



Senior Eco-Nect Strategy Report



PARTNERS:



Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

Senior Eco-Nect Strategy Report

Date: 19/12/2023

Work Package	WP4
Objective	O4.2. to prepare a strategy to jointly address the challenges and benefits for the opportunities offered by a growing silver economy.
Task	Task 4.2. Strategy to address the challenges and opportunities of the sector (M12-18) - MTU Based on the results of the SWOT analysis, partners will prepare a strategy to address the challenges identified and the innovation potential and opportunities of a sustainable European silver ecosystem. The strategy shall be prepared jointly, considering partners' regional ecosystems specificities, and its use for organisations outside of the partnership. The strategy will help identify the activities for inclusion in the joint action plan (WP5).

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	5
2. Highlights of The Strategy Report.....	7
3. SWOT Results and Market Comparison	8
4. Definitions.....	11
5. Sector Overview	13
5.1 Summary of Market Study.....	13
5.1.1 Ageing Population	13
5.1.2 Labour Market Status.....	19
5.1.3 Overview of Health and Social Sectors.....	22
5.2 Regional Ecosystem.....	25
5.2.1 France.....	25
5.2.2 Slovenia.....	29
5.2.3 Spain.....	33
5.2.4 Ireland	35
5.3 Market Overview	41
5.3.1 Opportunities	41
5.3.2 Challenges	43
5.4 Market Outlook	45
5.4.1 Ageing Population Estimation	45
5.4.2 Older People in Labour Market.....	47
5.4.3 Healthy Ageing and Education	48
5.5 Sectoral Demands	50
5.5.1 Health & Care Sector	50
5.5.2 Housing Sector.....	51
5.5.3 Tourism Sectors	52
5.5.4 Enterprises and Other Industrial Professionals.....	53
5.6 Good Practice Cases	55
5.6.1 Good Practice Cases in France	55
5.6.2 Good Practice Cases in Slovenia.....	55
5.6.3 Good Practice Cases in Spain.....	57

5.6.4 Good Practice Cases in Ireland	58
5.7 EU Policies.....	61
5.1.1 European Care Strategy	61
5.1.2 European Pillar of Social Rights and the Action Plan.....	61
10. Opportunities Analysis.....	63
6.1 France.....	63
6.2 Spain	64
6.3 Slovenia	66
6.4 Ireland	67
6.5 European Sports Sector	71
6.6 European Tourism Sector.....	73
11. Challenges Analysis	74
7.1 France.....	74
7.2 Spain	74
7.3 Slovenia	76
7.4 Ireland	77
7.5 European Sports Sector	80
7.6 European Tourism Sector	82
12. Strategy Development	83
8.1 France.....	83
8.2 Spain	84
8.3 Slovenia	86
8.4 Ireland	87
8.5 European Sports Sector	91
8.6 European Tourism Sector.....	94
13. Research Methodology.....	95
14. Conclusion	96
15. References.....	98

Figures

Figure 1: Estimation on Population Structures, 2022—2100	14
Figure 2: Population Pyramid of France in 1970, 2021 and 2070	15
Figure 3: Population Pyramid of Slovenia	16
Figure 4: Population Pyramid of Spain	17
Figure 5: Population Pyramid of Ireland	18
Figure 6: Older People Self-employment Status in EU (2021)	19
Figure 7: Older People Part-time Working Status in EU (2021)	20
Figure 8: Older People with Good or Very Good Health Status in 2021	23

1. Introduction

The Senior Eco-Nect Strategy Report: Blueprint for Future Silver Economy Development is produced as part of the Senior Eco-Nect Project. Senior Eco-Nect Project aims to involve all possible stakeholders in a wider society to engage and participate in the silver economy and take concerted actions to tackle any challenges that may face in the future, so that a robust, inclusive, and sustainable silver economy could be established at both the national level and at the European level. The Senior Eco-Nect Project has five objectives for achieving the ultimate target.

Objective 1: Support the emergence, growth, efficiency, and interconnection of at least four European ecosystems dedicated to active and healthy ageing.

Objective 2: Unlock the full potential of the silver economy sector by integrating key transversal areas targeting the ageing population beyond the scope of health and care.

Objective 3: Ensure inclusiveness and interconnectivity between the key innovation players from across the quadruple helix around the sector of silver economy at the local, regional, national, and European levels and beyond.

Objective 4: Increase the efficiency and innovation potential of silver economy innovators and projects by addressing key challenges and exploiting the opportunities offered by this sector.

Objective 5: Encouraging synergies and complementarities between Senior Eco-Nect Joint Action Plan and the innovation programmes of public authorities.

The rapid growth of an ageing population at both the national and European level urges not only policy makers and public authorities, but also academic and research institutions, enterprises and industrial professionals to pay attention to the growing and diverse needs of older people. According to the news release from World Health Organization, the number of the population that is in the age group between 65 years and over will overtake the population who are under 15 years in European regions by 2024 (World Health Organization, 2023a). Senior Eco-Nect project responds to the significant challenge posed by the growing ageing population and contributes into the economic and social values and promotes the understanding and knowledge of ageing population and the needs of older people so that to create a synergetic network and support the development of a robust, inclusive, interconnected and sustainable silver economy. As part of the working packages for the project, a strategy report is produced to provide insights on the joint strategy plan at both

national and European level. In the report, an inclusive language regarding older people and very old people will be used which are aligned with the standards and requirements of European Union (European Commission. Statistical Office of the European Union., 2020).

The strategy report will examine both the results from SWOT composite report and the market study to find the common ground between them. Moreover, it will also investigate the differences to explore the untapped potentials for future development. The report also explains and analyses the current standing of ageing population and the development progress of silver economy, especially the performance in the labour market, and health and social sectors. The ecosystem in the partner regions will also be presented. Via the sketch of the national and regional ecosystem, it may present the audience a better understanding on the silver economy development and the related key stakeholders. Furthermore, the report will provide an overview and an outlook of the silver economy and the related market. The report also investigates the demands of different sectors which may indicate the supports that would be necessary to them. Good practice cases that are selected from the published handbook, Senior Eco-Nect Handbook on Silver Economy, Sustainable Development and Innovation Ecosystem, and public releases, and silver economy-orientated policies at the European level will also be demonstrated in the report.

The strategy report will investigate and analyse the opportunities and challenges at the regional and national level in the partner regions and based on the commonality, apply and reflect them at the European level. Strategies and joint action plan will also be made on the foundation of the opportunities and challenges analysis.

The research methodology that was applied will be presented in the report for further applicable research studies and references use.

The strategy report uses the four partner regions, France, Slovenia, Spain and Ireland as anchors for understanding the current development progress on silver economy, and the opportunities and challenges it encounters. The explored commonalities would be useful and indicative to the further understanding on the silver economy development at the European level. This report aims to provide support to varied stakeholder on their participation in the silver economy. It also aims to raise further awareness of silver economy development and encourage more stakeholder to take part in.

2. Highlights of The Strategy Report

- ▶ A benefit summary of SWOT analysis was made on the foundation of 108 effective responses which was collected via an online anonymous SWOT survey. A comparison was made between the SWOT analysis and the market study which was produced based on the desk research and secondary data that was published by government or public authorities. The comparison shows that both the SWOT analysis and the market study have emphasised the importance of strong industrial development in the health care and non-health care sectors. Moreover, support on policies, financial and non-financial resources are also essential to develop a robust silver economy.
- ▶ The review on the ageing population at both national level and the EU level shows a fast upwardly trajectory of growth. Moreover, the status in the labour market also shows the potential pressure on the labour supply and the needs of flexible working conditions to accommodate older people's needs. Moreover, the development and status in the health and social sectors revealed both the existed and potential needs of older people.
- ▶ A review of the ecosystem at the regional and national level in the partner member states, France, Slovenia, Spain, and Ireland are displayed and discussed. Moreover, the functions of the main components in the ecosystem are also presented. Selected good practices cases from the partner member states also add value to the review as highlights of successful experiences.
- ▶ An analysis of opportunities and challenges at the national level for the partner member states was provided which was constructed on the foundation of the SWOT analysis, the Market Study and the secondary data and information analysis. Recommended strategies was also provided to shed a light on what actions and strategic planning may be essential and necessary to develop a robust and inclusive silver economy not only in the partner member states, but also in the regions and states that are interested in practicing the strategies or promote the significance of silver economy.

3. SWOT Results and Market Comparison

The SWOT composite report was produced based on 108 effective responses that were collected from participants which were from five main stakeholder groups cross four partner countries, France, Slovenia, Spain and Ireland. The market study was created based on the collected secondary data that are released by statistics office and other public authorities. The comparison between the SWOT analysis and the market study may shed a light on the similarities and differences on the perceived market development.

Both the SWOT analysis and the market study have shown the enormous potential in the silver economy and related markets. Respondents believed that the growth of ageing population, relatively higher level of financial independency, and free time available to individuals within the silver economy, would indicate the potential for growth of this economic sector. The market study also shows that the rapid growth of an ageing population and their growing and diverse needs are fuelling future growth for the silver economy.

Both the SWOT analysis and the market study have presented the needs of health and care, and long-term care which are essential to older people. Financial and non-financial resources, such as policy support, would be necessary for the sustained growth in the health and care sectors.

According to the SWOT analysis, non-health and care industry, such as tourism industry, education sector, financial service and legal services sectors are also identified as the sectors and industries that have the untapped potential in the silver economy and the extended ecosystem.

The SWOT analysis and the market study have shown the importance of a robust tourism and hospitality industry. Respondents believed that the outstanding performance in the tourism and hospitality industry is not only a strength of current silver economy development, but also is a source of opportunities for developing a sustainable and inclusive silver economy in the future. Moreover, the market study shows that the needs of domestic and outbound trips from older people at the national and European level, which indicates the potential size of the market.

The market study also echoed the need for education and lifelong learning for long term, sustainable and inclusive development for the silver economy which was identified from the SWOT analysis. The market study shows that the progress of the education programme and lifelong learning activities development, and the potential economic and social value behind these programmes. The education programmes and lifelong learning activities can, not only encourage older people to stay connected with their local communities and the society, but also enrich their knowledge and skills, especially on computer literacy and digital technology, and expand their social network outside of their families. Both the responses from the SWOT survey and the secondary data collected for the market study confirmed the attitude from the stakeholder groups regarding the importance of education sector to develop an inclusive and sustainable silver economy.

In the SWOT composite report, the respondents also reported that the needs of older people on financial and legal services need to be fulfilled. From the desk research that has completed for the market study, there is a lack of services provision in these two sectors which confirmed the concerns from the respondents.

The respondents of the SWOT survey reported the strong and urgent needs for financial and non-financial supports from both the local and national government, and from a higher-level authority at European level. Based on the responses, the supports on policy, financing and infrastructure are essential and important to the SMEs, especially to the start-up, to encourage them to participate in the silver economy, and to maintain their momentum on the products and services development. The analysis from the market study also confirmed the needs on the support from policy makers and public authorities. The market study shows how enterprises, especially the SMEs could benefit from policy support and available funding and contribute to the silver economy development. The SILVER SMEs, an INTERREG Europe project which was launched in June 2018, covers 9 partner regions which includes rural areas in Europe ([Interreg Europe, 2023](#)). The project collected over 70 good practice cases across France, Slovenia, Spain, Portugal and Ireland ([Euromontana, 2021](#)). According to the project output and report, proactive supports are still necessary for motivating SMEs to get involved in the silver economy development ([ConwayLenihan, McGuirk and McAleer, 2018](#)).

The SWOT composite report and the Market Study provided an outline of the current progress for silver economy development and the essential players in the ecosystem from different angles. It is important to investigate the development of the silver economy with the combined opinions and insights to receive a better view of the whole picture.

Both the SWOT composite report and the Market study are available to the audiences.

The Senior EcoNect composite regional SWOT analyses report is available to view at the project website: <https://www.senior-eco-nect.com/download-our-composite-regional-swot-analyses-report/>.

The Senior EcoNect Market Study is available to view at the project website: <https://www.senior-eco-nect.com/download-our-market-study/>.

4. Definitions

- 1. Accessible housing:** it refers to the accessibility of the dwelling which would be approached and entered by both residents and visitors, considering their different needs, such as the needs on mobility and vision (Senior Eco-Nect, 2023).
- 2. Adaptable housing:** it refers to the dwelling that could satisfy diverse needs from the residents (Nielsen and Ambrose, 1999; Femenias and Geromel, 2020). Via a Universal Design Approach, a flexible housing design is used which could be changed to satisfy the resident's needs when it is required (Senior Eco-Nect, 2023).
- 3. Edadismo/Idadismo:** it refers to the set of social and political practices that discriminate against people based on their age, especially when it happens against older people. They are the Spanish and Galician words for ageism, both included during the past year in the Dictionary of the Real Academia Española and Real Academia Galega respectively.
- 4. Silver Economy:** "existing and emerging economic opportunities associated with the growing public and consumer expenditure related to population ageing and the specific needs of the population over 50." (European Commission, 2015)
- 5. Older People:** Those aged 65 years or more according to the European Commission
- 6. Very old people:** those aged 85 years or more according to the European Commission
- 7. Elderly:** The elderly population is defined as people aged 65 and over according to the OECD.
- 8. Old-age dependency ratio,** according to the OECD is the old-age to working-age demographic ratio, defined as the number of individuals aged 65 and over per 100 people of working age defined as those at ages 20 to 64.
- 9. Under-occupied dwelling:** it refers to the dwelling or accommodation, can be house or apartment, is perceived to be too large for the household living in it, for example, there are unoccupied rooms, or rooms that are left idle (Eurostat, 2021).
- 10. Senior Sports:** Senior sports involve physical activities and sports programs designed specifically for older individuals, focusing on promoting active and healthy lifestyles among the aging population.
- 11. Community Programmes:** Community programs are initiatives designed to engage and benefit the local community. In the report, community programs focus on creating opportunities for social engagement and inclusivity through sports activities for seniors.

12. G rontop le: the entire ecosystem supporting healthy, active, autonomous ageing
(<https://projects2014-2020.interregeurope.eu/ithaca/news/news-article/9495/gerontopole-project-is-bringing-people-together/>)

5. Sector Overview

5.1 SUMMARY OF MARKET STUDY

The Senior Eco-Nect Market Study was produced and completed in September 2023 by the Hincks Centre of Entrepreneurship Excellence (Robinson and Xiong, 2023b). The Market Study was produced for the Senior Eco-Nect Project which aims to encourage and involve varied stakeholders to contribute to the development of silver economy. The Market Study investigated the current status and development progress of the silver economy at EU level. The Market Study also looked into the performance of sectors, such as economic, health and social sectors, for contrast and comparison. This section will present a summary of the Market Study for audience to get a general overview of the silver economy development at EU level and at selected member states level. Furthermore, this section will also highlight the regional ecosystem in the selected member states, France, Spain, Slovenia and Ireland. This section will also cover the needs in different sectors and good practice cases. The level of detail in the analysis for individual member state is subject to the data availability.

5.1.1 Ageing Population

It is widely accepted that there is a rapidly growing ageing population in the EU. According to the Eurostat, the current percentage of older people in the EU population has increased to 21% (Eurostat, 2023a). In 2022, the median age of EU population is 44 years which is almost 3 years higher than the median age in 10 years ago. According to the estimation made by the Eurostat, by 2100 the median age would reach approximately 49 years. Moreover, the old-age dependency ratio at EU level has increased from 25% in 2007 to 33% in 2022. The projected old-age dependency ratio will increase to 55% by 2021, and the total age dependency ratio is estimated to increase to 85%.

The increasing number and percentage of an older population, and the fast rising on the old-age dependency ratio indicates the EU population pyramid will face a significant transformation. From the Figure 1 below, the projected population pyramid suggests that the peaks in the age group between 30 years and 59 years would be smoothed out by 2100 and the new peaks of the pyramid will be in the age group at 85 years and above. As shown in Figure 1 below, the shape of the population pyramid is estimated to transform into a shape that is close to rectangular which indicates the increasing proportion of older people and very old people in the population.

Population pyramids, EU, 2022 and 2100
(% of the total population)

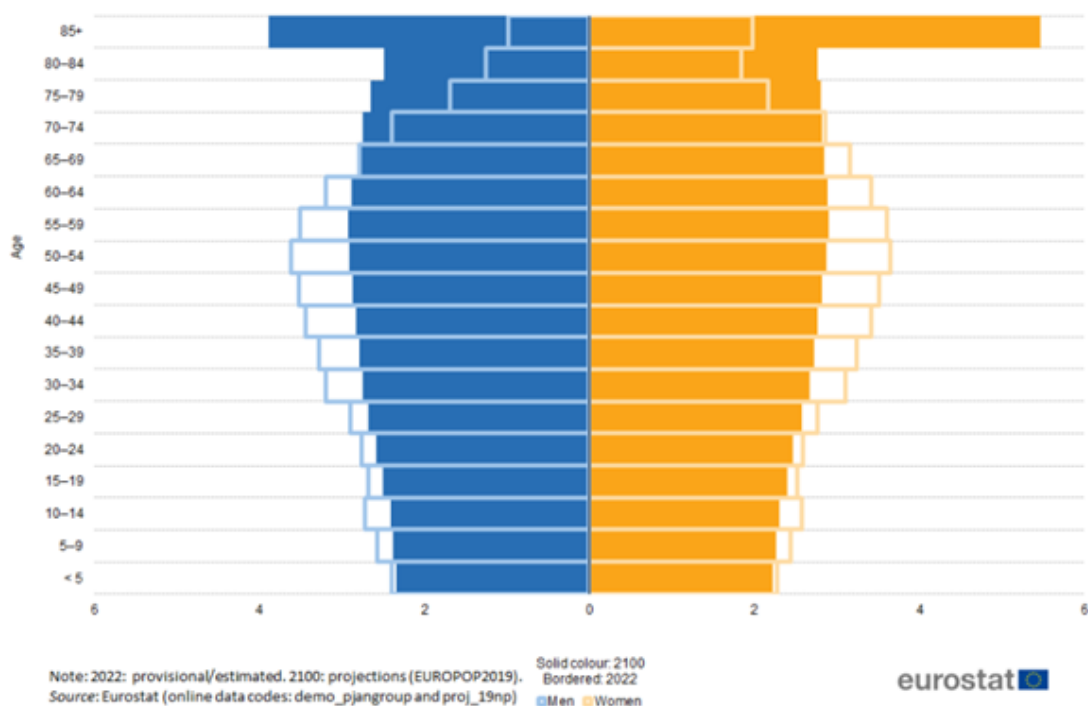


Figure 1: Estimation on Population Structures, 2022—2100

Source: (Eurostat, 2023a)

The situation in the selected member states do not look optimistic either. In 2023, the percentage of older people and very old people in the total population in France has reached to 21% (Madeline, 2023). The older age dependency ratio in 2022 was at 34% (INSEE, 2021). By 2050, the estimated growth rate of very old people will increase to 90% and the estimated number of older people and very old people will be over 19 million (Eurostat, 2023b). Moreover, as shown in Figure 2 below, the age group between 55 and 80 will become the dominant age group in the population pyramid by 2070.

