

# Policy Briefs 2020/2021



**Policy brief** UNECE

**Gender equality in ageing societies**

UNECE Policy Brief on Ageing No. 23  
March 2020

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**Challenging context**

Faced with population ageing, countries in the UNECE region are preparing for growing numbers of older persons receiving pensions and needing health and long-term care services. An important societal adaptation to ageing has been to increase the labour market participation among women and older persons to ensure the sustainability of social security and protection systems. It is now time that regulatory frameworks, financial provisions and services support the equal sharing of paid and unpaid work in families, households and communities between women and men to close prevailing gender gaps in care, employment, earnings and pensions. Unless gender- and age-responsive reforms are addressing the multiple dimensions of gender inequality in ageing societies, women risk to be disproportionately disadvantaged by the consequences of population ageing, facing double and triple shifts of paid, domestic and care work at the detriment of their own health, earnings and savings which can accumulate to a greater risk of poverty, social isolation and unmet care needs in their own advanced age.

**Suggested strategies**

Advancing gender equality in ageing societies requires an age- and gender responsive societal adaptation to population ageing that focuses on:

- Preventing the accumulation of gendered disadvantages over the life course by tackling inequalities at all levels to close gender gaps in education, employment, care, earnings and pensions;
- Mitigating the risks resulting from gender inequality among older persons through redistribution and support;
- Anticipating the impacts of current reforms on future generations of women and men by mainstreaming age and gender in societal adaptations to demographic change.

**Expected results**

A gender-responsive societal adaptation to population ageing will ensure that the opportunities and risks of population ageing will be equally shared by women and men, and that women and men can age more equally.

**With good practice examples from:**  
Armenia, Austria, Canada, Cyprus, Estonia, France, Germany, Israel, Malta, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom.

This policy brief addresses Commitments 8 of the Regional Implementation Strategy of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (to mainstream a gender approach in an ageing society) and Goal 5 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls).

UNECE | Working Group on Ageing | www.unecp.org/population | unecp.ageing@un.org

**Policy brief** UNECE

**Ageing in sustainable and smart cities**

UNECE Policy Brief on Ageing No. 24  
May 2020

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**Challenging context**

Most city environments are designed to support an able-bodied working population. Older people are often excluded from the social and economic life of the city, especially when they lose functional ability. With the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development policy makers across the UNECE region pledged to ensure that 'no one will be left behind' and one of the Sustainable Development Goals – SDG11 – focuses specifically on cities. Urban planning needs to cater for the whole population, developing supportive environments for an increasing proportion of older citizens, creating 'cities for all ages'.

**Suggested strategies**

In order to move towards sustainable and smart cities for all ages, this policy brief recommends mainstreaming ageing, gender, disability and human rights considerations in urban planning; to involve all generations and stakeholders for people-centred local development planning and to avoid working in silos, cooperating across sectors to connect the dots between different realms of city life. Recommended strategies focus on three domains:

- Housing:** develop sustainable, smart, age-friendly housing which facilitates 'ageing in place,' is affordable, smart, secure, safe, functional and comfortable.
- Green spaces and public spaces:** develop sustainable, smart, and age-friendly green spaces & public places which support life between buildings, green spaces, life in buildings and are safe & secure
- Transport:** invest in sustainable, smart, safe, age-friendly transport and reset planning priorities to make public transport acceptable, available, affordable and accessible, as well as safe and secure.

**Expected results**

Developing age-friendly physical environments in cities will enhance the lives of older people, contribute to sustainability, encourage socially resilient and inclusive communities and via improvements in public health, and contribute to economic prosperity across the region.

**With good practice examples from:**  
Austria, Belarus, Canada, Czech Republic, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America. City examples include Amsterdam, Athboy, Aveiro, Barcelona, Berlin, Bolzano, Chisinau, Côte Saint-Luc, Donostia-San Sebastián, Gothenburg, Graz, Lappeenranta, Ljubljana, London, Manchester, Minsk, New York, Prague, Rzeszów, Udine, Valetta, and Vienna.

This policy brief addresses Commitments 4, 2, 7, and 8 of the Regional Implementation Strategy of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, Goals 11, 2 and 3 of the 2017 Lisbon Ministerial Declaration, with a primary focus on SDG 11 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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- PB23 - Gender equality in ageing societies
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# Policy Briefs 2020/2021

## PB#25 Older persons in emergency situations



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### Policy brief

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#### Older Persons in Emergency Situations

UNECE Policy Brief on Ageing No. 25  
October 2020

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##### Challenging context

Between 2001 and 2019, emergency crises in the UNECE region affected an estimated 130 million people, injuring over 90 million, and making nearly 674,000 people homeless. Older men and women, though generally disproportionately impacted by emergency crises, are often neglected in disaster risk reduction strategies and emergency responses. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the vulnerability of older persons carrying the burden of severe illness and mortality as well as of acute loneliness and isolation. As of September 2020, nearly 9 out of 10 COVID-19 related deaths reported in the UNECE region have been among adults aged 65 years and older. Disaster risk reduction and preparedness plans need to be “older persons friendly and inclusive” to prevent and mitigate the potentially devastating

implications of emergency crises among them. The challenge is not only to protect older persons and ensure essential services provide for their needs, as part of the emergency response and recovery after crises, it is also to account for the diversity of this population group, recognize their capacities and harness their experience to maximize the preparedness and minimize the impact of emergencies’.

