and Switzerland, it was found that the proportion varies drastically from one country to the next. The largest proportions of working pensioners are found in Norway (39 per cent), Iceland (37 per cent) and Sweden (35 per cent). The lowest proportions are found in Greece and Spain (two per cent).¹⁰

6. NOSOSCO (2016) Social Protection in the Nordic Countries. Scope , Expenditure and Financing. Nordic Social Statistical Committee 62:2016

7. 5 Ibid

8. OECD (2015), Pensions at a Glance 2015: OECD and G20 indicators, OECD Publishing, Paris. Diagram: Average effective age of retirement versus the normal retirement age, 2009-2014. http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/pension_glance-2015-en

9. Eurostat (2016) Employment rates by sex, age and citizenship (%) [lfsa_ergan], for 2015. Data collected 1 March 2017).

10. Eurostat (2016). Labour force survey statistics – transition from work to retirement. Statistics Explained 18/10/16.



Who are the elderly?

We often speak about "the elderly" as a group rather than individuals, and generalisations are common. But the age-span within this group is considerable. There are 40 years – almost two generations – between a 65-year-old and a 105-year-old. Life as a pensioner is affected by many different factors such as personality, what we have worked with, education, finances, housing, family situation, interests,

activities, health and where in the world we have grown up. The majority of people have, at retirement age, 15-20 healthy years of life to look forward to. These are years which they fill with "leisure" – travel, gardening and looking after grandchildren etcetera. But the differences in conditions are drastic, for example, in terms of finances, family and health. Many different factors have an effect: gender, class, lifestyle and ethnicity.¹¹

11. Läs mig! Nationell kvalitetsplan för vård och omsorg om äldre personer [National quality plan for care and welfare for elderly people]. Statens offentliga utredningar, SOU 2017:21 (Summary in English).





The third and fourth ages

Retirement is normally divided into the third and fourth ages (the first age is childhood and adolescence, the second is the period of starting a family and working). The third age is the part of retirement when the individual can mostly manage by themselves. The final years of life, when the individual is dependent on help in daily life due to disease and disabilities, tends to be called the fourth age.¹² It is difficult to say when the fourth age begins. It can happen at 65, or even 95. What we know is that it starts earlier for people with a low level of education and low income than for people with a high level of education and high income. It is during the final years of life that we receive and require care and welfare. Good

quality of life for elderly people applies both to the period as a newly retired person and the fourth age.

Terms used in this publication

Different terms tend to be used when talking about elderly people – pensioners, seniors or the elderly. In this publication, all three are used synonymously to mean people who are old age pensioners.

When we speak about "a better environment to age in", the words city and municipality are used interchangeably.

12. The British sociologist Peter Laslett used the term in *Ageing and Society* in 1987.

Four cornerstones of good ageing

In research, the consensus is that four factors are of particular significance to ageing well. These are:

- physical activity
- good eating habits
- social interaction
- meaningfulness.

Physical activity and spending time outdoors has many positive effects on elderly people in terms of increased well-being, mobility, preserved muscle and a strengthened skeleton. Additional effects include improved sleep, counteraction of excessive weight and promotion of mental and social health. Physical

activity can be important in order to retain functions and independence.

Food and enjoyable mealtimes can be very important to health and well-being. Just as for the rest of the population, it is important for elderly people to eat regularly and have varied meals.

Social interaction – the feeling of being involved and being able to have one's say – are essential to good health. It is important for both the individual and society at large. Elderly people have important skills and experiences to contribute. Association activities and culture play an important role as social forums.



What is perceived as meaningful can vary greatly from person to person. It may mean feeling involved in the community or coping in everyday life – being able to shop, cook or visit friends independently.¹³

Differences in health

How well a person fares after retirement is closely linked to their living conditions prior to this. There is a clear connection between income and health. The higher the income, the lower the likelihood of ill health. Class differences carry on through into old age. Women live longer than men, but they report more often that they have health problems which limit their ability to remain active. Those living alone generally have worse health than those living together with somebody else. The proportion of elderly people who have migrated will increase in the Nordic region. There are major variations with regard to country of origin, language, time in the new country, reason for emigration, etcetera.¹⁴

Healthy ageing is already a reality in high-income nations. The majority of elderly people in these countries are high-functioning up to the age of 85. Today, elderly people live longer and healthier than they did 20 years ago. Interventions which aim to promote healthy behaviours (such as non-smoking, moderate intake of alcohol, intake of healthy food and physical activity), optimal control and treatment of vascular disease and to maintain socially and mentally stimulating activities are expected lead to even longer and healthier life among those older than 75.

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13. <http://www.kunskapsguiden.se/aldre/Teman/Aktivtochhalsosamtaldrande/Sidor/default.aspx>

14. www.norden.org

AGE-FRIENDLY CITIES

– inclusion and accessibility



There is a global trend towards an ageing population and more and more people living in cities. One major challenge is therefore to bring about societies which are inclusive and accessible and where people can be active throughout their life. Achieving this is beneficial both for the individual and society at large. An age-friendly city also counteracts what we tend to call ageism¹⁵, and in the long term, age discrimination as well.

In 2010, the World Health Organisation (WHO) founded the WHO Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities in order to promote the exchange of experiences and learning between cities and communities throughout the world. Any city or locality which endeavours to create an inclusive and accessible environment can take part. The focus is active and healthy ageing.¹⁶ But being "age-friendly" is more than simply being a good place for elderly people to live in. It is a place for people of all ages to grow up and age in. If we plan a city for – and together with – elderly inhabitants, this often benefits people of all ages. 15 of the UN's 17 development goals are linked to an ageing population.¹⁷

As of 2017, the network comprises 500 cities and communities in 37 countries, with a total of 155 million inhabitants. These are both major cities and small communities. Six Nordic cities are included (2017): Oslo, Trondheim, Tampere, Reykjavik, Uppsala and Gothenburg. In dialogue with elderly inhabitants in the various countries, the network has highlighted eight domains which an age-friendly

city needs to work with:

- outdoor environments and the built environment
- housing
- transport
- respect and social inclusion
- social participation
- civic participation and employment
- communication and information
- community support and health services.