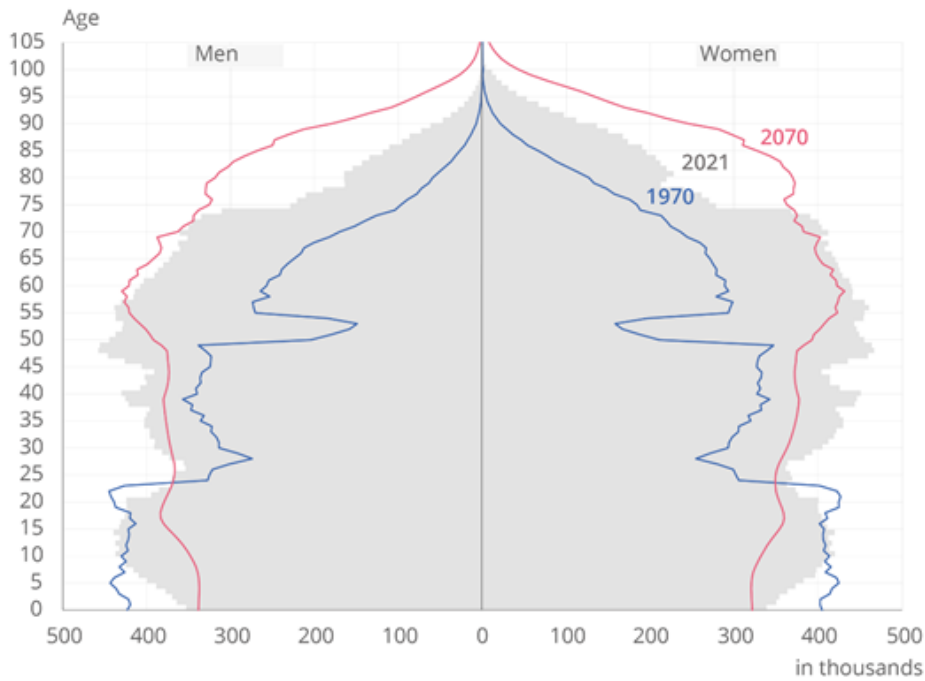


Figure 2: Population Pyramid of France in 1970, 2021 and 2070

Source: (INSEE, 2021)

Slovenia faces a comparable situation of increasing ageing population. The median age of the population in Slovenia has increased from 42 years to 45 years within 10 years (Eurostat, 2023b). The estimation is that the median age will increase to 50 years by 2070. Moreover, the old-age dependency ratio will also increase to 60% in the same projection horizon. The increasing volume of an ageing population will bring a notable change to the population pyramid. As shown in Figure 3 below, the estimation shows that the dominant age group is changing from the age group between 32- and 52 years, to the age group between 66- and 89 years in the next 40 years. A declining birth rate, an increasing life expectancy at birth and healthy life years may result in the increasing number of ageing population in the projection horizon.

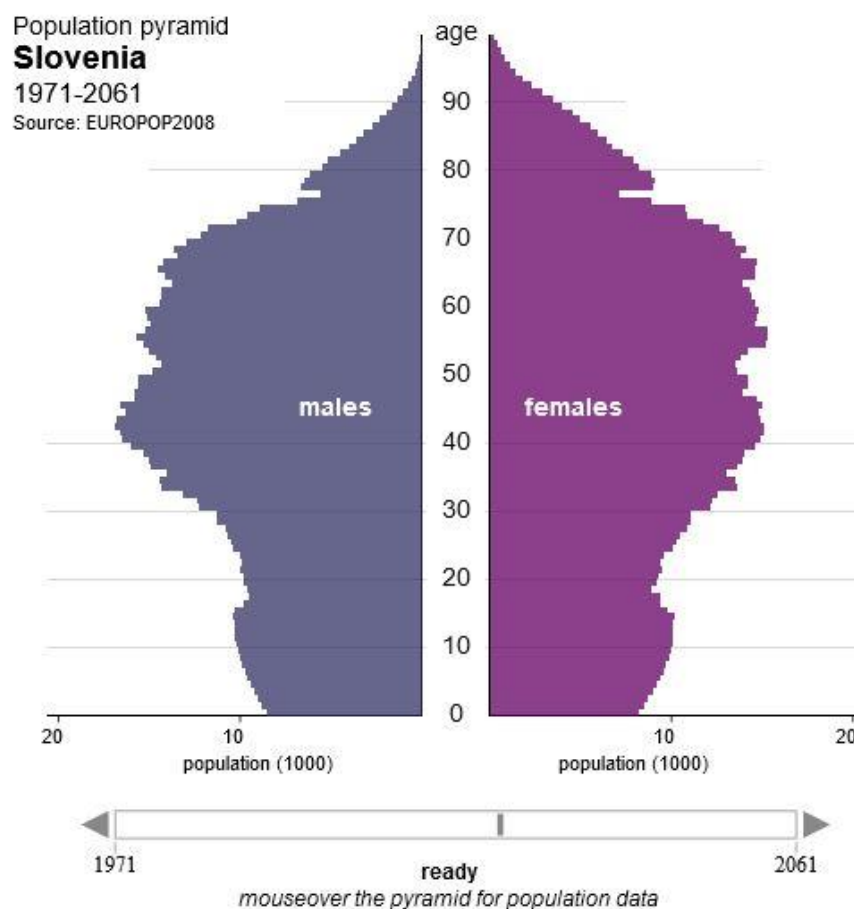


Figure 3: Population Pyramid of Slovenia

Source: (Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, no date)

In Spain, the percentage of people aged between 60- and 74 years has increased from 14% in 2000 to 16% to 2021 (European Commission, 2023). The share of people aged at 75 years and above has increased to approximately 10% in 2021. In 2022, the median age of the population in Spain has reached to 45 years (Eurostat, 2023b). The current old-age dependency ratio has increased to approximately 31% (Eurostat, 2023b). According to Instituto Nacional de Estadística, the pyramid of the population in Spain would show a similar moving trend with the two member states, France and Slovenia, that discussed earlier. The dominant age group in the population has changed from the age group between 20-and 50 years in 2003, to the age group between 40-and 64 years which could be seen in the Figure 4 below.

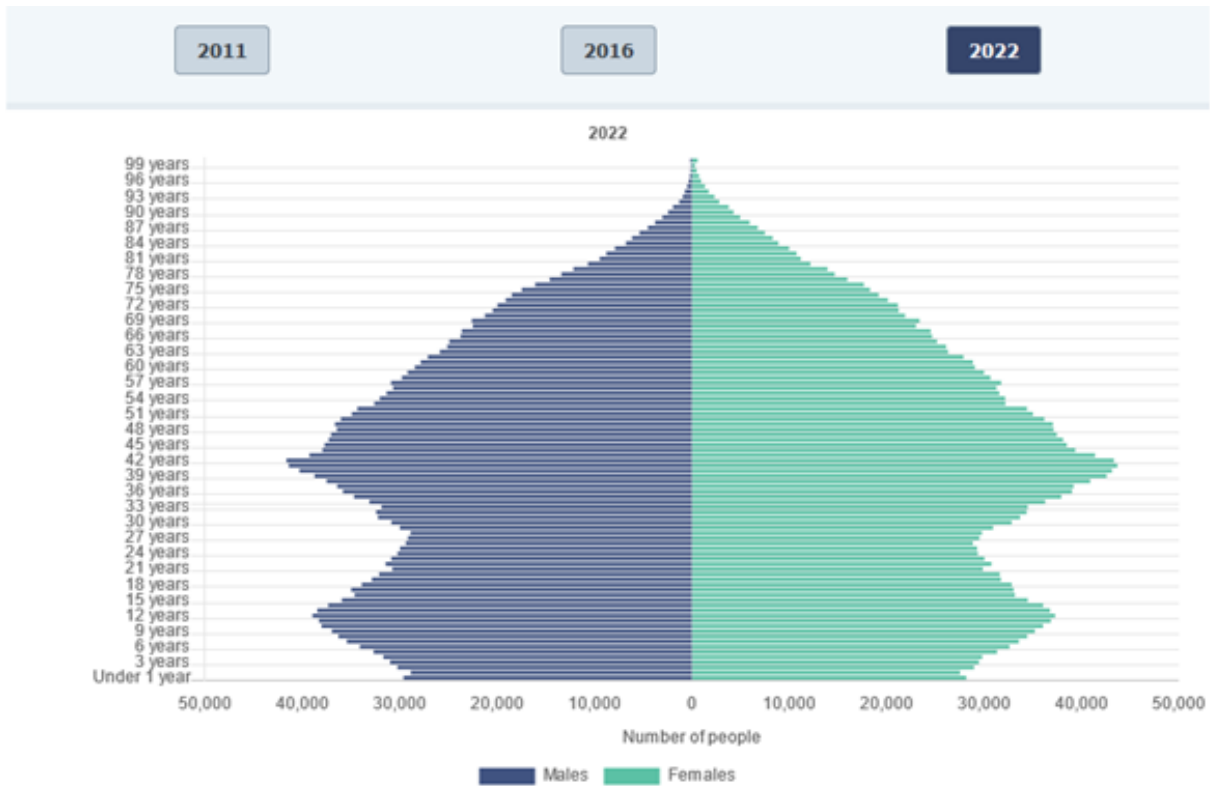


Source: Continuous Register Statistics

Figure 4: Population Pyramid of Spain

Source: (Insituto Nacional de Estadística, 2023)

Compared with the other selected member states, Ireland has a relatively higher percentage of young people in the population. However, this does not remove or reduce the shadow of an increasing ageing population. In Census 2016, the number of older people has reached 637,567 (Central Statistics Office, 2017). The estimation shows that the number of older people will be over 1 million by 2051, and the number of very old people will increase to 304,900 within the same forecast horizon (Central Statistics Office, 2020). Additionally, the median age of the population in Ireland has increased to close to 39 years in 2022 (Eurostat, 2023b). Even though the current old-age dependency ratio in Ireland, 23%, is lower than the ratio at EU level, the estimation shows that it will increase to 41% by 2051. According to the Census in 2022, the dominant age group of the population pyramid has shifted from the age group between 25 and 29 years in 2011, to 40 and 44 years in 2022 which could be seen in Figure 5 below.



May 30, 2023 11:00:00 UTC

© Central Statistics Office, Ireland
<https://data.cso.ie/table/FY006B>

Figure 5: Population Pyramid of Ireland

Source: (Central Statistics Office, 2023a)

5.1.2 Labour Market Status

Among European Union member states, the average retirement age is generally 64 years. However, the statistics indicates that many older people choose to work after reaching their retirement age. Close to 20% of the population of employed are aged between 65 years and above and between 70 and 74 years (Jamet and EI-Atillah, 2023). Self-employment and part-time working are the two working status that are popular among older people and very old people who are active in the labour market. Figure 6 shows that in 2002 over 50% of older people that were in employment, were self-employed. The percentage of older people that are self-employed declined in 2021, which may be a result from the tight restrictions and unprecedented economic situation across European countries during the COVID-19 pandemic.

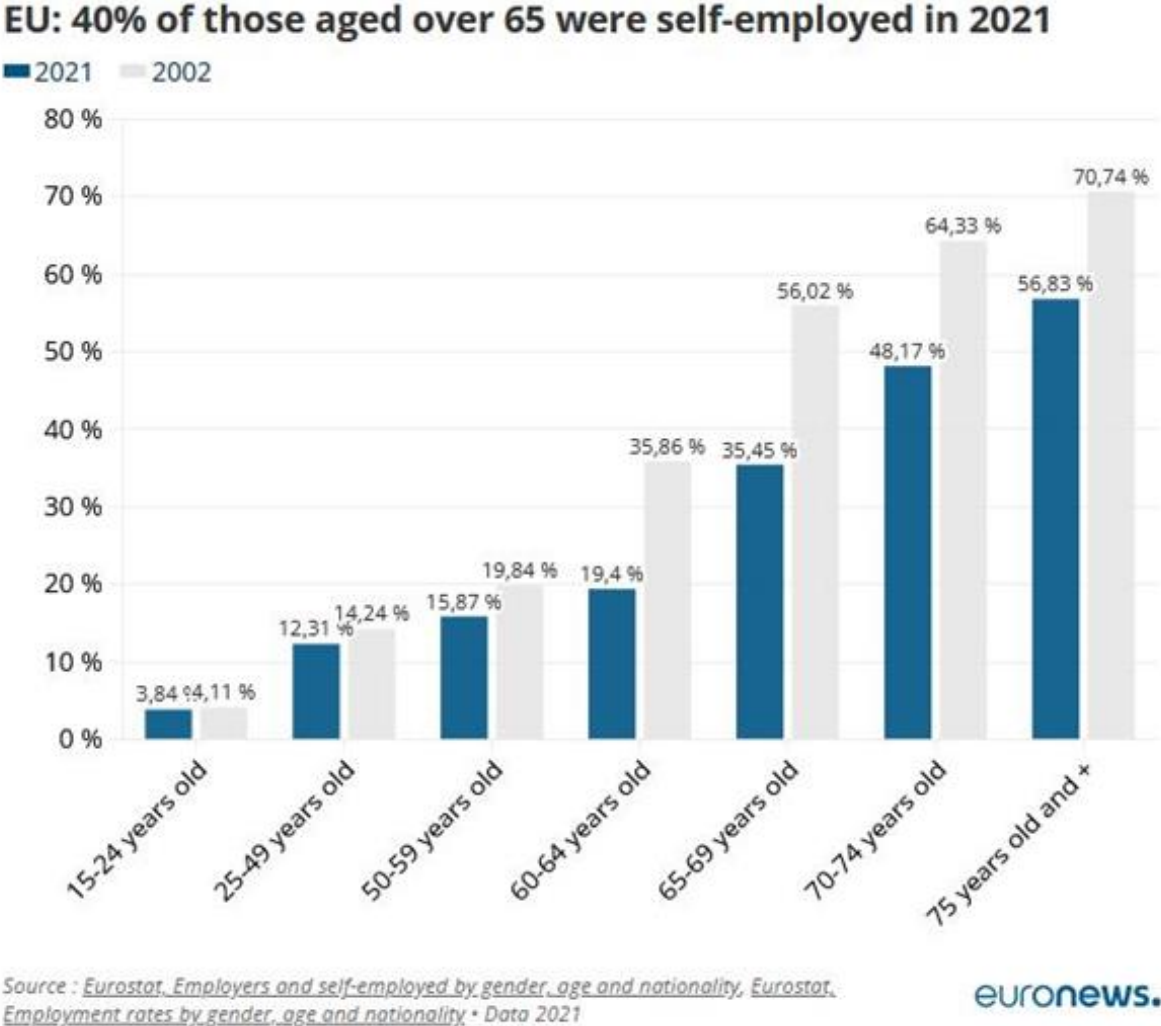
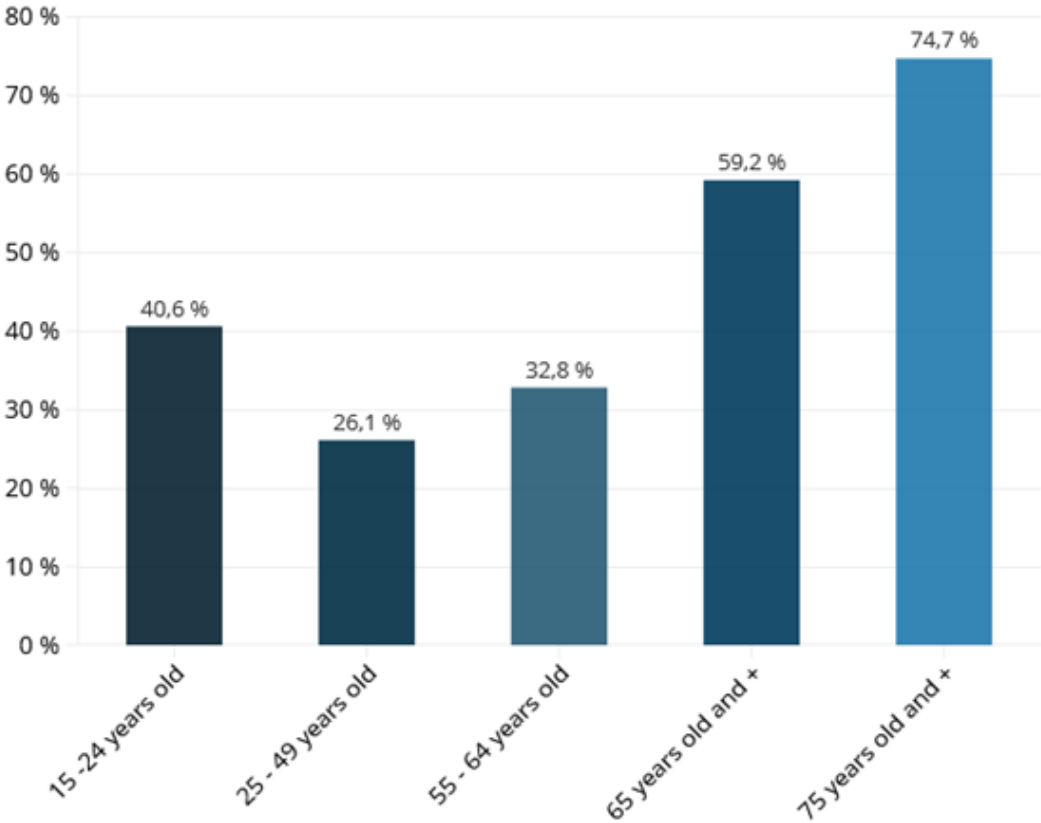


Figure 6: Older People Self-employment Status in EU (2021)

Source: (Jamet and EI-Atillah, 2023)

According to Figure 7 below, slightly below 60% of the older people who are between 65 and 74 years and close to 75% of the older people who are aged at 75 years and over were working part-time in 2021. The percentage of older people who are working part-time is disproportionately higher than the other age groups. The exceptional share of older people choosing this working status could be a mutual choice between older people and employer/labour market. Flexible working hours and suitable working conditions and workload make part-time working more favourable to older people.

EU - In 2021, 59% of people aged 65 and over worked part-time



Source : Eurostat

euronews.

Figure 7: Older People Part-time Working Status in EU (2021)

Source: (Jamet and EI-Atillah, 2023)

It is also worth mentioning that older people and very old people are also active in the voluntary activities. Even though volunteers often are not counted into employment as they do not fit in the traditional definition of employment which emphasizes work for payment, such as wages and salaries, volunteers and voluntary activities create enormous economic and social benefits to the economy, the national and regional ecosystem, and the local

communities. Denmark, Sweden, and the Netherlands have the highest number of older people that participate in voluntary activities (Eurofound, 2011).