##### Suggested strategies

Ensuring that older persons needs are addressed within preparedness, disaster risk reduction, emergency response and recovery frameworks requires:

- Engaging older persons in the development of preparedness plans and disaster risk reduction strategies;
- Considering older persons prominently in the mechanisms and operations of national and regional Civil Protection;
- Addressing the needs and rights of older persons in relief efforts;
- Providing financial support and extended social protection measures to protect older persons from the social and economic stress resulting from emergency crises;
- Developing recovery strategies and actions geared towards “building back better”, contemplating specific measures for reintegrating older persons into the normal circuits of social and economic life;

##### Expected results

Developing preparedness, disaster risk reduction, and emergency response strategies centred on older persons will ensure that this population group is adequately protected, and its potential fully harnessed.

##### With good practice examples from:

Albania, Belgium, France, Hungary, Israel, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain.

This policy brief addresses Commitments 1, 2, 4, and 7, 8, 10 of the Regional Implementation Strategy of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing; Goals 1 and 3 of the 2017 Lisbon Ministerial Declaration, and SDGs 1, 2, 3 and 10 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



United Nations

- Engage older persons in preparedness and disaster risk reduction
- Consider older persons in Civil Protection
- Address needs and rights of older persons in relief
- Provide financial support and extended social protection measures
- Develop recovery strategies towards “building back better”
- Promote age-disaggregated data

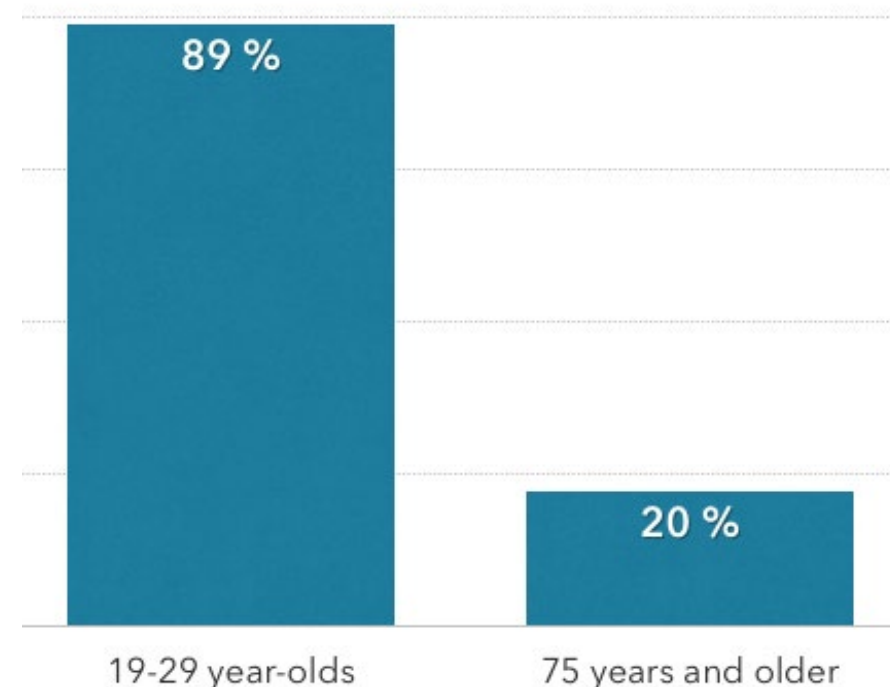
# Policy Briefs 2020/2021

## PB#26 Ageing in the digital era



- Digital technologies are evolving at high speed while the digital divide and related inequalities continuously grow
- Digital technology includes not only everyday technologies such as e-banking, online-shopping or parking-applications, but also encompasses e-health, e-governance, robotics and artificial intelligence
- As more and more services move online, digital exclusion hinders access to a growing range of goods and services

### OCCASIONAL INTERNET USE



Source: Fundamental Rights Survey conducted by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2019

# Policy Briefs 2020/2021

## PB#26 Ageing in the digital era



Key challenges to be addressed in PB#26:

- **Ensure equal access to public goods and services** by fostering
  - accessibility, affordability, availability, digital skills and competent use in ageing individuals, and by tackling the physical and digital infrastructure
  
- **Combat loneliness and social exclusion** by promoting
  - intergenerational solidarity and exchange through digital technology as well as safe and competent use of digital technology in ageing populations
  
- **Ensure safety and privacy** by addressing and ensuring
  - data protection and security across the whole population

# Policy Briefs 2020/2021

## PB#26 Ageing in the digital era



### Next steps...

- Please send us examples of policy initiatives for inclusion in the brief by 4 December
- PB 26 will be issued in the first half of 2021