Based on these domains, a checklist has been produced as a tool to facilitate the associated work. The checklist is also useful in evaluating progress. A guide has also been produced for creating age-friendly environments in Europe. It is intended for politicians and community planners.¹⁸ It is crucial that the elderly people themselves participate both in the development of age-friendly cities and in the evaluations.

The members of the network can also add their own areas for development. They can also choose to focus on a number of the areas highlighted by the network. It is important to always see from the perspective of the elderly when plans in different areas are produced. It is essential to speak with, not "at", the elderly inhabitants.

As our ageing is affected by social, environmental and economic factors, this involves several policy areas. The work towards age-friendly cities benefits from the cooperation of different sectors.

15 Elderly people are viewed as a homogenous group in which the distinctive characteristic is age. The people are not seen first as men and women; they 'become' their age. This is known as ageism.

16 http://www.who.int/ageing/projects/age_friendly_cities_network/en/

17 www.un.org

18 http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/333702/AFEE-tool.pdf

Äldrebarometern used WHO's checklist

Pensionärernas riksorganisation, PRO [the Swedish National Pensioners' Organisation], is Sweden's largest organisation of pensioners, with around 360,000 members. For 2010, 2012 and 2015, the organisation has conducted an "Äldrebarometer" [Elderly barometer], in which the members rate their municipality on a scale of 1-6 within a large number of areas. It looks at accessible environments, food, housing, opportunities to have influence and more.

PRO took inspiration from WHO's Checklist of Essential Features of Age-friendly Cities when Äldrebarometern was introduced. One conclusion is that a well-functioning advisory council of pensioners (elderly council, seniors' council) plays a significant role in how the municipality works for elderly inhabitants – i.e., how age-friendly the municipality is.

Äldrebarometern has been followed with great interest by the media and local politicians alike. The municipalities compare themselves with each other and the results are also used in the political debate in the municipalities. In Äldrebarometern 2015, Svedala and Emmaboda, two smaller municipalities in the south of Sweden, had the best results.

Nordic cities look for new ways

Many municipalities in the Nordic countries – both major cities and smaller communities – are working to become age-friendly; i.e., inclusive and accessible. Both long-term investments and a number of fixed-term projects are underway. Cities also collaborate in different constellations in order to inspire and learn from each other. In this publication, we have chosen to describe what is being done in the Nordic cities which have joined the WHO Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. We are highlighting the cities in the WHO network as they have decided to work with different multi-sector themes. Denmark's second largest city, Aarhus, is also discussed here. The city is very active in its work to counteract people's loneliness and promote social interaction. The cities have chosen different working methods – selecting a pilot district, conducting an extensive dialogue with citizens, organising meetings with all concerned administrations at the same time. In this publication, we describe how the cities have worked and we also provide a number of practical examples of what is being done in the endeavour to become a better environment to age in. We do not evaluate the measures; this is a description of the approach.





OSLO SELECTS PILOT DISTRICT

There are more than 660,000 inhabitants in the Norwegian capital. The municipality's prognoses show that 20 per cent of inhabitants will be over the age of 67 in 2030. Today, around 7,000 Oslo residents have dementia. This number is expected to double by 2040. In 2014, Oslo became the first city in Norway to join the WHO Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities.

The city has taken its cues from WHO's eight domains, consolidated them and redefined them as just six different areas.

These are

- housing
- health and welfare services
- communication and collaboration
- participation in society
- transport
- outdoor environments and physical activity.

The key words are security, satisfaction and accessibility. Oslo municipality has employees specifically tasked with working on the assignment "Age-friendly City". Universal design and age-friendliness have many points in common. Oslo has therefore involved a number of experts in this field in the efforts to create an age-friendly city.¹⁹

¹⁹ Read "Norden för alla" (A Nordic region for everyone), a report (in Swedish) from the Nordic Welfare Centre which includes proposals for collaboration areas related to universal design and accessibility.



A new service with a door-to-door bus is now being tested in one district. It is a minibuss with just 16 seats.

Nordre Aker moves ahead

Nordre Aker, with around 50,000 inhabitants, has been chosen as a pilot district. The district will function as a mentor and the measures will spread to other parts of Oslo. Right from the start, it has been important to have a close dialogue with the elderly. What is the most important factor in well-being? What would you like to see? What do you feel is lacking in your local area? Different methods have been tested for obtaining opinions – debate evenings, a major conference with workshops, interviews, film projects. It is important that discussions can be conducted in many different ways. The central pensioners' advisory council in Oslo and the 15 district councils play an important role in the development of the age-friendly city.

Different methods for improving participation need to be tested. Many elderly people do not use Facebook and do not have a smartphone. They risk being alienated in an increasingly digitalised society. Groups in which elderly people can learn to use smartphones have

been organised. Volunteer organisations are very important; they often involve "the elderly helping the elderly" to learn about new technology. But it is important to communicate in different ways. The magazine "Aldersvennlige Oslo" [Age-friendly Oslo], which was first published in 2018, will be published both digitally and in paper format.

In Oslo, new technology has in part been used when elderly inhabitants are to describe their local environments themselves. They have been provided with iPads and made their own films. The films have for example shown how difficult it can be to exit the metro or to get about in an inaccessible environment.