In France, the Labour Force Survey results showed that in 2022, the labour force participation rate for the older people is slightly over 4% (ILOSTAT, 2023). 596,300 older people were employed when surveyed and 24,300 older people were unemployed however were willing to work (Eurostat, 2023b). Similar with the statistics at EU level, self-employment and part-time working are popular among older people in France. Approximately 40% of people who were between 65 and 74 years and 60% of people who were 75 years and above were self-employed (Eurostat, 2020c). 40% of men and 60% women who are aged at 65 years and over were working part-time.

In Slovenia, statistics shows that approximately 5% of the men who are aged between 65 years and over that were in the labour force were employed (Eurostat, 2020c). The employment rate for women, that were in the same age group, was below 5%. Approximately 30% of older people were self-employed (Eurostat, 2020c). Regarding part-time working, almost 60% of women and slightly over 40% of men who were 65 years and over were working part-time when the data was collected. Comparing the percentage of the people who are between 25 and 54 years, slightly over 10% of people in this age group were self-employed and under 20% of them were working part-time, it is clear to see that self-employment and part-time working are more likely to be the working status for older people. The relative flexibility on working hours for part-time working, and the possibility of self-controlled workload for self-employment could be a reason to explain why both working status are more likely to be chosen by older people.

Statistics shows that in Spain the employment rate for older people was below 5% in 2019 (Eurostat, 2020c). The data also shows that public administration and defence, and compulsory social security are the industries that older people were active. Similar with the situation in France and Slovenia, the working status, self-employment and part-time working, are more likely to be observed in the age groups between 65 and 74 years, and between 75 years and above. Over 20% of the labour force that were between 65 and 74 years and over 70% of the labour force that were between 75 years and above were self-employed in 2019. Lower than 40% of women in the older people group were working part-time. The percentage for the men that were in the same age group were working part-time was slightly over 20%.

According to the data, from 2016 to 2022, the number of retired people in Ireland has increased by 21% (Central Statistics Office, 2023a). During the same time period, the labour

force participation rate for older people group has increased from approximately 9% in 2011 to 11% in 2022 (Central Statistics Office, 2023a). The number of older people in employment has risen from 78,300 in to 108,500 within 5 years (Central Statistics Office, 2023b). The percentage of farm holders which belongs to self-employment group in the older people group has increased from approximately 23% to 33% (Central Statistics Office, 2022a).

5.1.3 Overview of Health and Social Sectors

Regarding the health status of older people, it is generally accepted that older people tend to face a higher risk of experiencing complicated health issues which includes vision and mobility difficulties. However, with the promotion of modern health and care related technology, healthy diet and appropriate exercises, the healthy life years (HLY) has been extended. Statistics shows that the healthy life years for older people group is close to 10 years. Figure 8 below presents a summary of the self-reported health level at EU level and at national level for member states. At EU average national level, 41% of older people stated their health level is good or very good. A slightly higher percentage, 43%, of older people lived in the urban areas reported the same when data was collected.

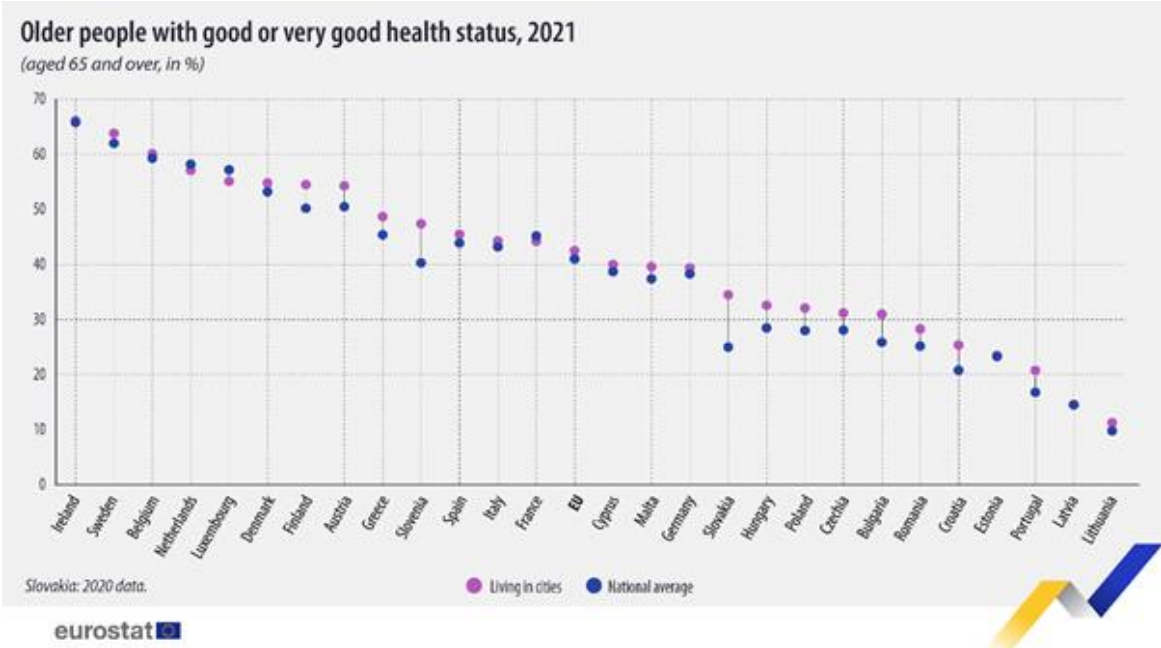


Figure 8: Older People with Good or Very Good Health Status in 2021

Source: (Eurostat, 2023b)

According to Eurostat, at the EU level, over 60% of older people consumed both fresh fruit and vegetables daily (Eurostat, 2020a). Regarding the consumption of alcohol and tobacco,

approximately 37% of older people consumed alcohol at least once a week. The percentage is slightly lower than the people aged between 18 and 64 years which was around 38%. Approximately 8% of older people reported that they smoked on a daily basis. Unsurprisingly, a higher percentage (24%) of people who were aged between 18 and 64 years reported smoking every day. The relatively healthier lifestyle may have contributed to the extended healthy life years and the increasing life expectancy at birth.

Obesity and other long-standing health issues and difficulties still pose challenges. In 2017, over 15% of older people and very old people reported that they have obese. In 2018, over 70% of very old people reported that they have long-standing health issues.

Tourism industry may benefit from an increasing volume of ageing population. Statistics shows that approximately 25% of EU residents that took overnight trips were older people. 52% of them travelled for recreation and leisure, and 37% of them travelled for family and friends visiting purposes (Eurostat, 2021b). The percentage of travelling that were made for leisure and recreation purposes and for visiting purpose were similar with the age group between 18 and 64 years which were 51% and 32% respectively. The data shows that 18% of the EU residents who generated trips and tourism nights were older people who represented 24% of the overall population that aged 15 years and over.

Comparing to the data at EU level, older people in France have greater healthy life years. The healthy life years for women in the older people group are close to 13 years, and for men that are in the same age group, it is 11 years (Eurostat, 2021a). Over 70% of older people in France consumed fresh fruits and vegetables on a daily basis, which is above the EU average level (Eurostat, 2020a). Less than 10% of older people reported that they smoke daily. Data also shows that in 2018, approximately 70% of older people lived in under-occupied houses/accommodations (Eurostat, 2020b). Moreover, over 60% of older people did not have any outstanding mortgage or housing loans which indicates more financial independency and flexibility. The under-occupied housing situation may provide an opportunity to the housing market, however precautionous planning and strategy should be completed before any actions that are taken. In 2019, close to 25% of the EU tourism population were made by older people, which is the highest percentage of tourism population across European Union (Eurostat, 2021b).

In 2021, the reported healthy life years for females who were at 65 years or over in Slovenia was 11 years and for males who were in the same age group the healthy life years was 10 years (Eurostat, 2021). The data shows that over 70% of older people reported that they

consume fresh fruits and vegetables daily and slightly over 5% of the older people reported that they smoke daily. Moreover, in 2021, 44% of older people who aged between 71 and 84 years took daily trips by non-driving options, such as walking and cycling (Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, 2023). Over 70% of older people in Slovenia have cleared their mortgage or housing loans for the dwelling they currently live. In 2019, the percentage of older people in the tourism population was close to 13% which is lower than the EU average level (Eurostat, 2021).

In Spain, the healthy life years for females in the older people group was 10 years and for males that were in the same age group it was approximately 11 years (Eurostat, 2021). Approximately 45% of older people reported that they had a good or very good health status in 2021 (Eurostat, 2023). The relatively high percentage of older people reported a high quality of health status may be a result from a healthy lifestyle. Approximately 90% of older people in Spain consumed fresh fruits daily and 70% of the people in the same age group consume fresh vegetables daily (Eurostat, 2020). Over 60% of people who were aged at 50 years or over reported that they are highly satisfied with their social relations, and over 60% of them reported that they did not experience any loneliness (Silberman-Beltramella et al., 2022). Statistics shows that the older people in Spain also have a relatively high financial independency. Over 80% of older people have no outstanding mortgage or housing loans. The percentage of older people in the tourist population which was close to 15%, was slightly lower than the EU average level.

The healthy life years for older people in Ireland has increased from 11 year to 12 years between 2011 and 2020 (Central Statistics Office, 2022). According to the answers in the Census 2022, over 40% of older people and 36% of very old people have a good or very good self-reported health status (Central Statistics Office, 2023). In 2022, 374,417 older people had no outstanding mortgage or housing loans for the dwellings they live in (Central Statistics Office, 2023). Data shows that the number of older people took overnight trips within the country has increased from 124,500 in 2017 to 268,700 in 2021 (Central Statistics Office, 2022). However, the number of older people taking outbound overnight trips has fallen since 2017, which could be due to the unfamiliarity of foreign environment, such as language and culture.

5.2 REGIONAL ECOSYSTEM

5.2.1 France

In France, life has become longer thanks to progress in science and medicine. In 2022, men live on average up to 79 years old, and women up to 85 years old, compared to 68 and 76 years old in 1970. This means that the French have gained 10 years of life expectancy in 50 years. As of January 1, 2023, 27.4% of the French population was 60 years old or over. However, this increase in life poses financial challenges, such as pensions and health care, requiring the mobilisation of society to find a new balance.

Professionals working with and for elderly have long awaited government commitments and investments to address these challenges. On November 17, French Minister Aurore Bergé presented the “Aging Well” strategy, aimed at anticipating the demographic challenge. The first objective is to adapt public services to simplify procedures for older citizens, support research and innovative projects, and recognize the needs of seniors.

A bill voted on in December 2022 provides for measures to prevent loss of autonomy and isolation of elderly people, improve the reporting of abuse, and better remunerate the work of home carers. This also concerns nursing homes, which accommodate more than 700,000 dependent elderly people. As the population ages, the number of residents will increase, creating a need for 100,000 additional places.

Most people prefer to stay at home rather than go to a nursing home, according to surveys. Various alternative solutions exist, with advantages and disadvantages in terms of availability, prices, and advantages.

Concerning prevention, the WHO suggests monitoring the evolution of the intrinsic capacity of individuals on six functions to allow as many people as possible to age in good health. A sector called Silver Economy was created to meet the needs linked to aging and promote employment. It has had its difficulties, but recent efforts aim to revive it, with state support. 2023 marks the 10th anniversary of silver economy sector, as an organized economic sector.

This sector has contributed to the development of support structures, in particular clusters to create synergies between companies, gerontopoles to promote innovation, and living labs to evaluate products and services before they are placed on the market. These initiatives involve collaboration between companies, start-ups, public authorities, universities and users.

In the Hauts-de-France region, the silver economy ecosystem is characterized by a plethora of actors involved in aging well, with a strong representation of health, social and medico-social professionals. For example, there are more than 500 home help structures and nearly 600 EHPADs (care homes). Demand is very strong with the aging of the population, waiting lists for EHPADs are often very long.

At the same time, we are witnessing the development of numerous projects offering an alternative to individual housing and care facilities: grouped housing (for example the Octave project supported by the MEL), shared housing (Un Toit à Partager project, Ama shared houses). Vitae...) etc.

Numerous collective actions are also developing in favour of preventing loss of autonomy and fighting against isolation. For example, at the beginning of 2017, the retirement insurance funds of Hauts de France created the social and medico-social cooperation group (GCSMS): "Senior Autonomy Challenge", which offers the organization of collective prevention actions at destination people over 60 years old and carries out a social engineering mission in public health, aiming to change the behaviour of seniors and forms of collective intervention. The associative network fighting against isolation is also well developed, with organizations such as Les Petits Frères des Pauvres.

In Hauts de France, it is estimated that 310,000 people help a family member aged 60 or over, at home, with the tasks of daily life. The support and respite platforms for caregivers welcome caregivers of people over 60 years of age with loss of autonomy, cognitive and/or functional, as well as caregivers of people suffering from neurodegenerative diseases (Alzheimer's and related diseases, Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis) without age limit. Today, in the Hauts-de-France region, we are fortunate to have 47 structures dedicated solely to supporting caregivers. Those organizations aim to meet the needs for information and training, the needs for social relations, the need for psychological support and the need for respite of caregivers to help them support their loved ones over time. without getting exhausted.

As for start-ups and businesses, there are 200 in silver health, which represents 10,000 jobs.

Eurasenior is the leading silver economy incubator in Europe. Created in Arras in 2021, it aims to support innovative projects in favour of healthy aging. Since its creation, 55 start-ups and projects have been supported. The projects supported are of all types (telemedicine, home automation, etc.) with a preponderance of projects relating to housing. However, there is a lack of innovative projects in the fields of nutrition and mobility.

To evaluate their solutions, project leaders and start-ups in the region can benefit from various testing locations and showrooms:

- ▶ **Label'Age in Valenciennes:** Living lab of the hospital center, Label-Âge allows you to meet seniors and listen to their problems. Using tools for group work and innovation, professionals define the subjects on which to work and collectively (residents, elderly people, doctors, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, social workers, associations, etc.) solutions are created, responding to the problem.
- ▶ **HIPA in Marles-les-Mines and Harnes:** HIPA showrooms are spaces exhibiting technical and home automation aids for aging well
- ▶ **AgeingFit,** 1st European business convention dedicated to innovation in the silver economy

Local authorities, particularly departments, finance collective actions to prevent the isolation of partners in the field. However, they do not have a policy for financing innovation. The region, for its part, financially supports Eurasanté (and therefore its incubator Eurasenior) and project leaders via the Regional Innovation Fund (FRI).

Pension funds can also give a boost to projects that fall within their priority objectives and themes. In addition, Carsat and its partners - Banque des Territoires (Groupe Caisse des Dépôts), MSA, Agirc-Arrco and France Active - jointly launched VIVA Lab in 2019. This hub aims to identify and support innovation in the field of prevention and active and healthy aging.

Some training players are also very active in the field of the silver economy.:

- ▶ **The "Autonomy Longevity Health" Careers and Qualifications Campus:** professional network which aims to strengthen collaboration between high schools, universities, vocational training centres, research laboratories, companies and associations in the sector and local authorities.
- ▶ **The University of Artois,** including a DU in Gerontology and a DU in Entrepreneurship in Silver Economy co-developed with the Eurasenior incubator.

Numerous research projects are also underway in the region:

- ▶ **PREMOB** - clinical investigation network dedicated to research into the prevention of loss of mobility and falls in the elderly.
- ▶ **The Vulnerage Chair run by the University of Lille:** it focuses on issues linked to the vulnerability and fragility of elderly people, experienced in the context of illness and care. This research program conducted at the University of Lille evaluates public

health policies and current care practices by confronting them with the varied, complex and multiple life experiences of older people. The ambition of the collective of researchers, from several research units in health and human and social sciences, is to make a contribution to demographic and social developments, by building a new paradigm of care adapted to the elderly population.

- ▶ **The Pr'Agi'Lab program:** Pr'Agi'Lab, created by Carsat Hauts-de-France (pension fund) is a coordinated program of collective reflection and innovation around the prevention and identification of (pre)fragility among seniors in Hauts-de-France, which aims for a more effective aging prevention policy in our regional territory.

However, despite this diversity of actors and projects, collaboration is often limited, with “silo” effect. For example, some establishments are reluctant to open their doors to experiment with innovative products and/or services. This may be due to a lack of time, human resources, or even the desire to protect fragile elderly people.

To respond to these difficulties, the creation of a gerontopole in the region underlines a strategic desire to concentrate skills and resources to promote innovation in health and healthy aging.

Since 2007, creation of gerontopoles in France under the leadership of local/regional actors uniting to increase their capacity for action in the face of population aging.

These gerontopoles bring together 5 communities of actors working in the fields of:

- ▶ the care and support of the elderly person,
- ▶ research on aging,
- ▶ businesses
- ▶ training and higher education on these themes in the areas of social support, prevention and preservation of autonomy
- ▶ public policies, represented by territorial institutions and local authorities

Their mission is to encourage the emergence of projects, but also to coordinate actions and initiatives in the fields of territorial development, research, economy and training. For example:

- ▶ Support for public policies, with initiatives such as the mobilization of the G rontopole Pays de la Loire to establish a falls prevention plan alongside the ARS

- ▶ Work on the attractiveness of professions in this sector, following the example of the G rontop le Nouvelle Aquitaine which conducts various actions to promote professions in personal services (meetings, seminars, etc.)
- ▶ Support for start-ups and silver economy companies in the development of their innovations thanks to a support offer in evaluation and experimentation: animation of a living lab by the G rontop le Normandie

The expected benefits of the creation of the gerontopole created on July 7, 2023 are as follows:

- ▶ The creation of a privileged framework allowing the emergence of new shared projects in the field of prevention and maintaining the autonomy of elderly people, by bringing together the essential fields of research, training, silver economics and prevention and care.
- ▶ The opportunity to connect with other French gerontopoles in order to share our work and collaborate on common issues and have a greater impact on these subjects internationally.
- ▶ The possibility of applying for national calls for projects (CNSA type) to benefit from national funds allowing the deployment of large-scale projects favourable to the development of the Hauts-de-France region and for the benefit of its population.
- ▶ Better coordination of actors in this territory which abounds with initiatives in the fields of territorial development, research, economy and training in the field of aging, making it possible to give greater scope to already existing actions.

5.2.2 Slovenia

The dynamics of aging in Slovenia is above EU average, illustrated very clearly through the demographic forecast of the share of seniors above 65 years in the country: from 18.4% in 2016, it is expected to reach 24.8% in 2030, and even 29.5% in 2060.

The government Office for Macroeconomic Research, UMAR, has prepared in 2016 an analysis on demographic changes and their economic and social consequences. The key economic impact of this intensive aging is the drastic reduction of the ratio between active and retired citizens: this has gone down over the last 20 years from 2.5 vs. 1 to 1.5 vs.1 – while the EU average is still 2 vs.1. Consequently, the share of pensions, health care, and elderly care in Slovenian GDP - in 2013 being 18.9% (with pensions 11,1%) – is forecasted to grow by 2060 to 25.0% (with pensions to 15.3%).

In order to respond to these challenges, the Government has adopted the "Healthy Aging Strategy", which defines the basic approaches for necessary changes. It opens new development prospects, and a fresh paradigm being able to respond to the new demographic situation – following the Madrid Political Declaration and International Plan of Action on Aging (2002 – and being established at the first UN Assembly on Aging, Vienna, 1982).

As in many countries, attention to the aging process and issues of the seniors in Slovenia is not only limited to national government, and regional/local authorities, but strongly involves civil society, particularly the representatives of seniors. Seniors represent 40% of all unemployed in Slovenia, which is relatively high, but actually many of those perform some activities, being paid in cash.

Also, in Senior Employment Index, the Slovenian seniors are ranking among EU member states by the 4 criteria the following of the 27 positions:

- 6. Employment 19**
- 7. Participation in society 16**
- 8. Independent healthy living 10**
- 9. Enabling environment 19**

The favourable Slovenian position in independent healthy living is to be understood in view of the explanation from the points point (1) above. Slovenian government deals with seniors through Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs and Ministry for Solidarity Future - with the Directorate for Elderly and Deinstitutionalization – as well as Ministry of Health, which has a Department for Long-term Care.

Otherwise, the National Institute for Public Health is dealing with health and welfare issues of the elderly. An important impetus for Government engagement in the domain was made by the EU co-funded project AHA (2015-2016).

There are 22,000 seniors in Slovenia, receiving some type of care, and from them about 5,000 are being connected to the electronic surveyance system, in order to receive due attention in case of a fall or other emergencies. All this is funded annually at the level of 600 million to 1 bn € from the budget.

Systemic Background

Evaluating the evolution of the Slovenian social and elderly care's systemic background, it has to be stated that – started 30 years ago – when the country left socialist Yugoslavia, elderly care was organized rather favourably. By developing a market economy, this system came

gradually under intense pressure, and important reforms had to be undertaken, bringing elderly in a less privileged position.

In 1997 the Programme of the Development of Elderly Care in the domain of Social Care to year 2005 was adopted, and it introduced gradual shift from institutional to care closer to home environment, introduction of private initiative (through concessions), and introduction of additional programmes of social care.

On that basis the National Active & Healthy Aging Strategy has been prepared and adopted in 2006 covering the period up to 2010. It was subtitled "Solidarity, Coexistence, and quality Aging of Population". It was to be followed by the implementation Action Programmes – to be adopted annually, which did not happen.

The second Slovenian Law on Longterm Care (ZDOsk) was adopted by Parliament on 9 December 2021, and due to change of government became subject of a referendum, having confirmed the current Government's proposal to introduce some changes into a revised law to be adopted early next year. The basic principle is that all citizens having valid public health insurance are also entitled to long-term care services. While this is expectedly enjoying public support, the Government claims that funding this requires some further clarifications still to be elaborated.

Faced with the need to reform the system inherited from socialist Yugoslavia, the Slovenian government has gradually adjusted the health and elderly care systems to the conditions of a market economy. Contrary to several countries going through the same experience, Slovenia managed to keep all citizens covered by the public or primary health insurance (since 2008 actually at 100% level – contrary to Poland with 26%, Czech rep. with 60%, and Greece with 36% of population). On the other hand, the average level of pensions is rather low, and many pensioners are living under strong financial pressure. Currently, pensioners are getting politically organized and are requesting the government to modernize the whole employment, social & medical care, and the system of pensions.

It is also important to refer to the contribution of youth organisations to strengthening inter-generational collaboration. In 2017 the 4 leading youth organisations have adopted an ambitious Agreement on Inter-generational Collaboration and created an Inter-Generational Coalition of Slovenia.

Solidarity and voluntarism play a crucial role in Slovenian society in urban and rural areas, being supported by intergenerational collaboration (Simbioza, Sopotniki cases), intragenerational (elderly for elderly movement), and big hearts of Slovenian people.

On the 26th of June 2023 the Government has sent to the Parliament a new Law on Long-term Care, which is to be adopted before the end of the year and will be gradually implemented in the next three years. According to Minister for Solidarity Future, the law is addressing the issues of long-term care in a comprehensive and innovative way – benefitting all seniors, irrespective of their health and residence.

The key principle is, that all seniors are entitled to care services, which are accessible through Centres for social care, and that funding of the system is shared among all concerned. This means that – besides the budget – employers, as well as beneficiaries are going to contribute employers 1% of respective gross salary, and the employee, as well as the pensioners each 1% of their salary/pension. On this basis every senior will be entitled to care services (living in a care home, or in his/her own home).

This is only an amendment to the law adopted a year ago, the only difference introduced now is extending the implementation timing for a year.

Institutional care and opportunities for silver economy

In Slovenia there are around 22,000 places available in nursing homes. The basic mission of the homes is to provide institutional care for the elderly. Institutional care for the elderly is aimed at eliminating the personal hardships and problems of people over 65 and other people who cannot live at home due to illness, age or other reasons. Homes thus replace or supplement the functions of the home and one's own family by offering accommodation, organized meals, care and health care in 59 public institutions and 44 operators with a concession. Of this, in:

- ▶ 13,500 places in public homes for the elderly,
- ▶ 6,000 places in private homes for the elderly,
- ▶ 2,400 places in special institutions for adults.

With the number of elderly (65+) exceeding 440.000, institutional care presents approximately 5% capacities. Considering that another 5% older people needs care at their homes, we are encountering more than 80% citizens participating actively in silver economy.

Even in a small size country like Slovenia these numbers show the enormous potential for development of silver economy: new services, innovative programs in entrepreneurship, lifelong learning, tourism, adapted sports and recreational activities.

5.2.3 Spain

Spain is a country in southwestern Europe, a peninsula surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean on the left side, the Cantabric Sea in the northern part of the country and Mediterranean Sea in the west. It is neighbored by Portugal to the southwest, Andorra and France to the northeast, organized into 17 autonomous communities and two cities with autonomous status (Ceuta and Melilla). Each of them has its own provinces, with a total of 50 throughout the country. In turn, each province is divided into municipalities, with a total of 8,131. The autonomous community chosen for this project is Galicia, which is divided into four provinces as follows:

- ▶ Coruña (93 municipalities)
- ▶ Lugo (67 municipalities)
- ▶ Ourense (92 municipalities)
- ▶ Pontevedra (61 municipalities)

The current population (National Statistics Institute, 2023) in Spain is 48,345,223 people, with an employment rate of 51.07% (24,689,905), as of the 1st of July 2023. Specifically, in the autonomous community of Galicia the current population is 2,690,424 (Galician Statistics Institute, 2022), with an employment rate of 48.1% (2023). Galicia is the second autonomous community in Spain with the highest aging index, being 214.36% in 2022, where the population aged 65 and over occupies 24.93%. The aging index in each province is as follows: Coruña (161.14%), Lugo (220.05%), Ourense (241.26%) and Pontevedra (140.65%). There are three universities divided into different campuses spread along different provinces of Galicia: The University of Vigo located in the cities of Ourense, Pontevedra and Vigo; the University of Santiago located in the cities of Lugo and Santiago and, finally, the University of Coruña located in the cities of Ferrol and Coruña.

The aging of the population is one of the great trends in the world that we have had to live. Faced with the catastrophic visions that linked this demographic change to all kinds of negative consequences. In recent years, the approach that values opportunities have gained weight. With more older adults' people in the world than ever before and with better health, the economy can be boosted.

Seniors as consumers, but also seniors as producers feed aggregate demand and allow new companies to emerge with new goods and services for that age cohort. The concept of silver economy, due to the colour of the elderly's grey hair, brings together the above. In fact, it has managed to quantify the impact of grey hair on one in every four euros of European wealth and, in Spain, on 26% of GDP and 60% of all national consumption.

The insurance company, MAPFRE, established in 2016, the *Ageingnomics Research Center* that promoted in 2021 a report and a ranking of Spanish territories by the senior economy 2021, prepared to be a useful tool for the Spanish autonomous communities that, as is known, manage a large part of public policies.

There were 24 indicators, branching from six main lines (demographic, employment and opportunities, social engagement, pensions, public spaces and infrastructures, care and health services), that were analysed and which provide a very plural view of how friendly people are in the different territories with the elderly. It allowed establishing a solid base with which in the future can measure its progress and evolution over time in order to achieve the best objective conditions for this age group.

They are not only representative of the situation of each of the independent Spanish territories, but also reflect aspects on which institutions and society as a whole have the capacity to influence and improve. Asturias, Castilla y León and Galicia are the territories with the most elderly people.

The Balearic Islands, Navarra and Galicia have the highest life expectancy. La Rioja, Castilla y León and the Basque Country have the highest healthy life expectancy. Galicians, Balearic Islands and Basques aged 65 and over are the ones with the greatest life expectancy too.

Madrid, the Balearic Islands and Murcia lead the classification in the activity rate of the elderly while Castilla y León, Asturias and Cantabria lead regarding occupation rate of the seniors. Regarding senior unemployment the best data are from the Basque Country, the Foral Community of Navarra and La Rioja. The territories with the most self-employed seniors are Catalonia, Madrid and Andalusia.

Castilla y León, Navarra and Murcia are the communities that have the most senior deputies in their parliaments. While Aragon, the Basque Country and the Community of Valencia lead for the most councillors over 55 years old, in their governments. For city halls headed by seniors, the best data leads us to the Valencian Community, Asturias and Galicia. And the greatest number of possible senior voters are in Andalusia, Catalonia and Madrid.

The best community in senior centres is La Rioja along with Navarra and the Balearic Islands. Regarding day centres, Extremadura, Catalonia and Navarra lead. The residential centres are led by Extremadura, Castilla y León and Aragón. The greatest coverage of housing for the elderly is in the Basque Country, Castilla-La Mancha and Galicia.

Spain is in a position to lead a global strategy so that life extension represents an economic opportunity through new products and services for the elderly. We have the highest life expectancy in the world next to Japan; a culture of openness thanks to tourism and an entrepreneurial spirit that we have demonstrated throughout our history. And as the ranking of territories by the senior economy 2021 shows, we have a plurality of well-positioned autonomous territories.

5.2.4 Ireland

In Ireland, the population status of older people is changing with a noticeable speed. According to Census 2016, the number of older people has risen by 19% in 2016 (Central Statistics Office, 2017). In 2015, the projected number of older people will reach to 1.29 million and the estimated number of very old people will reach to 304,900 in the same year (Central Statistics Office, 2020). According to the information from Central Statistics Office, the national statistics office of Ireland, 75% of people that were age between 55 years and 69 years reported that they have pension coverage which includes personal pension, state social welfare pension and other types of pension scheme (Central Statistics Office, 2022). The median equivalised nominal disposable income of the age group between 65 years and over did not have any significant change in the past three years which stays in the range between €20,000 and €23,000 (Central Statistics Office, 2023). The median nominal disposable income is approximately €7,000 lower than the one for the people who were age between 18 and 34 years.

In the ecosystem in Ireland, the stakeholder groups that are acting as the pillars could be categories into the five categories below.

- ▶ Academia
- ▶ Civil society and end-user organisations
- ▶ Industries and other professionals
- ▶ Public authorities and policy makers
- ▶ Other innovation actors

These stakeholder groups were also the main target audience groups for the SWOT survey. The industrial sectors that these stakeholders represent not only covers the sectors that are generally associated with older people and very old people, such as healthcare, and related supports and family care and physical activity and rehabilitation, but also covers the emerging industries in the silver economy, such as research and education, business consultancy and training, digital and technological solutions, social housing, and travel and tourism. The

stakeholders that are from governance and planning, and those who work closely with local government, non-government organisations (NGOs).

48 stakeholders from varied sectors and background registered to be included in the interconnected and inclusive map of silver economy. A full list of active stakeholders is available to view in the mapping sector on the website at: <https://www.senior-eco-nect.com/interactive-mapping/>

These stakeholders offer diverse types of supports and solutions to the challenges that an increasing ageing population and the extended community and society are facing and will face in the near future. The stakeholders from the academia field offers silver economy and silver ecosystems-focused entrepreneurship research and research-based support. Moreover, the academia stakeholders also provide a wide range and variety of continuing professional development (CPD), educational and training programmes to promote lifelong learning and encourage intergeneration connections. The assistance and solutions that academic stakeholders offer may not be noticeable all the time, however, they continuous supply the energy and fuel to a sustained development of silver economy.

In Ireland, universities, colleges, and research institutions have started to connect and collaborate to contribute to a dynamic silver economy. Dublin City University (DCU), Munster Technology University (MTU), Trinity College Dublin, University of Galway, University College Cork (UCC), University College Dublin (UCD), University of Medicine and Health Sciences (RCSI) have adopted the concepts and principles of age-friendly university and became part of the global age-friendly university network (Trinity College Dublin, 2022; Dublin City University, 2023; Munster Technological University, no date; University College Cork, no date; University College Dublin, no date; University of Galway, no date; University of Medicine and Health Sciences, no date). Moreover, University of Limerick has an Ageing Research Centre (ARC) which is focusing on conducting research in the old people-related sectors (University of Limerick, 2020). Maynooth University also has close strategic partnership with Age Friendly Ireland, a national organisation that is responsible for the national Age Friendly Programme in Ireland, that aims to extend the current research network and create opportunities for collaborations and learnings on older people and the related areas (Age Friendly Ireland, no date).

The stakeholders from the civil society and end-user organisations provide down-to-earth community-based and other related support to the older people directly. The support they provide covers family care, physical and mental health maintenance and improvement, and

social services. The services and support currently have also extended to education which includes digital and technology training for older people and senior enterprises, housing, and transportation. It may be worth to mention that charities and volunteers and the ongoing services and supports they provide to the local community are indispensable to the robust and interconnected ecosystem.

Charities, non-government organisations, and non-profit organisations play a significant role in the silver economy. ALONE is a national charity organisation that offering supports to older people to age at home without sacrificing the quality of life. In 2022, ALONE supported 22,300 older people, and among them 4,566 older people received support with technology ([ALONE, 2023](#)). It also made 50 collaborations with other organisations to enhance and widen the existing network. ALONE also increased their reach on social media and other platforms in 2022 and promoted the needs of older people and the importance of improve the wellbeing of older people.

Age Friendly Ireland continuously encourages and supports businesses to explore the needs of older people and deliver the products and services in a more age-friendly approach ([Age Friendly Ireland, 2023](#)). They have constructed a comprehensive toolkit to businesses that are interested in practicing the concepts and principles of age friendly. Age Friendly Ireland also work on providing affordable and accessible transportation options to older people to encourage them to maintain the connection with a wider society.

Both ALONE and Age Friendly Ireland and their practices are included in the section 5.6.4 Good Practice Cases in Ireland.

Industries and other professionals, such as SMEs and large enterprises, are dedicated to providing solutions, products, and services that could fulfil the needs of older people and very old people. The industrial sectors that are active on the mapping in Ireland cover health and care, tourism and hospitality, SMART and technology, sports and exercise, and business consultancies which enables further innovation and capacity building via designed trainings and consultancy services. The varied products and services aim to maintain and improve the wellbeing of older people and encourage them to remain active in the communities and in the wider society. Moreover, these industrial professionals and their business activities would also create job opportunities directly and indirectly in the silver economy and the related markets. The economic multiplier effect that is generated from the businesses activities is significant to a sustained growth of the silver economy.

Enterprises, including social enterprises from different sectors in Ireland actively contribute to develop an inclusive and sustainable silver economy. Beyond the Trees Avondale, established in 2022, is the first officially recognised age friendly tourism destination in Ireland ([Age Friendly Ireland, 2022](#)). It was also the first good practice model of age friendly tourism destination that is included in the good practice model collections of World Health Organisation.

THE HomeShare, a non-profit social enterprise, which bridges homeowners and home-sharers via finding the suitable match for both parties and providing follow-up evaluation and consultation ([THE HomeShare, 2020](#)). THE HomeShare received the Excellence in Public Sector Homecare Services Support Award, and Republic of Ireland Prestige Awards in 2021 ([THE HomeShare, 2021](#)).

The practices of Beyond the Trees Avondale and THE HomeShare are available to view in the section 5.6.4 Good Practice Cases in Ireland.

Moreover, large enterprises and SMEs have started their practices of age friendly at the national and regional level. Vodafone, a telecommunication company, launched a five-year digital skill learning programme, “Hi Digital”, with a €2 million investment in 2021 ([Vodafone, 2021](#)). ALONE and Active Retirement Ireland, two charities that focus on older people and their wellbeing, are the strategy charity partners for the programme. The programme aims to impact over 230,000 older people directly to increase older people’s digital literacy levels. Bank of Ireland has formed a senior advice team to answer and satisfy the needs of older people and provide customised solutions to their queries ([Bank of Ireland, no date](#)). Solicitors for the Elderly (SFE) Ireland, an independent national association of solicitors and barristers, aims to deliver professional and specialised legal services to older people and vulnerable people, and the people in the extended network around them ([Solicitors for the Elderly Ireland, no date](#)). Many businesses in Ireland have started their exclusive journey of silver economy. Even though it is not possible to include all of them and their practices in the strategy report, their great and significant contribution are undeniable.

Policy makers and the supporting public authorities, a stakeholder group that is significant to make strategic decisions which would influence the aggregate supply and demand in the silver economy. They are responsible for designing and implementing strategies and policies, and providing resources, such as funding and other types of financial support, to other stakeholders in the ecosystem. The policy makers and the supporting public authorities from health and care, housing, cultural and other sectors have registered to be shown on the interconnection map for developing a robust, inclusive, and collaborative silver economy which shows that the

policy makers are willing to fulfil the commitment to boost the silver economy development at the regional and the national level. The services that the public authorities offer to the older people and to the wider public includes health related services, such as promotion and protection of human rights, health and wellbeing, and daily phone call services, and non-health related services, such as library home services, age action IT courses, and open-source publications. These services aim to contribute to the improvement on the wellbeing of the older people, not only their physical and mental health, but also their social and learning needs.

In Ireland, the national government has published the “Lifelong Learning Strategy” in 2000 ([European Commission, 2022](#)). It emphasises and reflects the role of education in the ecosystem and construct the policies and strategies to develop and provide lifelong learning methods. Together with this strategy, the programmes, such as National Adult Literacy Programme, Back to Education Initiative and the Adult Education Guidance Initiative, working conjunctively and simultaneously to promote the lifelong learning in the society. The number of adults that are involved and participate in education and training programmes has increased significantly which resulted from the “Lifelong Learning Strategy” and the programmes that are named above. In 2022, 48,500 people who were aged between 55 and 64 years were participate in education or training programmes ([Skills and Labour Market Research Unit, 2023](#)). This number has increased by 4,900 people, compared to the level in 2021. Through this example, it is clear to see how the policy makers’ decision and the orientation of the future strategy affects the related sectors significantly.

Moreover, government also launched the programme, Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programme, in 2021, to respond to the policy “Housing Options for Our Ageing Population” ([Department of Health and Age Friendly Ireland, 2022](#)). Stakeholders from policy maker and public authority sectors and other sectors, Sláintecare, Age Friendly Ireland and local coordinators across nine local authority regions collaborated together on the programme operation. The programme aims to enhance care at home and ageing in place. Phase 1 of the programme has completed in 2022 and over 900 home visits were delivered and over 2,000 older people benefited from the provided supports. A detailed explanation of the “Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programme” is included in the section 5.6.4 Good Practice Cases in Ireland.