The pink minibuses

Having a social life, being able to meet those close to us and "doing what needs to be done" during the course of the day are valued highest when elderly people themselves have the opportunity to speak about what is important to them. It is important to be able to get around in one's local area. This means it is

crucial that there are public transport connections that can also be used when for example a person has difficulties walking long distances. A new service with a door-to-door bus is now being tested in one district. It is a minibus with just 16 seats. These pink minibuses have been highly appreciated. More lighting and more benches have also been introduced to make it easier to get around in the area, something which benefits all inhabitants.

During the winter, many elderly people are at risk of becoming isolated as they do not feel that it is safe to go outside. Snow and slippery streets are major obstacles. Bags of sand and anti-slip grips have been handed out to elderly inhabitants, depending on the type of house they live in.

Culture, sports and research

Culture is of great significance. "Möten med minnen" [Meetings with memories] is an activity conducted together with museums, in which elderly people are encouraged to remember and tell their story.

In 2016, in connection with Nordre Aker's investment in becoming an age and dementia-friendly district, a dance project was started up at a centre for daily activities, where many of the participants suffer from dementia. The idea was to offer an experience which

is interesting and which encourages physical activity as well as balance training and social interaction. The hope was that it would be inspiring both for the elderly and the staff and that the exercises could be used in the future as well. The project has enjoyed collaboration with the Norwegian National Ballet and has involved working on both Don Quixote and the Nutcracker. During gatherings, the various characters in the performances have been discussed and exercises were led by a former dancer who also has long experience of working with elderly people. Costumes were loaned from The Norwegian National Ballet. When it was time for a dress rehearsal of the Nutcracker, the project participants were invited, together with relatives, to see the performance. Work is now underway to spread the initiative to other districts.

The idea behind an age-friendly city is to encourage interaction between different generations. On 23 September 2017, the Generation Games came to Oslo for the first time. It is a sporting event in which elderly, middle-aged and young people compete in different sports.

The city cooperates with a number of research environments, and together, they organise the debate series "Oslo – en bra plats att åldras på?" (Oslo – a good place to age in?).

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE IN OSLO

- Oslo municipality has employees specifically tasked with working on the assignment "Age-friendly City".
- A pilot district – Nordre Aker – has been chosen.
- Cooperation with research environments is underway.
- Young, middle-aged and elderly people compete in different sporting events in the Generation Games.



Trondheim trains "happy drivers"

Trondheim is Norway's second city with around 200,000 inhabitants. It is said that Trondheim has "the quality of a major city and the closeness of a small town." In 2015, the city became a member of the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities. As in Oslo, in Trondheim it has been decided that parts of the city will become pilot districts. Three districts will be given this role: Saupstad-Kolstad plus two more which (as of 2017) have not yet been selected. One difference when compared with Oslo is that Trondheim has not appointed anyone to work specifically with issues related to the age-friendly city. They are part of normal operations.

Accessibility is a key factor

What will a day in your life be like in 2020? What will you be doing? These were the questions posed when Trondheim's elderly residents were invited to a breakfast meeting at the city hall. Many of the views put forward, both at the meeting and via the digital "suggestion box", concerned accessibility. When bus routes are moved further away from residential areas and the distance between stops increases, it becomes difficult for many elderly people to use the bus. For many, it is also important to continue to have a bus timetable in paper format. Having winter roads free of snow is another matter which is important for many. Cobblestones, which are found in



the old town, can be difficult to walk on. To make life easier, the road surface has been replaced along certain stretches and natural walkways have been made accessible. In the work to make Trondheim an age-friendly city, the pensioners' advisory council plays an important role.

Culture is significant as a health promotion factor. Over the course of one year, around 800 events will take place in Trondheim which are largely intended for seniors. The municipality will organise transport for those who need it. There will be hiphop concerts, blues nights and much more. Tai chi and yoga are other examples of activities. The city is investing in

new technology, and an app has been developed which allows residents to read about the activities. Seniors can also receive tuition in order to learn how to use digital technology. All inhabitants of Trondheim who have turned 70 receive the publication "Sytti pluss" (Seventy plus) in the post.

When calling for a taxi in Trondheim, you can now book a "happy driver". This driver has received special training in order to provide good service to passengers with dementia, for example.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE IN TRONDHEIM

- The municipality enjoys close cooperation with the pensioners' advisory council.
- "Happy drivers" have been trained in order to provide elderly passengers with a more personal service.
- In Trondheim, many cultural events are organised, and elderly people who need it receive help to get there.
- The municipality distributes the magazine Sytti pluss to all residents who have turned 70.

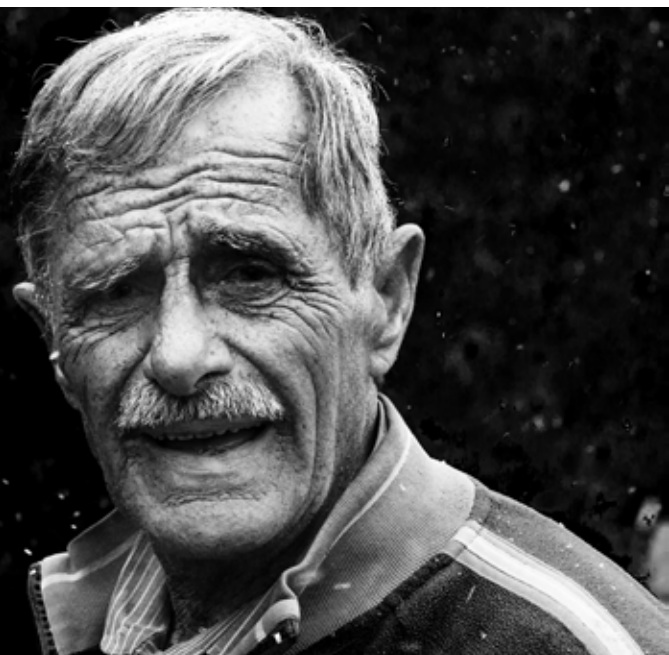


Culture is an important preventive factor. Here, there are hiphop dance sessions, blues nights and much more.