Some other stakeholders who are not categorised in any of the groups that were discussed earlier, also provide their important support to the regional and national silver economy development. These stakeholders offer their expertise and services which focus on specific areas, such as on the education, advocacy and information in the field of Dementia which is delivered via regular meetings at the community level, and on technology and digital skills

which is delivered through bespoke training programmes. These stakeholders also include charities or non-profit organisations (NPOs) that target on a wider audience group rather than only older people. Even though older people may not be the only audience group they focus on, older people benefit from the services and support they provide continuously.

Central Statistics Office, the national statistics office conducted the “Older Persons Information Hub” to present and display the data that is related to older people and the related sectors, such as socio-economic status, wellbeing, and needs ([Central Statistics Office, 2023](#)). It provides indirect support to other stakeholders who are interested in exploring the untapped potential of silver economy and conducting research in the related areas. A detailed explanation is available to view in section 5.6.4 Good Practice Cases in Ireland.

5.3 MARKET OVERVIEW

In this section, an overview of perceived opportunities and challenges which is made on the foundation of the SWOT Composite Report will be presented. The analysis on the opportunities and challenges is based on the feedback from five categories of stakeholders across different sectors and regions. The commonality in their answers may shed a light on the essential supports that are needed and the concerns from the stakeholders on the future development of the silver economy.

5.3.1 Opportunities

According to the responses that are collected via SWOT survey, it is widely accepted by the respondents that strong performance in industrial sectors would bring more opportunities to develop a strong and inclusive silver economy (Robinson and Xiong, 2023). The stable and sustained growth in the tourism and hospitality industry has been seen as one of the pillar industries for future silver economy development. Different from health and care industry which focuses on the essential needs of older people, tourism and hospitality industry focuses on the entertainment needs of older people. A strong performance in tourism and hospitality industry in the silver market would also boost the demand on accommodations, food and beverage, arts and culture and other related sectors. It does not isolate operate in the market. On the opposite, it closely interconnected and collaborated in formal and informal ways with the other industrial sectors, policy makers and end-user groups. Around half of respondents from Spain, one of the member states that has a relatively stronger performance on tourism and hospitality industry, strongly believed the opportunities for further development in silver economy.

Health and care sector, as the sector that provides goods and services to satisfy the essential needs from the older people in order to maintain and improve their health level and wellbeing, and prolong their life, is another industrial sector that perceived to be able to bring more opportunities to develop a robust silver economy (Robinson and Xiong, 2023). Similar with tourism and hospitality industry, health and care industry are also closely connected with other sectors, such as food and nutrition, physical exercises, pharmacy, and related technology development. The promotion and application of preventive care, curative care, care at home and care closer to home, not only could maintain and improve both the physical and mental health level of older people, but also will encourage and support older people to stay connected with the local communities and participate in social activities. The increasing demand on the services from the health and care industry would create significant amount of job opportunities and attract more stakeholders to connect and to engage in the silver economy.

It is also reported in the SWOT composite report, an increasing effective and collaborative connections and cooperation would benefit an inclusive and interconnected silver economy (Robinson and Xiong, 2023). Effective and collaborative networking, connections, and cooperation cross different sectors, especially among government, academic and research, and industrial sectors, would establish a stable silver triangle that could accelerate the development of silver economy. It also allows end-users and related civil organisations and institutions to benefit from the collaborations directly and indirectly. It would also promote active ageing, healthy ageing and lifelong learning in a wider society. Job opportunities creation is one of the benefits that is noticeable influenced by the collaborations. The communication and collaboration would also accelerate knowledge and experience exchange between sectors. services providers in the health and care sectors, and in the non-health and care sectors could share their information and knowledge on their understanding of the needs of older people and the solutions they have for certain problems. It is strongly accepted by the respondents that a stable and effective connection, cooperation and collaboration between sectors would benefit the silver economy development in the long run.

Government supports and policies could also fuel a sustainable silver economy development in the long run (Robinson and Xiong, 2023). The supports and policies from the local and central government level would influence on the funding availability and accessibility, and the allocation and distribution of non-financial resources. The urge of funding and other policies support in the industrial sectors and academic and research sectors to respond to the growing and diverse needs of older people is flagged in the report. In order to develop a thriving silver economy, it is necessary and indispensable to have supports and ageing population-orientated policies to direct and guide enterprises, especially the start-up enterprises and SMEs, along the journey.

Last but not least, it is perceived that the changes on existed perspectives, perceptions, interests and expectations are necessary to the future robust and inclusive development of the silver economy not only at the regional and national level, but also at the European level (Robinson and Xiong, 2023). Biased existed perceptions and expectations may blindfold the stakeholders in different groups and neglect the untapped potential in the silver market. They may also have no interest and incentives to learn, to explore and to develop any technology, products or services to satisfy the needs of older people. The changes on the attitude will result in a change on the interests and expectations. It may make the benefits of a sustainable and interconnected silver economy more visible to the stakeholder so that more of them are

willing to participate in. It is reported that more opportunities would be explored and created with a changing perception and expectation.

5.3.2 Challenges

The responses from the SWOT survey would also shed light on the possible challenges that may encounter when develop a robust and inclusive silver economy.

Lack of support and facilities were reported that would pose significant challenges to an interconnected and sustainable silver economy (Robinson and Xiong, 2023). Based on the SWOT composite report, lack of policy supports which includes the availability and accessibility of both financial and non-financial resources, would become a significant challenge which may become an obstacle to develop a strong silver economy. Inefficient bureaucracy and lack of official recognition on the importance of silver economy, and the related businesses and markets, could demotivate the stakeholder groups, such as industrial professionals, SMEs, academic and research groups and any other innovation actors. A long-term absence of sufficient recourse and supports provision would cause these key stakeholder groups shift their attention to other areas which would worsen the situation of silver economy development. Moreover, underdeveloped or insufficient provision of infrastructure, especially silver economy related infrastructure, lack of synergetic strategy and planning, and absence of strong leadership would also become significant challenges that poses in front of all the stakeholders when we are dedicated to developing an inclusive and interconnected silver economy.

Another challenge comes from a lack of connections and collaborations between sectors (Robinson and Xiong, 2023). The reason that this factor would become a crucial challenge is that it would restrict the synergy between sectors and between stakeholder groups. Moreover, it may deepen the misallocation on resources which would cause a slowing down or stagnation of silver economy development. Moreover, the uneven connections, communications and collaboration between rural and urban areas also challenge the inclusiveness and interconnectivity of the silver economy at both regional and national level.

Digital divide, technology gap, the names may be different, however, they all indicate one challenge the society is facing and would possibly continue to face in the future, a gap of knowledge and skills between generations (Robinson and Xiong, 2023). It would be biased to conclude that all the older people are unfamiliar with technology and digital devices. However, it is safe to say that there are a significant number of older people and very old people may experience difficulties when using modern technology and digital devices. It would be difficult

to develop an inclusive silver economy when a noticeable proportion of older people are excluded from the communication due to technological barriers.

In the end, a lack of focus, commitment and interests would also make developing an inclusive, interconnected and sustainable silver economy very challenging (Robinson and Xiong, 2023). Lack of focus and interest, which might be a result from lack of awareness would cause insufficient resources allocation in the silver economy related sectors and markets. Lack of commitment from the stakeholders would obstruct a sustained growth in the silver economy.

The stakeholders from five main groups shared their valuable insights and options on the opportunities and challenges that develop a robust, and inclusive silver economy overall that may face. In the sections of *Opportunities Analysis*, and *Challenges Analysis*, an analysis at the selected member state level and the corresponding reflection at the European level will be presented.

5.4 MARKET OUTLOOK

The understanding of silver economy is that it includes broad areas of economic activities to satisfy the growing and diverse needs and wants of older people (Varnai *et al.*, 2018). Public and private goods and services from varied sectors, that may not have been originally designed for older people, now have new functions to serve due to rapid changes in the market. The needs for public spending and government expenditure, provision of facilities and infrastructure, allocation of necessary resources are also considered to be an essential component to develop a robust silver economy. The direct and indirect income and economic benefits that are generated from the silver economy and the related markets are considerable. Research shows that in 2015 the total direct expenditure from older people for goods and services consumption reached to €3.7 trillion (Varnai *et al.*, 2018). In total the silver economy generated over €4.3 trillion at the EU level and created 78 million jobs in European Union area. The direct and indirect impacts, and the multiplier effect from the silver economy ecosystem and the related markets have made significant contribution to the overall economy.

In this section, an outlook and projection of the silver economy and related sectors will be presented. The market outlook and estimation are aligned to the reports and publications that are published by European Commission, World Health Organisation, United Nations and other public authorities (Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, 2023; United Nations, 2023; World Health Organization, 2023c), and other relevant public releases and publications.

5.4.1 Ageing Population Estimation

As mentioned in the Section 5.1 Summary of Market Study, the upward trajectory of an ageing population is unavoidable overall. The rapid increasing on the ageing population may result from longer living of the overall population. In EU, the average life expectancy has increased by over 15 years between 1960 and 2021 (Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, 2023). In 2021, the life expectancy has increased to approximately 79 years for males and to 84 years for females which indicate a rapid increasing on the life expectancy. The projected life expectancy at birth for males will increase to 83 years by 2050 and increase to 86 years by 2070, which indicates an approximately 8 years increasing from the level of life expectancy at birth in 2021 (Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, 2023). The projected life expectancy at birth for females will rise to 88 years in 2050 and to 90 years in 2070. An approximately 6 years increasing is projected on the growth of life expectancy at birth for females between 2021 and 2070.

Life expectancy at 65 is expected to increase for both males and females (Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, 2023). For males, it is projected that the life expectancy at 65 will rise close to 22 years by 2050 and to almost 24 years by 2070. For females, the estimation shows that the life expectancy at 65 will increase to close to 25 years by 2050 and close to 27 years by 2070. The projection indicates that an increasing of approximately 5 years on the life expectancy at 65 would be observed in both groups.

At the EU level, the estimation shows that the growth on the population is limited which may be due to the volatility character of migration, climate change and other factors in the domestic and external environment. The projected peak of the population will reach to 453 million people in 2026, then the population is estimated to start to show signs of shrinking thereafter (Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, 2023). By 2070, the population is projected to fall by 4% to below 432 million. It is worth to draw attention to the age composition of the population. The percentage of people who are in the age groups above 65 years is estimated to rise to 30% by 2070 at the EU level. The percentage of people aged 80 years and above would increase to 13% of the overall population. However, the age group between 0 and 19 years and the working age group (20 and 64 years) both are estimated to have a shrinking in the next 50 years. The percentage of the former one in the overall population will fall from 20% in 2022 to 18% to 2070. The percentage of the latter one in the overall population will decrease from 59% to 52% in the same projection horizon.

Based on the estimation, the peaks of the population pyramid at the EU level will shift upward. The largest age group will shift from age group between 50 and 54 years in 2022 to age group between 60 and 64 years by 2070. The median age is also estimated to increase from approximately 45 years to 49 years in the same projection horizon.

Moreover, the estimation on the old-age dependency ratio shows that there would be a 23% increasing on the ratio between 2022 and 2070 (Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, 2023). The old-age dependency ratio will reach to approximately 53% by 2045 and will increase to 59% by 2070. The estimation also shows that very old-age dependency ratio will increase by almost 15% in the same projection horizon to 25% by 2070.

The rapid increasing on the ageing population and the significant upward shift of the population pyramid (Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, 2023) indicates an urgent need for sustainably develop the silver economy by applying inclusive and interconnected approaches.

5.4.2 Older People in Labour Market

Between 2020 and 2021, the labour force participation rate for primary-age group (between 25 and 54 years) is increasing slowly from 83% to 86% in EU (Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, 2023). The labour force participation rate for older group (between 55 and 64 years) has increased from 38% in 2000 to 64% in 2021. However, the participation rate for the young group (between 20 and 24 years) has dropped from 64% to 60% during the same time period. The changes on the composition of the labour market may result from the notable change on the population structure and the rapid growth of an ageing population.

The projected labour force participation rate for older group will increase from 65% in 2022 to close to 76% in 2070 (Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, 2023). The estimated labour force participation rate for the people are aged between 65 and 74 years will increase from 9.8% to 18.4% between 2022 and 2070. Most member states in EU have started to investigate or have revised the retirement age in the recent years. The estimation shows that the average statutory retirement age for men will increase from 65.2 years in 2022 to 66.5 years in 2045, and to 67.3 years in 2070. For women, the retirement age will rise from 64.5 years to 66.2 years in 2045 and to 67 years to 2070. Both penalties and bonus would be used as incentives for postponing retirement. The policies on encouraging postponing retirement may be the reason of an estimated increasing on the labour force participation rate for this age group. The projected employment rate for both males and females aged between 55 and 64 years will be increasing by

The changes on the composition of the labour market and of the overall population also result in the change on the size of labour supply. It is estimated that by 2070, the overall labour supply at the EU level will decrease by approximately 12% with a 0.3% average annual declining. The number of males and females in the labour force are projected to shrink by at least 10%.

Another potential challenge that is posed to the same projection horizon is a slowing down GDP growth. The estimated GDP growth rate will be 1.3% between 2022 and 2030. It is expected to fall to 1.2% in the next decade, and then increase to 1.4% between 2041 and 2050. It is estimated to fall to 1.2% in 2050s and decline to 1.1% between 2061 and 2070. The estimated hourly labour productivity growth rate will increase from 1.1% in between 2022 and 2030 to 1.7% in 2040s, then fall to 1.3% in the last decade of the projection horizon which is between 2061 and 2070. The slowing down GDP growth, the declining hourly labour

productivity growth rate, and the shrinking labour supply in the projection horizon indicate a significant challenge that could affect developing a sustainable economy.

5.4.3 Healthy Ageing and Education

Healthy ageing and education are important to develop a robust and sustainable silver economy. Promoting healthy ageing aims to improve the well-being of older people. Healthy ageing not only reflects on the basic indicators on physical and mental health, such as mobility, vision, hearing and psychological quality, but also focuses on older people's ability to learn, to grow, to build and maintain social connections and relationships, and to make contribution to a wider society (World Health Organization, 2021). Healthy ageing also encourages stakeholders from the ecosystem to contribute to it via establishing an ageing friendly environment. It includes providing resources for older people, such as goods, services, policies, technologies, and remove or lower barriers on engagement and participation.

Currently, 37 countries around the world have estimations on at least one functional ability and 36 countries have estimates on two components to intrinsic capacity (World Health Organization, 2021). 31 countries have estimates that cover both areas. Based on the report, majority of older people would prefer "age in place" which means they age at home and/or in their local communities. "Age in place" would encourage the older people to stay connected with the local communities and their existed social network. However, it would also increase the demands on the health and care system. A comprehensive and inclusive system to provide care at home services and care closer to home services would be necessary and essential to make "age in place" possible, available, and accessible.

To foster healthy ageing, long-term care is very important. Global Network on Long-term care (GNLTC) which is established under World Health Organisation provides a multidisciplinary and multi-institutional network of stakeholders in a wider ecosystem. It provides strategic and technical advice to support to achieve healthy ageing overall. It is expected the GNLTC will continue to contribute to achieve healthy ageing and develop a sustainable silver economy. Members states in EU would also benefit from the provide practical assessment tools for assessing functional abilities which would be important to allocate long-term care services and resources. Moreover, the financing mechanisms within GNLTC would also encourage the innovation in the long-term care system. Currently 40 European regions have a policy or strategy regarding to long-term care, or a plan which includes long-term care (World Health Organization, 2023b). 32 European countries have established legislation or regulations for older people to access to World Health Organisation Priority Assistive Products.

In the education sector, stakeholder groups are dedicated to take proactive actions and to make transformative changes to raise the awareness of older people and ensure their voice to be heard. Ageism is still a challenge to an inclusive silver economy. Not only it affects older people, but also it negatively influences younger people, especially in Europe area (World Health Organization, 2023c). Educational activities are essential to transfer and transmit the information, knowledge and skill to transform the understanding, especially the stereotypical understanding of ageing, and to tolerant and to enhance empathy.

Moreover, an inclusive education and related life-long learning programme would encourage older people to stay connected with the communities and society and expand the existing network which is often surrounded by their family and friends. It could also remove certain barriers, such as technology, and assist them in a more efficient way. European Digital Credentials for learning aims to provide supports to individual learners, employers, and education and training institutions (Europass, no date). This "Credential" belongs to one of two initiatives that the European Commission released which aims to support and encourage all adults, including older people to involve in life-long learning (AGE Platform Europe, no date). The European Digital Credentials for learning not only recognise and certify formal qualifications, but also certify non-formal learning activities, such as training sessions organised and/or provided by employers. The formal and non-formal education and training record can be stored securely on Europass (AGE Platform Europe, no date). In order to remove the barriers in education and lifelong learning, more efforts need to be made on remove restrictions that are related to age. Tackling challenges in the education and lifelong learning sector needs long term plan and strategies.

5.5 SECTORAL DEMANDS

The upward trajectory of the ageing population is increasingly noticeable in the last decade. The percentage of older people in the total population in the EU area is at 21% ([Eurostat, 2023](#)). The median age has reached to 44 years in 2022. It is projected that the median age will keep rising the in the following 70 years and reach to close to 49 years by 2100. The rapid growth on the ageing population at the national and EU level poses challenges to different sectors in the silver economy. It also raises the attention on the needs in different sectors. In this section, the needs from both perspectives of providers and consumers in health and care sectors, tourism sectors and education sectors will be discussed.

5.5.1 Health & Care Sector

The fast growth in the silver economy indicates a strong need in the health and care sector. Older people and very old people are more likely facing and experiencing health difficulties and complicated, even long-standing health issues ([Robinson and Xiong, 2023](#)). The growing ageing population brings an increasing demand in the health and care sector. The COVID-19 Pandemic has aggravated the situation. The related public health care expenditure is worth close to 17% of government expenditure in 2019. Moreover, statistics shows that the total expenditure on long-term care is worth 1.5% of GDP in 2017 ([European Commission, 2021](#)). In the same year, the percentage of long-term care expenditure is 15.5% of total health and care expenditure. In 2019, the public long-term care expenditure equals 1.7% of EU total GDP ([Gauret, 2023](#)). Studies show that currently approximately 6 million long-term care workers are actively working in Europe, however the demand shows that another 1.6 million qualified long-term care providers would be needed ([Gauret, 2023](#)). Approximately 40% of the 87% of older people who need long-term care received the care services, the remaining are still waiting for the services. The age group between 75 years and above is facing a comparable situation. Approximately 42% of the 89% people in this age group that needs long-term care received the care services.

An advocate of active ageing and healthy ageing has positively and strongly promoted the ideas, logic, applications and practicality of preventive care, curative care, care at home and care closer to home. Moreover, it may ease the pressure on both health and care sector. Moreover, the policy support in the health and care sectors may also help to increasing the supply on the long-term care providers. European Care Strategy which was launched in 2022 aims to encourage more people to work as care-providers in Europe area via improving working conditions for them ([European Commission, 2022](#)). The European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) provides financial support to the care sector. Bulgaria, Czechia and Lithuania, three countries

under ESF+ Programme have planned to increase investment in the long-term care sector to €323 million, €165 million and €71 million respectively ([European Commission, 2022](#)).

The SWOT composite report also shows the importance and the needs on the health and care sector. Majority of the respondents believed that health and care sector “*has the most potential to be further developed*” in their regions ([Robinson and Xiong, 2023](#)). Moreover, the development in the health and care sector would also accelerate the related industrial sectors, such as nutrition, physical activities and sports. Respondents also believed that these three industries have untapped potential to be further developed in a robust environment of silver economy. It is also worth to highlight that the financial supports such as funding, grants, tax reductions and other non-financial resources, such as labour is perceived to be important to develop health and care sector to contribute to the regional and national silver economy development.

5.5.2 Housing Sector

Housing for older people is a factor that often could be neglected in the public. The reason might be that majority of older people are homeowners. Data shows that close to 61% of older people were homeowners and had paid off mortgage or housing loans and only around 5% of the older people had outstanding mortgage and housing loans when data was collected ([Eurostat, 2020](#)). However, this does not mean that there is no or low needs on housing. Adequate adaptable and accessible housing options are essential needs to older people. The requirement of living changes when the age changes. The age friendly design of housing and dwellings which could prevent accidents happen is necessary. However, there is a lack of awareness and understanding on the adaptable and accessible housing and designs among the architects and designers ([Senior Eco-Nect, 2023](#)). An adaptable and accessible housing should be friendly and welcoming to both residents and visitors, and simultaneously satisfy the diverse needs of residents. With a flexible design, foresighted thinking, and preventive approaches, the housing conditions and living environment would reduce the unnecessary trips and moves of older people who have difficulties and/or disabilities.

The responses in the SWOT composite report also echo the findings on the housing sector ([Robinson and Xiong, 2023](#)). Respondents reported that housing sector has a high level of potential which eager to be further developed. With the rapid changing on the population structure, the needs on accessible and adaptable housing would become more noticeable. It is important for enterprises to seize the opportunities at an early stage.

5.5.3 Tourism Sectors

The Senior Eco-Nect Market Study shows that in 2019 approximately 25% of the EU residents that had overnight trips aged 65 years or above (Robinson and Xiong, 2023). Recreation and leisure and visiting family and friends are the main reasons for older people to travel. 50% of older people travelled for recreation and leisure purpose and 37% of the people aged between 65 years and older travelled for visiting purpose. Less than 5% of the trips were made for professional or business activities. Data shows that 18% of the travel population in Europe area are older people. Considering the collected opinions and insights from the Senior Eco-Nect SWOT analysis, majority of the respondents reported that the tourism and hospitality industry has a strong and outstanding performance in the silver economy and it is expected to bring more opportunities to the regional silver economy ecosystem (Robinson and Xiong, 2023). Both the Senior Eco-Nect Market Study and the Senior Eco-Nect SWOT analysis indicate strong needs in the market on this sector.

Accessible Tourism is increasingly regarded as an important development in the tourism sector, providing a competitive opportunity for tourism destinations, attractions and businesses. ENAT's members and partners have emphasised the value of the senior economy to the tourism sector, in Europe-wide and national studies in EU member states that have been published in the last 5 to 10 years. The senior economy, which includes older adults and people with access requirements, is a growing and significant market that should not be overlooked. (European Commission, 2014, 2015).

Considering data from the United Kingdom (since this is currently the most extensive source in the countries of geographical Europe), the market size and value of the "grey pound," represented by people aged 50 and above, accounts for a significant portion of the tourism market. The number of over-65s in Britain is set to surge by 4.5 million by 2030, and in 2020 they accounted for 58% of travel and tourism expenditure.

Accessibility in tourism is important, not only to comply with legal obligations but to provide amazing and fulfilling customer experiences for persons of all ages. The "Universal Design" approach to the design of environments and services embraces a wide range of customer requirements, ensuring that all visitors are accommodated in an equitable way. At the same time, universally designed solutions minimise the need for "special" services for many older persons who may have, for example, walking difficulties or limitations in sensory perception as a result of the aging process. As such, measures to make tourism accessible for all can contribute to business growth, improved quality of experience for all visitors, and increased

competitiveness in a market which is still recovering from severe consequences of the of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The largest group of people with access requirements, across all EU Member States is those with long-term illnesses (46%), followed by people with mobility impairments (24%), and those with hearing impairments (24%). This demonstrates the need for a diverse approach to accessibility in tourism.

Accessibility information for visitors plays a key role in all stages of the visitor journey for persons who require a supportive environment and services when travelling. Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) play a vital role in providing accessibility information to tourists. There is growing awareness among DMOs that seniors are a significant part of the potential market, especially in cultural tourism and also in day visits.

An analysis of visitor data from DMOs in the United Kingdom between October 2010 and October 2011 showed a 26% average increase in bookings of accessible accommodation, indicating the importance of accurate and relevant accessibility information for decision-making and planning.

The European Commission study on the accessible tourism market showed that older travellers (65+) constitute a significant market segment. It was found that older visitors:

- ▶ usually travel with a companion – increasing the value of each visitor
- ▶ spend more per trip, on average, than younger visitors
- ▶ tend to stay longer than other age groups
- ▶ are more likely to make return visits
- ▶ travel throughout the year, contributing to an extended tourist season for tourism suppliers and destinations.

In conclusion, the senior economy offers a significant opportunity for the tourism sector. By focusing on accessibility and providing outstanding customer service, businesses and destinations can tap into this growing market and maintain or even extend their market share.

5.5.4 Enterprises and Other Industrial Professionals

A robust silver economy cannot be developed with the absence of active enterprises, not only the large enterprises, but also SMEs and start-ups. Research shows that SMEs and other size enterprises were not fully aware the potential opportunities and benefits that silver economy and the related markets could bring (McGuirk, Conway Lenihan and Lenihan, 2022). Moreover,

there is a strong need on the training and education of silver economy and policy supports in this sector. Training and education may help the enterprises to realise that the business opportunities that are associated with silver economy, with older people and very old people, are not only related to health, care, and medicine. It is important to raise the awareness on the different characters that older people and very old people have, so that enterprises could notice the existed and hidden opportunities, and the untapped potential of the silver economy. It is also important to stimulate the innovation and creation by promoting the silver economy and providing related financial and non-financial supports. With those supports, the enterprises and other industrial professional would be encouraged and have a strong incentive to explore and to develop new goods and services that could satisfy older people and very old people's needs. The industries, such as finance, legal services and sports, which are not seen as older people related industries from the traditional view, could explore new segmentations of markets and benefit from a developing silver economy.

5.6 GOOD PRACTICE CASES

There are many good practice cases that can be found across the EU member states which reflect the progress on the silver economy development. The good practice cases that are selected for the strategy report were based on the Handbook which was produced for Senior Eco-Nect Project, Handbook on Silver Economy, Sustainable Development and Innovation Ecosystem ([Senior Eco-Nect, 2023](#)), and the data and information that are available to the public. The selected good practice cases cover the areas of tourism, care, housing and accommodation, digital education, lifelong learning, transportation and successful cross sector collaborations.

5.6.1 Good Practice Cases in France

Gerontopôle is another project that is worth to highlight in the strategy report. It was formed in 2010 which focuses on research, innovation, territory and training which aims at tackling the challenges with an increasing ageing population at the regional level ([Senior Eco-Nect, 2023](#)). In July 2023, a Gerontopôle is also formed in the Hauts-de-France region which has joint other nine regions in France that has practiced it. Via the wide and strong connections and networks, the project promotes and encourages stakeholders from varied backgrounds, such as research, health care and social care, education and training, businesses and enterprises to take concerted actions to address the challenges of ageing population, to share their experiences, to explore opportunities, and to enhance collaboration, networking and cooperation ([Senior Eco-Nect, 2023](#)).

Moreover, in order to make the transportation easy and convenient to be assessed by older people, local government in France has offered different options to older people ([Makindu, 2021](#)). For instance, the public transport cards are offered to the older people to allow them to take public transportation at a lower rate, even for free. This could avoid the older people from certain income group is disadvantaged on travelling and taking daily trips due to the cost of public transportation. Varied transportation choices, such as taxi and shuttle bus, are also made available to satisfy different types of travel needs. The transportation solutions that local government in France has made it more affordable and accessible to older people.

5.6.2 Good Practice Cases in Slovenia

In Slovenia, the association of universities for the third age is an association, includes University for third life period in Ljubljana, Slovenian university for the third life period, and the Institute for research and development of education, that aims to provide older people

education and training options which includes varied activities such as counselling, networking, and project work. The older people can not only gain knowledge and skills from these programmes, but also can build a non-family centred social network with the others. This programme can also help the older people who are capable and willing to work to continue to engage in activities in the labour market and workplace. It also facilitates as an “intergenerational centre” to encourage intergenerational education. The association aims to raise the awareness of ageing population and their social and economic values, promote and encourage active ageing with dignity, and facilitate collaborations between generations. The target audience include the people who are retired or in the period of retirement preparation, and the older people who are still active in the labour market.

Sopotniki Institute, Sežana, an international organisation, aims to help older people to regain mobility and have an active life. The organisation provides free transportation to older people for social purpose, such as social events and engage with social and community activities, and for essential trips, such as grocery shopping and medical appointment. It encourages the old people to stay active and connected with the local community and the wider society. The volunteer drivers provide the services to ensure the passengers to have safe trips. Currently, multiple small villages and towns in the Slovene regions have been covered by the free transportation services.

Moreover, Velenje in Slovenia also has made significant contribution to providing inclusive transportation options to older people. The free bus services within Velenje and the suburb areas allow the older people who cannot drive and may not be able to travel with family and friends able to leave home and enjoy social activities and engage with community activities. The free bus services with a shortened waiting time could also benefit other people in the community. It is worth to mention that this good practice case has been shared on the platform of World Health Organisation ([World Health Organization, 2013](#)).

In order to narrow the digital divide and computer technology gap for older people and very old people, Slovenia has started to offer free computer literacy lessons to them since 2007 ([World Health Organization, 2007](#)). Within 12 years, in total 1,884 free courses were provided. 15,538 older participants have benefited from the programme and the average age of them was 68 years. The total investment to the programme was over €1 million. The free computer literacy course aims to provide help and support on using computers for social activities, such as sending emails and social networking, searching information and using different types of devices.

5.6.3 Good Practice Cases in Spain

A programme, Digital Competencies Workshops (Taller Competencias Gigitales Atendo) was launched 3 years ago in Vigo city. It targets on older people and provide them help and support on digital skills and related technology. In first half of 2023, 90 older people have benefited from the courses. This programme provides significant economic benefits to older people and the wider society via learning to use and manage online social network, getting to know how to use searching engines to access information, using the functions form the mobile devices, such as update settings, taking photos, and manage image gallery and so on. Through the positive and strong collaboration between ATENDO, COGAMA, XUNTA DE GALICIA, and Galician Confederation for the Elderly, the programme has made noticeable changes on narrowing the digital gap between generations and enriching the social and education experience of older people.

The I Feel Method is established in order to improve the wellbeing of the older people who live alone. It does not aim to change their lifestyle completely, on the opposite, it respects the older people's current lifestyle, and it is designed to embed their current lifestyle with the methodology. It prioritises the dignity of living, self-esteem, feeling of belonging and considers into the varied needs of lifestyles, and respects older people's choices on living and cares. The economic benefits of this project include providing an upgraded module of care which could facilitate the growing needs in the related sectors and adding values to geriatrics and raising awareness of related concepts. This methodology has received recognition at both national and international level.

Spain is another member state that provides support via subsidies to older people on public transportation. It has shown that the subsidies have benefited older people significantly, especially to those who are in the range of lower income level and may face financial difficulties (Arranz, Burquillo and Rubio, 2022). Research also shows that this older people-orientated policy has a positive impact on the older people and the extended households, especially on the social activities engagement.

Moreover, ACTIVA el +60 was launched in 2021 in Spain to narrow the information gap between generations. The project aims to help older people to sign up and get messages and announcements of social activities, community activities and information from trustworthy resources during the pandemic, so that an inclusive and effective communication and social network in communities and the wider society would be established.

5.6.4 Good Practice Cases in Ireland

Beyond the Trees Avondale, is an age friendly tourism destination in Ireland which was established in 2022 and it was the first one that received the related recognition in Ireland (Age Friendly Ireland, 2022). It focuses on the varied needs of older people and other tourists with a diverse demand on the facilities. This tourism destination provides sufficient parking spaces which are close to the entrance to disabled and older tourists, accessible toilet facilities, accessible walk trails which are also wheelchair user friendly and viewing places, and age friendly signages and seating. In 2022, it was included in World Health Organisation as the first good practice model for establishing an age friendly tourism destination.

Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programme was established in 2021 to respond to the policy, “Housing Options for Our Ageing Population” via collaboration between Sláintecare and Age Friendly Ireland, and local coordinators across nine local authority areas (Department of Health and Age Friendly Ireland, 2022). It focuses on enhancing care at home and care closer to home which would reduce the growing demand and pressure on the health care system. It aims to provide an accessible care service and shorten the waiting time for care and treatments. In Phase 1 (March 2022), over 700 assessments and over 900 home visits were completed. The supports on healthcare, housing and other areas were also delivered to over 2,000 older people (Department of Health and Age Friendly Ireland, 2022). In the future, the project aims to extend to 31 local authorities in Ireland.

THE HomeShare is a non-profit social enterprise that bridges homeowners and home-sharers (THE HomeShare, 2020). Via helping both parties to find a suitable match to each other and providing continuous support and post-matching evaluation, THE HomeShare ensure the arrangement for both homeowners and home-sharers is suitable and satisfying. The services THE HomeShare provides encourage and support older people to age at home and in their local community with independence, dignity and in an active way. The number of matches increased from 6 in 2018 to 105 in 2022 (THE HomeShare, 2021; Cunningham and Sweetman, 2022). This social enterprise received the Excellence in Public Sector Homecare Services Support Award, and Republic of Ireland Prestige Awards in 2021 (THE HomeShare, 2021).

ALONE, is a national charity organisation that offering supports to older people to age at home without sacrificing the quality of life. It also helps them to stay connected with the local communities. The supports that ALONE offer, covers medical and non-medical support, technology support, and support on housing and accommodation demand. In 2021,

simultaneously fighting against the challenges of COVID-19 pandemic, ALONE helped over 9,000 older people, provided over 60,000 home visits and made 165,740 calls to the older people (ALONE, 2021). Moreover, via collaboration with a network company, Vodafone, ALONE distributed 524 technological devices to older people and provided related support to 704 people.

Moreover, Central Statistics Office established the Older Persons Information Hub to report older people's living status in Ireland. It also provides rich and wide ranged statistics via publications on older people, and their wellbeing (Central Statistics Office, 2023). The statistics include the overview and profiling on ageing population, reports and summarised data on the status of health and safety, housing situation, income and poverty, education level, and preferences on travel and tourism and so on. This one stop information hub also provides abundant information to any stakeholders that would be interested in study and explore the needs and current status of older people.

Ireland also provides free travel to older people who are 66 years and over who have social welfare pension (Citizens Information Board, 2023). The free travel services cover all bus and rail transportation. The spouses, civil partners and cohabitants of the older people who meet the criteria can also travel free with them. Stated in Budget 2024 which was announced on 10th October 2023, the free travel services have been extended to those are medically certified unable to drive from July next year (Citizens Information Board, 2023). Age-Friendly Ireland, a national organisation which is affiliated to the Global Network of Age Friendly Cities and Communities of the World Health Organization continuously supports over 30 local Age Friendly Programmes (Age Friendly Ireland, 2023). Age-Friendly Ireland also dedicates to provide affordable and accessible transportation options to older people via offering taxi and car-pooling scheme which suitable for the older people from different income levels.

Last but not least, the Age Friendly Ireland Business Recognition Programme which is supported by Chambers Ireland and the Age Friendly Programme, continuously encourages and supports businesses to explore the needs of older people and improve their business to be age friendly (Age Friendly Ireland, 2023). A comprehensive toolkit is provided to any businesses that are interested in it. Via offering advice on communication, needs identification and recognition, the toolkit provides the cost-efficient approaches to the businesses to make age friendly changes.

A more completed and comprehensive explanation and demonstration of good practice cases is available to view in the handbook, *Handbook on Silver Economy, Sustainable Development*

and Innovation Ecosystem, at Senior Eco-Nect official website: <https://www.senior-eco-nect.com/download-the-senior-eco-nect-handbook-on-silver-economy-sustainable-development-and-innovation-ecosystem/>.

5.7 EU POLICIES

This section will review the current policies that would benefit older people and support silver economy development. The analysis would be based on the public release of the EU policies and with the great extent of neutrality.

5.1.1 European Care Strategy

European Care Strategy is a strategy that aims to support those people who need care and who provide care services in European Union (European Commission, 2022). The consumer group includes older people and very old people. The strategy aims to improve the situations for care receivers and care providers. For the care receivers, the target is to make high quality and long-term care more accessible and affordable. Moreover, care providers are facing challenges due to lack of resources. A relative lower number of people that are interested in working in this area as the job often is associated with high working requirement, complicated working needs and working environment, however with low salary. Such a strategy provided the funding and other types of supports, such as European Social Fund Plus, that would improve the working conditions of care providers and attract more people to join and work in this area (European Commission, 2022). Via relieving the pressure on the supply side, it may ease the urgency of the required cares on the demand side as more care providers would be available so that the cost of care would be reduced. Moreover, the strategy also encourages and promote the research on the social and economic value in the care sector which reveals part of the value and government expenditure in the silver economy.

In 2023, national long-term care coordinators were appointed and the future challenges for health and long-term care systems and for the coordination mechanism were addressed (European Commission, 2023a). Moreover, in the round table meeting, appointed national long-term care coordinators and contact points also discussed the sustainability of funding model at regional, national level and the possibility of funding at the EU level. The continuous actions and discussions would keep the long-term care needs of older people in the dialogue and direct more stakeholder groups to join the conversation.

5.1.2 European Pillar of Social Rights and the Action Plan

The European Pillar of Social Rights contains 20 principles (European Commission, 2021). Among these 20 principles, below is a list of principles that are closely connected and related to the wellbeing of older people and very old people and are fundamental and significant to develop a robust and inclusive silver economy.

- ▶ Equal opportunities and access to the labour market

- Education, training and life-long learning
- Equal opportunities
- Active support to employment
- Active support to employment
- ▶ Fair working Conditions
 - Secure and adaptable employment
 - Wages
 - Information about employment conditions and protection in case of dismissals
 - Social dialogue and involvement of workers
 - Healthy, safe and well-adapted work environment and data protection
- ▶ Social protection and inclusion
 - Social protection
 - Old age income and pensions
 - Health care
 - Long-term care

Source: [European Commission, 2021](#)

It is clearly to see that with the structural changes on the labour market, majority of the social rights pillars that are associated with working opportunities and working conditions would potentially improve the working conditions and working environment for older people. According to the analysis earlier on the labour market, there is a higher possibility that older people would choose part-time work or self-employed. They may not want to leave the labour market when they reach to the retirement age, which is 65 years in most of the EU member states. To those who still would like to contribute to the labour market or would actively engage with business activities via different channels and different mode, European Pillar of Social Rights provide them important and effective policy and strategy support.