Many people feel that cobblestones, which are found in the old town, can be difficult to walk on. To make life easier, the road surface has been replaced along certain stretches. Natural walkways have also been made accessible.

Citizen dialogue on tour in Uppsala



Uppsala is Sweden's fourth most populous city with around 215,000 inhabitants. The city is growing rapidly; by roughly 4,000 people every year. 22 per cent of the inhabitants – around 47,000 people – are over the age of 60. Within a little over ten years, the number of people aged 80 and over will double. This places high demands on elderly care, but the municipality wants to approach the development with a broad perspective. This means working with a greater breadth, and more preventively. Housing, streets, public transport, cultural activities and services must be adapted to the needs and conditions of elderly people. In July 2016, Uppsala became a member of the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities.

Becoming an age-friendly city is a long-term undertaking. The first step was, in dialogue with the elderly inhabitants, to conduct a baseline survey; i.e. to determine the current status. The views become the basis for a three-year action plan which is produced in dialogue with those involved. The action plan encompasses eight development areas and follows the WHO guide.

What do the elderly think?

One beautiful day in June, the municipality's "tour bus" arrived in Sävja in southwestern Uppsala. Around 60 pensioners had gathered at Kulturcentrum (the Culture Centre) to offer their views on what it is like to live and age in the area. The participants were divided into groups around eight tables and received a voting card. At each table, a discussion leader



(also a pensioner) was appointed. Within the space of a few hours, the participants discussed the eight thematic areas that the WHO network has underlined as important for an age-friendly city. The discussion leader read a statement and the participants raised their hand with their voting card to signal their agreement. Where there was disagreement, a special computer programme used at the meeting signalled that it was time to stop for a discussion. The discussions concerned many different subjects – snow clearance, security during evening strolls, opportunities for gainful employment in old age, or being accepted for voluntary work, and service and treatment in shops. When the meeting was over, the participants in the room had answered a total of 130 questions.

Uppsala municipality aims to improve elderly people's chances of living a healthy and independent life as well as increase their participation in the community. The meeting in Sävja was just a small part of the work to find out what exactly the elderly residents in Uppsala think about their city and what they want for the future. Similar meetings have been conducted in 14 municipal districts. The invitation had been sent to all residents over 60 in the 14 municipal districts. A total of around 1,000 people aged 60-94 participated. A questionnaire was also handed out on streets and squares in order to obtain opinions. Around 800 people were reached in this way. In addition, 100 people who use subsidised transport offered by the municipality have been interviewed. The municipality has continued to invite residents to information meetings and discussions regarding public transport. This

is, overall, the municipality's most extensive citizen dialogue ever with seniors. The purpose has been to identify a number of areas for development and improvement; not to present solutions. What has emerged in these meetings and interviews will form the basis of a three-year action plan which will be drawn up in collaboration with authorities, volunteer organisations and the business sector.

The opinions of many of Uppsala's inhabitants have been heard. But one major challenge remains: how do we reach those people who do not attend the meetings, who are not involved in association activities? In many cases, these are thought to be people whose backgrounds are in another country and who do not have Swedish as their mother tongue. Presumably, migrant associations can play an important role here. It is important to involve everyone in the development of a district.

An active and healthy life

Via a number of different measures, the municipality wants to enable elderly inhabitants to live independent and active lives.

Health coach online

Hälsocoachen (The Health Coach) is a website which specialises in health for seniors. The aim is to inspire and motivate people to take part in activities. The site offers various health tips and invites visitors to share their own tips. The site can be used for exercise at home using instructional videos in which a physiotherapist demonstrates various exercises.

Outreach home visits

Everyone who has turned 80 and does not receive home help service from the municipality is offered home visits. The purpose of the home visits is to promote health and security and contribute to a good living situation. The discussion is conducted based on the wishes and needs of the elderly person. The municipality's representative can convey information, mediate contacts and provide advice and support with regard to activities intended to make daily life easier.

Meeting points

There are 16 meeting points run by Uppsala municipality. This activity is intended to promote health in accordance with the four cornerstones of healthy ageing – social interaction, meaningfulness, physical activity and good eating habits.

At the meeting points, a number of different activities are organised. These cover everything from meeting for a cup of coffee and different types of physical activity (Zumba, gymnastics for the elderly) to computer courses, fashion shows, entertainment etcetera. The participants can decide which activities are organised.

Cycling Without Age

Uppsala aims to become Sweden's best cycle city for people of all ages. Cykling utan ålder (Cycling Without Age) is a non-profit activity whereby volunteers take elderly people or people with disabilities on bike rides in "trishaws" with electrical power assist. The passengers get some fresh air, new visual impressions, the



WHAT HAS BEEN DONE IN UPPSALA

- In 14 municipal districts, residents over the age of 60 have been invited to dialogue meetings based on WHO's check list for an age-friendly city.
- All residents over the age of 80 are offered a home visit.
- At senior restaurants, pensioners can eat nutritious food at a reduced rate.
- Employees who meet elderly people in their work are offered training in mental illnesses.

opportunity to create new relationships, and memories. It may for example be about getting out into the city parks and hearing bird-song, cycling past their childhood neighbourhood, stopping at a café, or simply feeling the wind in their hair.