Member states have constructed joint action plan and set achievable targets of different sectors. National, regional and local authorities, and other related social partners and stakeholders were encouraged to engage with the action plan.

10. Opportunities Analysis

6.1 FRANCE

The opportunities analysis for Hauts-de-France ecosystem is based on the SWOT analysis conducted by Senior Eco-Nect project. 11 stakeholders from Hauts-de-France region shared their views regarding the regional silver economy ecosystem. Data collected allow to identify a series of opportunities. However, low participation of French stakeholders to Senior Eco-Nect SWOT questionnaire must also be analysed: it is certainly not the consequence of the lack of interest for the subject, as more than 40 organizations registered to Senior Eco-Nect mapping of actors. A piece of explanation could come from the need to raise awareness about silver economy.

One of the key opportunities identified through the analysis of the stakeholders' answers is that silver economy is not understood in all its dimensions, even if the term "silver economy" is known. There is still a need to discover the full potential of silver economy, through better sensitization about the sectors covered by silver economy. This knowledge is a necessary condition for all the actors to feel involved and then to see the opportunities that could come of it, in terms of collaboration or diversification for example.

The respondents confirmed the need for solutions to deal with a large range of challenges, face daily by health and care organizations. Moreover, there is needs expressed by seniors and their families. The silver economy market is clearly open, supported by seniors' new expectations in life (e.g. seniors that are increasingly connected and keen on new technologies).

Nevertheless, the responses also underlined a need for financial support to companies working to develop new products or services on the silver economy market. Respondents stated that they need funding to keep on innovating and/or to grow further on the market, especially in the context of financial restrictions and HR difficulties. The answers do not specify if the funding should be specific to silver economy or if it could come from a better recognition of silver economy in more general funding schemes.

Another opportunity mentioned by the respondents is the development of incubators to support innovative projects and take part in awareness raising. Answers highlight that initiatives should be developed at the local level. Indeed, the first steps of silver economy projects are often fixed at local level with local partners.

6.2 SPAIN

The opportunities analysis for Galicia, Spain is conducted on the foundation of the Senior Eco-Nect SWOT composite report. The insights gathered from the 32 respondents highlighted a promising landscape for the development of an interconnected silver economy in Spain. The consensus among Galician respondents emphasizes the pivotal role of fostering connections and collaborations, especially between the public and private sectors, in order to unlock the full potential of interconnectivity in the regional silver economy.

One of the key opportunities identified is the necessity for synergies among health and care workers. The collaboration between professionals such as doctors, nurses and pharmacists are viewed as necessary for improving the efficiency of delivering products and services to older patients. And not only to improve the efficiency of the service but also to elevate the quality of product and service offerings, to address the unique needs of older patients.

The respondents conveyed their belief that strengthening the collaboration and coordination across these sectors, would help reach and develop the full potential of the silver economy.

The responses also highlighted the importance of fighting against edadismo, by challenging and transforming existing perceptions about older people. The shift that is currently underway in societal outlook towards ageing population, both regionally in Galicia and nationally in Spain, is also seen as an opportunity to reshape the narrative and establish a strong silver economy. By changing preconceived notions and expectations, there is the opportunity to create a more inclusive and supportive environment to the growth of the silver economy ecosystem.

Further development in technologies is also seen as a critical catalyst for advancing the silver economy. There is an emphasis in highlighting the need for developments in technology to facilitate the delivery of better services in a more efficient and effective way. These developments would include healthcare technologies, communication tools and other digital solutions tailored to the needs of the ageing population. This improvement of technology is perceived as a means to enhance accessibility, improve healthcare outcomes and contribute to the development of the regional silver economy.

Technology, social care services and education and lifelong learning are seen as contributing significantly to the strength of the silver economy in Spain. Advances in technology, especially those related to social care, telecare and other health solutions, would have a critical role in providing continuous energy to the growth of the silver economy.

Respondents also considered that the Spanish silver economy has a significant benefit in its tourism and leisure industries. For Galicia, the region's breath-taking natural scenery, together with its rich cultural heritage, is seen as a strong advantage to boost the development of tourism and leisure activities. The friendliness of the local population, coupled with an attractive offer and convenient transportation options, solidify, in the respondent's eyes, the region's position as a prime destination for older people seeking leisure and recreational activities.

These advantages, which are also nurtured by stakeholder groups across different sectors in Spain, make the region a pillar of silver economy development. It was also emphasized that it is the norm that older people in the region can comfortably afford the cost of living, creating a perfect opportunity for economic activities catered to the ageing population.

The expansion of the older population is also perceived as a strength and therefore an opportunity, representing a growing market that captures the interest of business and stakeholders eager to explore this demographic. The growing population could reflect not only the potential market size, but also highlight the various opportunities that exist within the Spanish silver economy.

Despite the overall positive responses and interesting proposals, some reported a lack of awareness regarding opportunities for developing a strong and interconnected silver economy in the region. This highlights a need to increase the visibility and dissemination of the information in regard to the potential benefits and avenues that involvement in silver economy offers. Outreach and knowledge sharing efforts can play a very important role in ensuring that stakeholders across Galicia and Spain are well informed and engaged in the development of the silver economy ecosystem.

In conclusion, the responses from the participants in the SWOT Survey shed light on a multitude of opportunities to better an interconnected silver economy in the region of Galicia. The opportunities revolve around collaboration, advances in technology, and the fight against edadismo and other age-related perceptions, all of which can contribute to the development of a regional silver economy that caters to the diverse and evolving needs of the ageing population. The strength in the tourism and leisure sectors are also seen as an opportunity to position Spain as a multifaceted leader to bring life to the potential of a silver economy.

6.3 SLOVENIA

The SWOT survey gave a clear picture, that Slovenia is in very early phase of development of silver economy. Some respondents have not seen any opportunity for the development (because they did not know enough about) silver economy while the others saw numerous possibilities, provided that there is available financing.

Regional policies: Raise the awareness of potential of the silver economy, political support is needed

To begin with, it would be beneficial to promote the clear definition of what silver economy is and how can it benefit the society. By increasing the awareness of the advantages that silver economy is creating, various stakeholder groups will discover its potential and contribution to also to their benefit. Therefore, political support is needed for creation of new opportunities.

Potential in tourism, natural resources, skilled people

Innovation and development on age-friendly technology and digital services, such as digital health technologies and smart home system, can improve the wellbeing of older people and keep them connected with the community and society. It will provide potential opportunities to drive the silver economy to grow further in a sustainable way and develop the potential opportunities on silver-related tourism and leisure businesses.

Skilled workforce

Slovenia is recognized by well skilled and educated workforce. Having a robust education system to promote education and lifelong learning to older people is a perceived strength and valuable opportunity. Education programme, training courses, and workshops that are designed and developed to meet needs of older people could enhance their personal development and encourage them to remain active and connected with the community and society. Overall, it could also narrow the gap on certain knowledge or skill area, such as digital technology. Contribution from social services, volunteering and community support were also discussed in the answers. According to the answers, respondents also believe that entrepreneurship in the social sector and that their sustainable growth are another great strength in developing a strong silver economy in Slovenia.

Building industry and accessible infrastructure

With an ageing population, the demand for adaptable housing is also growing, either in tourist destinations as well as in domestic housing. This is a big opportunity for property developers.

Age- friendly infrastructure and housing options are seen as perceived opportunities to future regional silver economy development. By providing adaptable, affordable and accessible transportation and housing options to the older people, it can support healthy and active ageing and living with independency and dignity which is important to an inclusive silver economy.

Financing and funding

Funding and financial support are essential to develop an inclusive and interconnected silver economy eventually. Sufficient funding and financial support can motivate enterprises to focus on older people and silver market, and to be innovative on the design and development of products and services. Moreover, collaborations between different sectors, such as among education and research institutions, and start-ups, government sectors, and SMEs is another perceived opportunity. The cross-sector collaboration would provide more possibilities on innovation and strengthen the interconnections among different stakeholder groups. It would bring opportunities to the local regions to develop an interconnected silver economy.

6.4 IRELAND

As our society undergoes a transformative shift towards a growing ageing population, the challenges and complexities associated with an ageing population also bring forth a myriad of opportunities. In this section, we delve into the prospects that arise from the changing demographic landscape and explore the opportunities that can arise as a result. Opportunities can present themselves through in the form of social responsibility, innovation, service and product enhancement and economic development.

By understanding and leveraging the unique opportunities that emerge with an ageing society, we position ourselves to not only meet the evolving needs of this demographic but also to contribute to a sustainable and inclusive future. In this section we will discuss the potential avenues for growth, development, and positive impact that come with addressing the needs and aspirations of an ageing population.

Firstly, when conducting a SWOT analysis for Ireland, listed below are the common themes that emerged to reflect the opportunities in addressing the opportunities associated with an ageing population, encompassing policy, funding, technology, entrepreneurship, regional considerations, health and well-being, community support, awareness building, transportation, income protection, and more.

Policy Reforms

- ▶ Recognition of the need for policy reforms to address twenty-first-century demographic changes.
- ▶ Emphasis on correcting long-held prejudices about ageing and addressing inequalities in healthy life expectancy.

Funding for Innovation

- ▶ The necessity for funding to encourage innovation within the sector.
- ▶ Funding grants and support for businesses developing products and services targeting the ageing population.

Technology Solutions

- ▶ Acknowledgment of the critical role of technology solutions in modern living.
- ▶ Advocacy for policies driving innovation in technology for older individuals and ensuring educational supports for acquiring relevant skills.

Support for Older Entrepreneurs

- ▶ Recognition of the importance of incentivizing self-employment for individuals over 50 through tax breaks.
- ▶ Support for emerging entrepreneurs and self-employed individuals in this age group.

Regional Policies

- ▶ Emphasis on regional policies, including spatial and economic strategies, to support the ageing population.
- ▶ Specific support for funding, grants, and accelerators at the regional level.

Health and Well-being Initiatives

- ▶ Funding grants and tax breaks for activities promoting healthy ageing, including membership of gyms.
- ▶ Identification and support for activities crucial for healthy ageing, such as nutrition, exercise, and social habits.

Housing and Community Support

- ▶ Policies advocating for mixed-sized public housing and smaller units for older individuals.
- ▶ Creation of sit-down spaces in public areas and funding for cost-free activities in community and health services.

Cross-Department Collaboration

- ▶ Recognition of the need for more collaboration across different government departments.
- ▶ Calls for development and promotion of cross-departmental collaboration.

Awareness Building

- ▶ Recognition of the lack of awareness regarding the experiences and needs of older people.
- ▶ Calls for funding grants to promote the development of goods and services relevant to older individuals.

Transportation Support

- ▶ Advocacy for funding for transport to help older adults attend activities and appointments.
- ▶ Proposals for specific transport options and the establishment of a mobility task force.

Income Protection Measures

- ▶ Recognition of the importance of adequate income protection measures, considering the challenge of being asset-rich but cash-poor

Anti-Ageism Awareness

- ▶ Emphasis on awareness building for older people as a key consumer base and anti-ageism awareness.

Multiannual Funding

- ▶ Preference for multiannual grants to improve public services and community development.

Retirement Age and Active Aging

- ▶ Opposition to forcing people to retire based on age.
- ▶ Support for active aging through an active mind and body.

Marketing, Communication, Legislation

- ▶ Recognition of the importance of marketing, communication, and legislation in addressing the needs of the ageing population.

Reduced VAT Rate

- ▶ Proposals for a reduced VAT rate for hospitality packages for retirees.

Age-Friendly Spaces

- ▶ Funding for age-friendly community spaces and town bus services for better accessibility.

The SWOT analysis was gave some valuable insights into the Opportunities that could better exist for an ageing population from individuals who are profoundly involved in the senior economy landscape and who are particularly knowledgeable in providing their opinions for a growing silver economy. The Mapping exercise conducted as part of this project also provided an insight into the opportunities that could occur for Ireland. An examination of the Mapping showed us that Ireland has a strong presence for the silver economy in the areas of academia and civil society and end-user organisations however many opportunities lie in the private and SME sector. This is reflected by the many of the recommendations that emerged in the SWOT analysis highlighted in the 17 points above.

Additionally, both the Senior Eco-Nect Handbook on Silver Economy, Sustainable Development and Innovation Ecosystem, and Section 5.6.4 in this report, includes the good practice cases in Ireland which also shed a light on the rising opportunities in the existed markets or in the emerging markets.

Beyond the Trees Avondale presented a new angle to tourism industry which is establishing an ageing friendly tourism destination. By improving and upgrading the facilities that are provided to the tourists and the existed design in the destination, it would serve a bigger range of tourists and accommodate their needs and requirements in a more efficient and effective way (Age Friendly Ireland, 2022). THE HomeShare provided a new thought for the housing market which may provide a solution to improve the situation of living in under-occupied dwelling for older people, provide non-medical and non-care assistance at home, and possibly to ease the housing market pressure in the long run (THE HomeShare, 2020). Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programme aims to provide accessible care services to older people who would like to “age in place” (Department of Health and Age Friendly Ireland, 2022). By providing accessible care closer to home and closer to community, the waiting time of care and treatment could be shortened, and the pressure to the healthcare system could also be eased to a certain degree. Moreover, the Older Persons Information Hub which is established by Central Statistics Office, provides abundant of data and information which is related to older people, such as their status of living, and well-being level. It would create more opportunities not only for academia, education and research sectors, but also for business and enterprises sectors, to cooperate and collaborate to study the needs of older people and explore solutions. The Older Persons Information Hub and the data and information that is available on the platform would

also encourage varied stakeholders and interested groups to study and investigate the critical issues related to develop an interconnected, inclusive and sustainable silver economy.

The ecosystem in Ireland which is presented in Section 5.2.4 also shows that Ireland has a relatively strong stakeholder network. Stakeholders from the areas below actively make contribution to the development of silver economy at both the regional and national level. 48 stakeholders have registered for the interconnected and inclusive map of silver economy. The growing network and increasing collaboration between stakeholders would also create opportunities to develop a robust silver economy in Ireland.

- ▶ Academia
- ▶ Civil society and end-user organisations
- ▶ Industries and other professionals
- ▶ Public authorities and policy makers
- ▶ Other innovation actors

Ireland is a relatively young country among other EU member states. Statistics shows that the median age in 2022 was close to 39 years (Eurostat, 2023c), which is lower than the EU average level, 44 years (Eurostat, 2023b). However, it does not mean that that ageing population situation in Ireland is not an urgent challenge to focus on. The significant changes on the old-age dependency ratio and the composition of population suggests that developing a sustainable silver economy should be priorities in the strategy and planning. The perceived opportunities that were discussed above may inspire stakeholders and interest groups to start planning on their future actions.

6.5 EUROPEAN SPORTS SECTOR

The demographic shift towards an aging population provides a substantial opportunity for the sport sector, particularly in catering to the needs and preferences of seniors. This analysis explores opportunities at the national regional, and local levels, considering socio-economic status, market potential, workforce development, healthcare innovation, social inclusion, and other related factors.

Socio-economy Status of Older People

National Level: The aging population seeks opportunities for active and healthy lifestyles. This creates a favourable environment for the sports sector to develop programs and services tailored to the physical well-being of seniors.

Regional and Local Level: Diverse socio-economic backgrounds may influence access to sports facilities and programs. To ensure inclusivity, it is crucial to tailor offerings to accommodate various economic circumstances within different regions.

Market Analysis

National Level: The sports sector for seniors exhibits significant growth potential. There is an increasing demand for age-appropriate fitness programs, senior sports leagues, and specialized sports equipment. The market is ripe for expansion.

Regional and Local Level: Understanding specific sports preferences within regions is essential for guiding targeted initiatives. Local partnerships with community centres can enhance accessibility and foster community engagement.

Workforce and Skill Development

National Level: Investing in training programs for coaches and fitness instructors focusing on senior-specific needs can elevate the quality of sports services provided to older individuals.

Regional and Local Level: Tailoring training initiatives to address specific cultural and regional preferences is necessary. In rural areas, community-led sports events can contribute to skill development and community building.

Healthcare Innovation

National Level: Integrating healthcare professionals into sports programs can address holistic health needs among seniors. Innovations like wearable technologies for monitoring health metrics during sports activities present opportunities.

Regional and Local Level: In remote areas, telehealth services can complement local sports initiatives, providing access to healthcare resources and enhancing overall well-being.

Social Inclusion and Engagement

National Level: Creating sports events that encourage socialization and camaraderie among seniors is essential. Partnerships with retirement communities can facilitate organized sports activities, promoting a sense of community.

Regional and Local Level: Tailoring programs to local cultural preferences fosters inclusivity. Local sports clubs can serve as hubs for social engagement among older individuals, enhancing the overall impact of sports on community well-being.

Other Opportunities

National Level: Collaborations with the tourism sector to promote senior sports tourism can contribute to economic growth within the country.

Regional and Local Level: Utilizing public spaces for community sports events can enhance visibility and participation, turning local areas into vibrant hubs for senior sports activities.

Remarks

National Level: Government support, in the form of grants or tax incentives for businesses promoting senior sports, can stimulate growth and investment in the sector.

Regional and Local Level: Local governments can play a pivotal role in facilitating infrastructure development for senior sports facilities, ensuring accessibility and inclusivity at the grassroots level.

In conclusion, a strategic and customized approach to the senior sports sector, considering national, regional, and local nuances, will contribute to the development of a robust and sustainable industry within the silver economy.

6.6 EUROPEAN TOURISM SECTOR

The **opportunity** for countries, regions, cities and business lies in shaping the tourism offer to with high quality services for visitors including those with a range of ages and abilities, aiming for the goal of "Tourism for All", which allows seniors to take part in tourism, on their own or in 2- and 3-generational groups (with families and others). Some seniors with age-related health conditions will have certain needs which must be met with special services as they move into older old-age but even in this case, care and assistance services can allow these age groups to continue to travel and enjoy new surroundings, also in long-term accommodation, for example, through the European winter months.

11. Challenges Analysis

7.1 FRANCE

Respondents highlight a trend of decreasing public funding which have direct impact on policies implementation. In this context, public funding is targeted on health, notably curative health. There is no or low funding available for developing projects outside of health, e.g. social activities. When specific funding is available, it does not take enough into account the time and energy needed to implement innovative projects. Keeping on with the daily work is already a challenge in itself in nursing homes and home care services. Thus, there is also a tense situation on human resources emphasized by the lack of funding and a lack of recognition for the workers in health and care.