The project is led by Uppsala municipality and is conducted in collaboration with the county administrative board, Region Uppsala, Uppsala Cykelförening [cycling association], the Swedish Red Cross and student volunteers in Uppsala. In 2017, four residential homes joined the project. The idea comes from Denmark, where the concept has become a success with over 400 bicycles and 2,500 volunteers in 60 cities. As of 2017, Cycling without age exists in 70 cities in 26 different countries.

Falling accidents must be prevented

Uppsala municipality is running the campaign "STÅ UPPsala" [STAND UPPsala]. Material has been produced which, among other things, highlights the importance of exercise and food, the effect of various medicines on balance, and what can be done to make the home environment safer. The material is presented and distributed at fairs, during campaigns, in connection with outreach activities offered to everyone 80 or over, at meeting points and at other open activities. Anti-slip grips are distributed (free of charge) to everyone over the age of 65. This is also done at fairs, during campaigns, at meeting points and at other open preventive activities.

Passion for food at senior restaurants

Most elderly people have good eating habits, at least in the "third age". But there are risk groups when it comes to poor diets, such as elderly men who live alone, elderly men with a low socioeconomic status, those who have recently lost their partner, and people who are physically and socially inactive and isolated. These groups are at risk of undernourishment and weight loss. Recently retired people may be at risk of developing worse eating habits. For many, the transition to retirement means more unhealthy food and less physical activity, which can easily lead to putting on weight and a higher risk of contracting a number of diseases. Being underweight is a major problem in the fourth age.

Food is so much more than nutrition and energy. It is about enjoying smells, savouring tastes, having a moment of social interaction with others – simply put, experiencing passion for food. Uppsala municipality runs seven senior restaurants. Guests of all ages are welcome. Those who are 65 or older can eat at a reduced rate. The purpose of the senior restaurants is to serve nutritious food. They offer traditional Swedish home cooking, food from different parts of the world, and vegetarian dishes. It has always been important to invest in quality. One of the senior restaurants in Uppsala has won an award in a national food competition.

Mental illness among the elderly

Mental illness is relatively common among the elderly, but it is a problem which is overlooked. Äldreförvaltningen (the Elderly Services Administration) in Uppsala municipality runs projects in order to disseminate knowledge about mental illnesses and poor mental health in order to mitigate problems of prejudice and stigmatisation. The municipality cooperates with a number of actors across the country that are conducting similar activities, as well as with trade associations. Employees who meet elderly people in their work are offered training in mental illnesses. This is an investment in order to detect mental illness at an early stage and then initiate measures to promote health.

Uppsala municipality runs seven senior restaurants. Guests of all ages are welcome. Those who are 65 or older can eat at a reduced rate.



Film - one way to make an impact in Gothenburg

Gothenburg is Sweden's second largest municipality after Stockholm, with 570,000 inhabitants in the urban area and 1,000,000 in "Greater Gothenburg". Today, 15 per cent of the population in Gothenburg are 65 and over. By 2050, the proportion will be 25 per cent. Gothenburg consists of ten districts. These differ greatly in terms of the population composition and socioeconomic conditions. Gothenburg is growing by 4,500-5,000 inhabitants per year. Since 2015, the city has been a member of the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities.

All of Gothenburg will be developed into a better environment to age in. It is part of the work to counteract segregation and increase equality in the city. Senior Gothenburg has been commissioned by the municipal board to produce an action plan to make the city more age-friendly. The work is being conducted together with the districts and with the elderly residents. Urban development is a key element in creating age-friendly Gothenburg.



A survey is being carried out to show what is being done today and how administrations can collaborate. The survey is a preparation for the upcoming action plan. The work focuses on a number of areas:

- urban environment and buildings
- mobility
- housing
- social interaction and inclusion
- community support and service
- information and communication.

Lessons learned

Together with the KTH, Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm, the City of Gothenburg organised a seminar in the autumn of 2016. A number of lessons from the seminar were presented:

- **Seniors have a right to the city.** The design of the built environment and public spaces can complicate or facilitate active, social and independent lives for seniors. In order for seniors to benefit from the city and city life, a number of different types of accommodation with proximity to service, everything the city has to offer, public transport, green spaces and meeting places are needed, which in combination form supportive living environments. Good living environments are the key to healthy ageing.

- **More accommodation for seniors.** The housing shortage in cities affects many people; not least seniors. Many cannot afford to move. Housing costs have risen and there are few options for seniors at a reasonable rent. But there are several good examples of joint building ventures and housing projects where seniors have actively participated in the planning.

- **Involving elderly people in the planning.** City planners need to be aware of the senior perspective. The needs of the elderly have to be taken into account early in the planning process. Important questions are: where are elderly people living in Gothenburg today, and where will they live in the future? Where do they want to live?

- **Seniors are a heterogeneous group** with different experiences, socioeconomic situations, interests, needs and origins.



Life filming – teaching about new technology and sharing experiences

How can we introduce modern technology to elderly people whilst at the same time learning about their experiences, knowledge, memories and needs? The Life Filming method focuses on content and form. The participants are encouraged to go beyond the barriers which technology often entails.

One rainy June morning, a group of pensioners had gathered in the meeting house in the Lundby district to conclude their film project. It began with everyone who did not have an iPad being given one to borrow and learning how it works. Then it was time to go out and film. What is good about Lundby? What do I feel content with? And what could be better? These

were questions which could be posed in the films. Then it was time to show the results. All of the films were in one way or another about obstacles, accessibility and security. How unsafe it feels to take a stroll when there is insufficient lighting and when bushes obscure the view. How strenuous it is to go shopping when there is nowhere to take a break inside or near the shop. Or how tiring it can be to get up the hill when there is nowhere to sit down and rest nearby. The film project started in the central district of Gothenburg and has since spread further afield. It has shown, for example, what it is like to get about with a visual impairment. The project has been carried out in collaboration with Valand Academy and the films are important contributions to the work with urban planning.

There is a lot of discussion around the need for the elderly perspective to be included. But all too often, it is not the seniors themselves but various experts who are enlisted to put this perspective forward. In the project Life Filming, the seniors themselves choose which story to tell. The films can help to disseminate ideas that can otherwise be difficult to express in words.

The project has been carried out in collaboration with Valand Academy and the films are important contributions to the work with urban planning.





When the elderly inhabitants in the cities are asked what is important to a good life, there is one response which usually comes up repeatedly: being able to get about in the neighbourhood, meet friends and relatives and run errands.



The flexlinjen bus stops close by

When elderly residents are asked what is important to a good life, there is one response which usually comes up repeatedly: being able to get about in the neighbourhood, meet friends and relatives and run errands. Public transport must be accessible and useful. Flexlinjen in Gothenburg is part of public transport and everyone is welcome to use it. Flexlinjen is found in all districts and covers almost the entire city. The route is operated with spacious minibuses with a low floor for both wheelchairs and walking aids. The buses operate within a set area, and there are many stopping points which allow passengers to get close to the route. The bus only stops where someone has booked to board and alight. The journeys can therefore vary in length. Passengers can receive help boarding and alighting the bus if required.

Rest for tired legs

– a matter of urban development

Central Gothenburg will double in size when Älvstaden expands on both sides of the river of Göta älv. This is the largest urban development project in the Nordic region. In accordance with the vision, Älvstaden will be environmentally friendly, inclusive, dynamic and accessible for all. A new city park is being created and the first stages are estimated for completion by 2021, when Gothenburg celebrates its 400th anniversary, thus the name Jubileumsparken. What are a city park and a meeting place? Where can tired legs rest? How do we achieve diversity? Together with

Age-friendly Gothenburg, those working on Jubileumsparken have arranged a workshop in which the participants have tested different kinds of furniture in order to investigate how we can sit, lay down and rest in the future city park, and how the park can become a meeting place for everyone.

One method has been used whereby the citizens can use prototypes and thus "inhabit the space". A targeted investment was made so that more seniors could try the prototypes and the activities in Jubileumsparken and participate in the workshop.

The work on Age-friendly Gothenburg has led to more discussion groups being started and more activities taking place throughout the city. The aim is to find out what the seniors think is important and how local environments work for elderly inhabitants. The importance of reaching relatives and elderly migrants has been specified.

Never too late to start exercising

Physical activity is also important in later life. It is also important in order to prevent falling accidents. In Gothenburg, the districts work in various ways to ensure elderly people have the opportunity to get some exercise. Elderly people and people with disabilities can come to Växthuset to do both weight and balance training. Seniorloppet is a very popular run for participants aged 65+. It is about exercising in the way you want out in the countryside. The idea of the run has spread to several districts.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE IN GOTHENBURG

- Elderly inhabitants have been invited to a dialogue regarding urban development.
- Life filming – using an iPad, elderly residents of Gothenburg make their own films about what is good and what is less good in their local area.
- Flexlinjen is found in all districts.
- All districts will work with intergenerational meetings.

Intergenerational meetings

Gothenburg aims to become a city of equality. This includes counteracting age segregation, which is often described as an overlooked form of segregation. Children, young adults and the elderly will have the possibility to meet and learn from each other. The Centrum district has been working with intergenerational meetings since 2012. The goal is for the entire city to follow.

A number of different activities have been launched. Seniors come to preschool and read to the children. In the school, seniors can be there during lessons and at break times, eat together with the pupils or help with homework.

Generationskören (the Generation Choir) unites young and old people in song, and in Generationsteatern (the Generation Theatre), young and elderly people enact plays together. The theatre has been called age

segregation's resistance movement, as their plays shatter prejudices about age. The age difference in the group is large – there are around 60 years between the youngest and oldest actors. Filmfabriken (the Film Factory) has participants between the ages of 13 and 100 who share a common interest in creating films together. They have made a number of short films and organised a film festival. Other examples of intergenerational meetings are school pupils who sing and take part in activities together with elderly people in residential homes. Another example is when hair and makeup pupils use their skills to give elderly people a makeover.

Decorating the town together

An important part of the work with Age-friendly Gothenburg is that elderly residents should be able to have their say on the urban environment. What we achieve in the short term can be of great significance in the long term. Mosaikfabriken (the Mosaic Factory) began as an integration project with children, young people and newly arrived migrants. Under artistic direction, they make mosaics which are then installed in the neighbourhood/residential area or in central locations in Gothenburg. At a number of sites, elderly people have participated together with younger people. The mosaics have then been installed on benches, walls etcetera.

TAMPERE WANTS TO CHANGE ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE ELDERLY

Tampere is the third largest city in Finland and the Nordic region's largest inland city. There are over 200,000 inhabitants in Tampere municipality and close to half a million in the Tampere region. The city is surrounded by lakes. 24 per cent of the surface consists of water. There are plenty of natural areas.

Tampere is growing rapidly, and every year the number of inhabitants increases by around 2,000. 24 per cent of the residents are over the age of 60. In 2012, Tampere joined the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities.



Being a senior in Tampere

See ageing as an opportunity! This is the message of the city and region's strategic senior programme which covers the period 2012-2020. The aim is to find a model to work towards ageing well. This requires the participation of the elderly residents themselves, as well as different collaboration partners; universities and other education institutions, companies and volunteer organisations.

The most important goals in the programme document are to

- change the way of speaking about elderly people – to become positive, encouraging, inclusive and appreciative
- strengthen cooperation between important stakeholders
- compile information on the challenges and opportunities presented by an ageing society
- gather together important research and development initiatives and disseminate good examples
- stimulate the growth of business related to ageing.

One important goal is for elderly inhabitants of Tampere to feel a sense of security and have the possibility to remain at home their entire life.

Active days

In Tampere, as in many other cities, there is keen of interest in keeping in shape. This is also the case among elderly people. Outdoor gyms are very popular, and the number of exercise groups with participants over 65 years of age

has increased significantly. Physical activity, as previously mentioned, is an important preventive factor.

In Tampere, people can receive advice about exercise. Trips to the swimming baths are subsidised for those who have special needs, for example due to diabetes. Physical activity can also be prescribed by a doctor. Advice, financial support and cooperation with volunteer organisations are the resources that Tampere municipality uses to encourage elderly inhabitants to take more exercise. Sometimes, it can be difficult to leave the house. The municipality has enlisted volunteers to provide company on a walk or bicycle ride, during an exercise session or to a cultural event. At many places, the person accompanying is granted free entry.

A more accessible city

Accessibility – being able to get about, receive information and communicate – is a prerequisite for an active life. The Accessibility Ombudsman in Tampere inspects detailed development plans and how they are executed. Subsidies are provided for installing lifts. The city is investing in more accessible public transport with low-floor buses, and the new tramline will have frequent departures.²⁰

22 per cent of Tampere's inhabitants over the age of 75 struggle to walk 500 metres. They feel there are many obstacles in their environment to leaving the house. The solution is benches to rest on, safe walkways for pedestrians and more lighting

20 Read "Norden för alla" (A Nordic region for everyone), a report (in Swedish) from the Nordic Welfare Centre which includes proposals for collaboration areas related to universal design and accessibility.



Outdoor gyms are popular, especially in the summer, and the number of exercise groups with participants over the age of 65 has increased.

Doing away with age segregation

Among other things, the planning for a better city to age in is about ensuring that different activities are accessible in the same area. This means shops, public services, restaurants and active volunteer organisations. Today, it is common for people of different ages to live separately – families with young children, elderly people, students. This makes it harder to create interaction between the generations. A new residential area is now being planned around a residential home in Käräjätörmä. The idea is that this residential area will be attractive for people from different age groups and with different backgrounds.

Having your say in your city

Since 1988, Tampere has had a pensioners' advisory council which mostly consists of representatives from pensioner organisations. The council has a full-time secretary on the municipal payroll. The council's mandate is to be involved in issues in all areas that concern elderly people: healthcare, social services, community planning, transport, etcetera.

The tree of life – a means of utilising memories and desires

What are your dreams? What do you need? What are you afraid of? The elderly person can write these things down on their "tree of life". The tree can then remain with them the rest of their life and, when elderly care is necessary, provide personnel with important information to take into account even if the elderly person no longer remembers what he or she once wrote.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE IN TAMPERE

- The municipality is working to change attitudes to the elderly and ageing.
- The Accessibility Ombudsman inspects all detailed development plans.
- The municipality has a close collaboration with volunteer organisations so that elderly inhabitants can get about more.
- Intergenerational interaction are facilitated when new residential areas are built.



Reykjavik invests in public health

Reykjavik municipality is home to over 120,000 inhabitants and 18 per cent are over the age of 60. The city became a member of the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities in 2015. Previously, responsibility for service for elderly inhabitants has been divided between the state and the municipal-

Collecting ideas

As previously pointed out, the work to create an age-friendly city touches upon a number of policy areas. Once Reykjavik had become a

ity. In the future, the municipality will bear this responsibility alone. A new program document is being produced in the elderly policy field. A significant part is creating a more age-friendly city and promoting public health. Since 2014, there has been a pensioners' advisory council which functions as advisor to the municipality.

member of Age-friendly Cities and Communities, a steering committee composed of representatives from eleven municipal administrations and the elderly citizens was established.



Every weekday morning, aqua fitness sessions are organised, led by an instructor. In Reykjavik there is also a geothermal beach to which elderly people have free access.

A kick-off was arranged in which both representatives for the municipality and elderly people participated. Eight conference tables had been arranged; one for each domain on WHO's checklist. At each table there were two representatives from Reykjavik municipality – a chairperson and a secretary – in order to list the ideas put forward.

One working group was appointed for each of the eight areas in order to utilise the suggestions from the kick-off. A total of 14 suggestions with 45 associated projects were relayed to the administrations in the municipality.

Remaining active in old age

The concept of the city's elderly inhabitants remaining physically active long into their old age is important in Reykjavik's work to become an age-friendly city. There are many swimming pools in Reykjavik and anyone aged 67 and over can enter for free. Every weekday morning, aqua fitness sessions are organised, led by an instructor. In Reykjavik there is also a geothermal beach to which elderly people have free access. In the mornings, activities for elderly people are arranged in collaboration with sports clubs. Buses drive around the neighbourhood and pick up the participants. The weather in Iceland can be cold and windy. When it is difficult or feels unsafe to go outside, it is possible for elderly people to go to an indoor football arena for a sheltered stroll. A map of walking trails in the city's environs has been produced. It includes markings for distances, hills, benches and lighting.

In Reykjavik, anyone aged 67 and over gains free access to the museums. At the libraries and in assembly halls, various activities are arranged with the purpose of having different generations meet.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE IN REYKJAVIK

- A steering group was appointed with representatives for the municipality's administrations and for the elderly.
- A kick-off was organised, based on WHO's eight domains, and suggestions were handled by various working groups.
- Anyone 67 years old and over has free access to the municipality's swimming pools.
- Close collaboration takes place with sports clubs so that elderly people can remain physically active.





Aarhus takes the fight against loneliness

Aarhus is situated in the middle of Jutland's east coast and, with 375,000 inhabitants, is Denmark's second largest city. It is a university city and home to 60,000 students. Aarhus is growing rapidly, with around 4,000 new inhabitants per year.

Around 47,000 of the residents are over the age of 60.
10,000 people receive home help service.

Everyone can help prevent isolation

Many elderly people suffer from loneliness. This has negative consequences, both for the individual's health and happiness, and for the society. Aarhus municipality – which has been appointed European Volunteering Capital of 2018 – has decided to take up the fight against loneliness and has started Genlyd, which means "echo". This is not a project, but rather a strategy for volunteer work. The purpose is to help people to find a new sense of community.

Aarhus is home to over 1,000 associations, and these play an important role in the work to be eradicate isolation and prevent ill health. With the regulation of financial support to the associations, the municipality sets requirements for associations to reach out to others beyond their existing membership.

There are many who in their work meet people who might be lonely. These professionals can be taxi drivers, pharmacists, doctors and window cleaners, for example. In Aarhus, there are mobile hairdressers who can notice whether someone is lonely. These profession-

als should also be enlisted in the fight against loneliness, receive information on what the municipality offers and how they can help the people they meet to make new contacts. Companies can also play an important role. Contact representatives in co-operative housing associations can take on the responsibility of contacting people who often seem to be alone. Aarhus municipality has entered an agreement with the Danish Pharmaceutical Society. The personnel in pharmacies meet a lot of people on a daily basis. In conversations, they can gain an impression of whether this is a person that might feel alone, and they can inform them about the opportunities for social interaction and activities in their local area. If the person is interested, the municipality will shortly contact them and help them on their way.

One of the most important parts of Genlyd is the website genlydaarhus.dk. There, apart from reading information of course, people can sign up for activities and even start their own. One man wanted company on a cycle trip, for example, and soon ten people had responded. But it does not have to be an

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE IN AARHUS

- Volunteers, occupational groups and companies have been enlisted in combatting loneliness together.
- Investment in welfare technology.
- Through outreach work in the city's districts, residents can test and borrow small assistive devices.
- In residential homes, they have once more begun making their own food.



At a number of residential homes in Aarhus, welfare technology has been introduced.

organised event. It can be something as simple as eating dinner together. In all districts, there are meal groups, and in the municipal localcentres, common mealtimes are organised which everyone is welcome to join. It does not even need to be as organised as this. An activity in Genlyd can start with a cup of coffee together.

Folkestedet is the municipality's community centre and reaches around 6,000 people per week. The centre is open to everyone. The idea is to give inhabitants the opportunity for an active and varied life, across area and generational boundaries, and regardless of people's backgrounds. At Folkestedet, organisations and individuals can run various activities. This can be small discussion groups, choirs etcetera. The municipality has staff on-site during certain hours. The rest of the time, everything is taken care of by volunteers. People organising activities can borrow a key to one of the rooms. Once they have finished, they clean the room and close it up. The fee for renting a room is very low.

Aarhus wants to be a dementia-friendly city and has therefore adopted a dementia plan. One part of this is disseminating knowledge about what dementia means. The city's bus drivers have attended a training course in order to learn to recognise and understand when a passenger may have dementia and thus provide more service.

Welfare technology

Aarhus is striving to become a leader in using welfare technology. With the help of technical solutions, elderly people should feel more secure, more independent, and have better quality of life.²¹ In Aarhus, they refer to this as "frihedsteknologi" (freedom technology), or "assisted living technology" in English, and it has been implemented in a number of residential homes.

DOKKX is a permanent exhibition where the city's inhabitants can come and test various assistive devices. The aim is to defuse the situation, inspire curiosity and insight into the

21 Read more about the Nordic Welfare Centre's welfare technology projects at www.nordicwelfare.org



idea that assistive devices are something that concern many people.

The exhibition will serve as inspiration for professionals, young people, relatives, and anyone curious about what is out there. It has been important to find a location where many people pass by and can easily come in and have a look. For this reason, the exhibition is in the same building as the citizen's advice office and the library.

It should not be difficult to ask questions about or test an assistive device. Aarhus is investing in the outreach operation DOKKX on tour. A bus will go on tour and make longer stops in city districts so that the residents can come and test small assistive devices, ask questions

and even borrow devices. It is important to reach both the elderly themselves and their relatives. After a visit to the bus, it is often easier to take the next step in the contact.

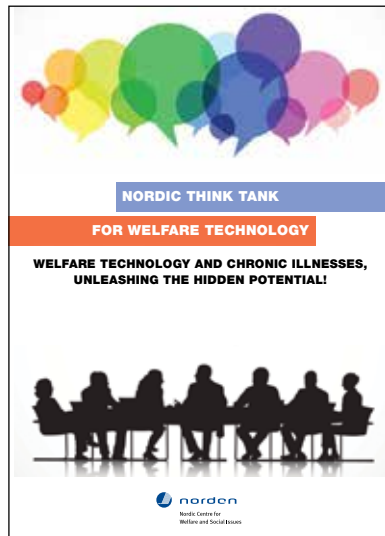
Eating well

Food plays a major role in wellbeing. The smell of food stimulates appetite and gives a homely feeling. Previously, food was made for Aarhus' residential homes in a central location and delivered out. In 2016 and 2017, extensive work has been underway to make the city's residential homes more "homely". Among other things, this has entailed renovating kitchens so that food can now be made at the homes. There are also cafés run by volunteers. Inviting people to supper at the homes is another way of building a community in the municipality.

MORE READING FROM THE NORDIC WELFARE CENTRE



Welfare technology Tool Box



Nordic Think Tank for Welfare Technology



Nordic Think Tank for Welfare Technology

These publications can be ordered from nordicwelfare.org/publikationer



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