In addition, the current economic situation is endangering people with low income, including seniors with receiving small pension. Respondents stress the question of purchasing power of seniors and thus the question of solvency of the demand side of the market. This is particularly true for technological solutions, sometimes assessed by seniors in focus groups or living labs, which are not affordable for most seniors.

Another dimension of the same challenge is the difficulty of building sustainable business models in silver economy. As stated by one of the respondents, the question “who should pay” does not have a simple answer.

One last point to underline is the remaining ignorance about what it is to grow old. Society still has prejudice about seniors.

7.2 SPAIN

The challenges analysis for Galicia, Spain is conducted on the foundation of the Senior Eco-Nect SWOT composite report. 32 respondents answered the SWOT Survey providing us their perception of threats to develop an inclusive and interconnected silver economy in the region, as well as highlighting the challenges that are faced by various stakeholders.

The main challenge that respondents highlight is the lack of interest and, crucially, commitment. Stakeholder groups, both public and private, are perceived as not willing to spend time, money and other resources on research and innovation in silver markets or on older people, as a result of lack of interest. The lack of interest poses a risk to the progress of

the silver economy in the region, and may also result in a failure to seize opportunities and not take advantage of the potential silver economy, as it is not fully explored and developed.

Respondents also perceive a short-sightedness in policy makers and their decision making, resulting in a disconnection between them, older people, and the silver economy. This disconnection not only hinders the implementation of effective policies but also, once again, risks missing the opportunities presented. They also identify a lack of policy support and they believe it has a direct impact in the development of the silver economy, as it affects the overall growth and sustainability of initiatives aimed at catering to the needs of the ageing population. This lack of policy support goes hand in hand with the absence of adequate funding from the government, which respondents highlight its detrimental impact on the silver economy.

A critical concern raised was the absence of practical and feasible policies to address demographic challenges associated with the ageing population. There is a need for well thought out strategies that can effectively address the evolving needs of the silver population. It is critical to have foresighted policies and strategic planning to ensure long term silver economy development. The challenge the region faces is to have proactive measures in place that anticipate future challenges and provide sustainable solutions, rather than reacting to issues as they show up.

The lack of connection and collaboration between sectors is also seen as posing a challenge to the silver economy in the region. It is crucial to overcome this challenge and create a connection, specially between the public and private sectors, to foster innovation, implement comprehensive policies and furthering growth in the region's silver economy.

Due to the geography of the Galicia region, there is a great challenge in the silver economy reaching and having an effect in rural areas. Respondents see policy makers as not paying attention to these rural areas and the often unique challenges and needs of their ageing population, resulting in a decline of services provision.

There is also a challenge in innovation in the social care sector, as respondents perceived that the silver economy is not fully embracing emerging technologies and new approaches that could enhance the quality of life for older people. A perception of underdeveloped business opportunities in the silver market is also expressed, with the challenge of addressing this potential gap in the economic ecosystem that could thrive with more attention and investment.

Additionally, there is a challenge perceived in the competitive landscape, emphasizing the potential threat posed by other tourism destinations to the regional silver economy. As highlighted earlier in the opportunities section, the tourism and leisure sectors have a great

importance to the silver economy in Spain, so any decline could have serious consequences. It is imperative that this challenge is addressed in order to maintain a strong silver economy ecosystem.

It is also worth noting that a portion of respondents have a lack of knowledge and did not provide their opinions on both threats and weaknesses to the Galician silver economy. This also goes hand in hand with the perception that respondents shared, expressing their concerns about general insufficient knowledge and understanding of older people and the silver economy, not only affecting public perception but also hindering the formulation of effective policies and initiatives tailored to the unique needs of the ageing population. These knowledge gaps underscore the challenge of creating an increased awareness and engagement to foster a more informed and proactive approach among silver economy stakeholders, as well as a need to do better in disseminating the information surrounding the ecosystem.

In conclusion, the challenges include a lack of interest and commitment, concerns with policy support and formulation, attention to rural areas, insufficient collaboration across sectors, and the threat of other tourist destinations. It is essential to address and overcome these challenges to ensure the sustained growth of the regional silver economy ecosystem, as well as unlocking its full potential and ensuring the wellbeing of ageing population in the region.

7.3 SLOVENIA

The key challenges:

- ▶ raising awareness of the advantages of silver economy,
- ▶ fragmentation,
- ▶ financing/funding to entrepreneurial community.

When asked what perceived opportunities are for developing silver economy in their region, 9 respondents did not give any answers or answered, "I don't know". A strong performance in the health and non-health related sector, such as tourism, hospitality and leisure, is a pillar strength that respondents believed that their region has. Moreover, the natural scenery and cultural and historical heritage that Slovenia has also provided unbeatable advantages to tourism and leisure industry.

Growth on innovation activities and innovation hubs in health care sector, and digital health, provide a good basis to develop a sustainable silver economy.

Lack of financial support and difficult to access financing options were seen as a weakness that would impact regional silver economy development significantly. Unavailability of funding programmes, limited financing options and difficult to access investment channels would obstruct institutions and enterprises to remain active and involved in the related markets.

Research, innovation, design and development on products and services, they all need financial support to continue. Respondents believed that lack of financial support may limit the regional silver economy development.

Also lack of awareness and understanding on the target population which is older people, related market and silver economy is another perceived challenge. Lack of awareness and understanding of older people may result in ageism and biased stereotypical views on older people which would wrongly define their characteristics and the needs of them. Moreover, lack of understanding of the related market and silver economy may cause the resources are allocated and employed inefficiently or even left idle. It may also affect how much potential of the silver economy and related markets could be explored.

Moreover, underperformed research, insufficient age-friendly infrastructure, and lack of connections and collaborations were important perceived weaknesses to the regional silvery economy.

7.4 IRELAND

The challenges analysis of Ireland is conducted on the foundation of the Senior Eco-Nect SWOT composite report. 34 respondents from varied background answered the SWOT survey and shared their valuable perceptions and opinions regarding the challenges that Ireland may face for developing an inclusive, interconnected, and sustainable silver economy.

According to the responses, the biased societal views on older people and the stigmatisation it may represent poses a significant challenge to the national and regional silver economy development. The biased and stereotypical existed societal opinions and perceptions regarding older people and their needs was also viewed as one of the current weaknesses in the silver economy development in Ireland. It reflects a lack of awareness and education of this group of people and the silver economy they may represent. Lack of understanding of older people and the silver economy would also result in other threats and challenges. It would result in an unwelcomed attitude towards silver economy and the related markets. Stakeholders may also be lack of motivation and incentives to develop the untapped potential of the silver economy.

This is a challenge that would decide the level of sustained growth that the national silver economy would have. Moreover, it would also result in inaccurate definitions on the needs of older people and neglect to their growing demand in the sectors that stakeholders may not realise the importance of these sectors. It will further prevent any research and development in these sectors. Moreover, the biased and stereotypical societal opinions would also become an obstacle on inter-generational communications and connections. It is reasonable to make an estimation that if the current situation of societal view is not changed, it would become a crucial challenge to tackle in the near future. Raising the awareness of older people and their needs could make stakeholders more keenly exploring opportunities and the great potential of the silver economy.

Additionally, the perceived challenges include the lack of support from government, policy makers and other supporting public authorities. Insufficient financial resources, such as funding and tax relief to entrepreneurs and industrial professional who actively participate in silver economy and engaged with silver economy related activities, absence of strong and strategic leadership, and foresighted planning, are perceived to be the causes of significant challenges to develop a robust silver economy in Ireland in the long term. The supports from policy makers, and supporting public authorities, acts as a guide which direct the industries, communities and other related stakeholders to focus on the potential of the silver economy. Comparing with other industrial professional, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), especially the micro-businesses and start-ups, urgently need the funding and other types of financial support from the government, so that they could re-invest the funding on the development of research and technology. Without funding supports, SMEs may not have the capability to allocate their resources on any silver markets or silver economy-related sectors, especially when these sectors may not bring them high return immediately.

Lack of a continuous funding support is also crucial to the sector of academia and research. Funding is necessary, not only to the newly developed projects, but also necessary to the well-developed projects. Follow up actions would be important to produce the ongoing positive impact to the ecosystem. Without a sustained provision of funding, it is difficult for any institutions and organisations to continue to pursue the solutions to the future challenges to develop an inclusive and interconnected silver economy. Moreover, the momentum that has established on the existed project may be lost when the project is completed. Stakeholders' interests would be shifted to the next project when the previous one is ending. However, the end of a project does not always mean the end of actions. Without continuous funding support, it would be difficult to continue the positive impact of the completed projects. It would also

cause the actions that were taken previously may become less meaningful, for example, the established information hub or website may not be accessible and/or may not be able to provide up-to-dated information due to lack of funding to support the necessary maintenance and management.

There is a deficit in the synergetic and collaborative policies, strategies and planning with precautious consideration on the benefits to the silver economy. There is no doubt that proactive actions that taken by the government has an effective effect on the stakeholders in the ecosystem. Stakeholders tend to plan their actions, such as research and business activities, with the consideration of the current and future focuses of the government policies, strategies and planning. The stakeholders may see the policies and strategies as an indicator which may signal them how resources would be allocated. Lack of such policies and strategies may demotivate the stakeholder to continuous investing in the silver economy and the related sectors and may exit the market permanently.

The underdevelopment on age-friendly infrastructure would also prevent older people to actively engage with the communities and social activities, which poses a challenge to active ageing and a sustainable development of the silver economy. Furthermore, the digital divide poses a similar challenge that prevent older people to maintain their social network and to receive the latest news and information. The digital walls that surround them may block the communications between them and the wider society. For developing an inclusive and interconnected silver economy, breaking the digital barriers is a vital action to take.

Additionally, there is a raising level of concern on the widening of inequality between sectors and groups. It may result from lack of understanding and awareness of older people and their varied needs. The increasing inequality in the older people group would negatively influence the inclusiveness of the silver economy. Especially in the rural areas, depopulation intensify the gap between generations, and between urban and rural areas. With a declining population, it is challenging to attract any stakeholders from industrial background to invest money and time in the rural areas. Resources would be more concentrated in the urban areas and more younger people would follow the resources and move to those urban areas with more resources and opportunities, which would cause the downward spiral on the silver economy development in rural regions.

It is also worth to mention that the over focus on the physical self-care needs may affect how the medical and health-care resources are allocated. The emotional, mental and social needs of older people should not be omitted either. Focusing on their overall wellbeing, not only the

physical health, but also the needs on their mental health and social connections, would promote actively ageing and healthy ageing, and encourage them to age in the local communities and stay connected with the society. Neglect their needs on social activities, not only would cause the stakeholders, especially the industrial professionals, miss the opportunities to develop products and services in these areas, but also would prevent a sustained development of an inclusive silver economy.

7.5 EUROPEAN SPORTS SECTOR

The challenges associated with the silver economy within the sport sector encompass various aspects, including current attitudes towards aging, healthcare disparities, long-term care, social isolation, financial security, and other specific issues relevant to the sports context.

Current Attitude to Aging

National Level: Negative societal attitudes towards aging can hinder seniors' engagement in sports. Overcoming stereotypes and promoting positive narratives about older individuals participating in sports is crucial.

Regional and Local Level: Cultural variations may influence attitudes towards aging and sports. Tailoring local campaigns and initiatives to address specific regional perceptions can encourage greater senior participation.

Healthcare Disparities

National Level: Disparities in healthcare access impact the ability of seniors to engage in sports. Addressing these gaps is essential to ensure equal opportunities for participation in sports activities.

Regional and Local Level: In remote regions, limited healthcare access may affect seniors' ability to partake in sports. Localized healthcare initiatives and telemedicine services can help bridge this gap.

Long-term Care and Aging in Place

National Level: Assessing the capacity and affordability of long-term care facilities is critical. Policies supporting aging in place, including accessible sports facilities and programs, need to be developed.

Regional and Local Level: Local governments should focus on creating age-friendly infrastructure that includes sports facilities tailored to the needs of seniors. This supports the idea of aging in place within specific regions.

Social Isolation

National Level: Factors contributing to social isolation, such as limited social sports activities, need to be analysed. National initiatives promoting social inclusion through sports, community-based programs, and events are essential.

Regional and Local Level: Localized community-based sports programs can address specific factors contributing to social isolation. Local sports clubs and events should be encouraged as platforms for fostering social connections among seniors.

Financial Security

National Level: Economic vulnerabilities among the elderly impact their ability to access sports programs. Developing financial literacy programs and policies to enhance economic security is crucial for enabling consistent sports engagement.

Regional and Local Level: Localized economic disparities may affect seniors' financial capacity to participate in sports. Regional programs addressing specific economic challenges and promoting financial literacy can enhance accessibility.

Other Challenges

National Level: Government bureaucracy, regulatory hurdles, and a lack of cohesive policies for senior sports may pose challenges to the effective implementation of programs at the national level.

Regional and Local Level: Demographic variations, such as urban-rural divides, may necessitate tailored approaches to address unique challenges specific to certain regions. Local governments play a vital role in overcoming such regional hurdles.

In conclusion, overcoming challenges within the silver economy in the sport sector demands a comprehensive and tailored strategy at both national and local levels. Addressing negative attitudes, healthcare disparities, and economic vulnerabilities while promoting social inclusion are essential for fostering a thriving senior sports sector.

7.6 EUROPEAN TOURISM SECTOR

With appropriate accessible provisions, countries and destinations that invest in the accessibility of the public realm, transportation and senior-friendly services will gain from this market. However, those regions that do not will see weaker growth and less satisfaction among their visitors.

12. Strategy Development

8.1 FRANCE

Strategy development for Hauts-de-France region must consider trends and initiatives at national level as well as regional data gathered through SWOT analysis and knowledge of the silver economy ecosystem.

Considering and summarising all the information, strategy development for Hauts-de-France region would be based on the following three axis:

Axis 1: Continue and strengthen the development of a silver economy ecosystem by:

- ▶ Facilitating better interconnection and inter-knowledge between stakeholders
- ▶ Fostering innovation and supporting projects from companies and other ecosystem members
- ▶ Raising awareness about silver economy and related opportunities.
- ▶ Developing collaborations between quadruple helix actors
- ▶ Encouraging the diversification of actors and ecosystem

Axis 2: Anticipate ageing process and facilitate life paths for all by:

- ▶ Encouraging preventive health
- ▶ Developing care solutions for the elderly and support for carers, professional and non-professional
- ▶ Simplifying administrative procedures and enhancing information sharing
- ▶ Fostering solutions for ageing well at home, including innovative housing solutions and home adaptation

Axis 3 Enable ageing well in the society by:

- ▶ Favouring accessibility and mobility
- ▶ Improving quality of life and full participation in the society
- ▶ Promoting long term healthy lifestyle
- ▶ Fostering new models for nutrition

8.2 SPAIN

Developing a strategy for the Silver Economy sector in Spain requires a comprehensive approach that addresses the diverse needs of the aging population. As Spain has 17 different Autonomous regions with a different population and services distribution, general solutions might not make the cut sometimes. Nevertheless, some general points to consider can be shared among the whole territory despite the approaches and findings may differ:

- ▶ Research and Assessment:
 - Thorough assessment of the current state of the Silver Economy in Spain, including demographic trends, healthcare, social care, employment, and technology adoption among the elderly.
 - Identification of the needs
- ▶ Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement:
 - Involvement of all stakeholders along the whole process is keen.
- ▶ Healthcare and Wellness:
 - Develop and enhance healthcare services tailored to the elderly population.
 - Promote preventive care and wellness programs.
 - Encourage the use of technology in healthcare monitoring and management.
- ▶ Social Care and Inclusion:
 - Implement initiatives to combat social isolation among the elderly.
 - Support caregiver programs
- ▶ Employment and Training:
- ▶ Housing and Infrastructure:
 - Create age-appropriate housing options, including accessible and affordable housing. Houses for all of life.
- ▶ Technology and Innovation:
 - Foster innovation in products and services catering to the elderly.
 - Promote the use of technology for healthcare, communication, and social engagement.
- ▶ Financial Inclusion:
- ▶ Education and Awareness:
- ▶ Regulatory and Policy Framework:
 - Review and update existing policies to better support the Silver Economy.
- ▶ Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the success of the strategy. -what cannot be measured does not exist!
- Regularly review and update the strategy based on evolving demographic and societal trends.

In Galicia there has been a Policy development based on the following aspects of the Silver Economy to be addressed:

- ▶ Improving care for dependency, chronicity and promotion of autonomy
- ▶ Launch social -health integration programs
- ▶ Promote technological, organizational and social innovation in public services
- ▶ Improve the quality of life of users and all agents involved in their care
- ▶ Increase the safety and comfort of the elderly in their own life environment
- ▶ Facilitate the delay of the unwanted institutionalization of people in dependency
- ▶ Involve in the attention of users and their relatives
- ▶ Improve accessibility to services through the use of new technologies
- ▶ Optimize the efficient use of social and health care resources
- ▶ Enhance the development of a senior economy in our community

The overall framework is to improve the services of the current model of advanced telehealth with mainly reactive care through a new more proactive and predictive model in the attention based on the technological integration of social health care that allows to provide a comprehensive telehealth service to users by facilitating their quality of life, safety and comfortability in your usual environment. As a transversal axis of any strategy, is the requirement of it being participative, personalised, proactive, predictive, oriented and involving people/population (referring to civil society) and professionals.

Due to a dispersed and rural ageing population of Galicia technology tends to be the backbone of any strategy development and the strategy has focused on three main lines:

1. Make Personalized Attention Available Inside and outside home

- ▶ Immediate Attention to Emergency
- ▶ Personal attention with calls Agenda-Recordatorio appointments and TTOS.
- ▶ Information service of socio -cultural activities in the rural area.
- ▶ Rural mobile telehealth with geolocation inside and outside the home.
- ▶ Monitoring and alert of sanitary parameters: weight, glycaemia and blood pressure.

- ▶ Monitoring Habits of life: sensors of presence and opening.
- ▶ Home safety alerts: smoke and/or gas

2. Establish Rural and social communities

- ▶ Socio -cultural community activities.
- ▶ Exercise and healthy habits.
- ▶ Games and entertainment.
- ▶ Major training programs.
- ▶ Physical and cognitive rehabilitation.

3. Consider the rural senior economy needs

- ▶ Better energy efficiency.
- ▶ Increased responsible consumption.
- ▶ Greater rural digitalization.
- ▶ Greater rural employment.
- ▶ New Rural Senior Economy of the Common Good.

We need to continuously involve relevant stakeholders throughout the strategy development process as well regularly assess and adapt the strategy accordingly.

8.3 SLOVENIA

Developing a strategy for the Silver Economy sector needs to address the diverse needs of the aging population in Slovenia. One of the major characteristics of Slovenia is fragmentation, the other is lack of venture capital. Strategically we should create the processes that would bring benefit to urban as well as rural areas. The strategy should stimulate the involvement of all stakeholders along the whole process and across diverse sectors. The elderly should have decent living conditions, either in their homes or in the institutions. What needs to be done:

- 1.** Create the awareness, that silver economy is present, based on demographic changes, it brings challenges and opportunities to healthcare, social care, employment, and technology adoption among the elderly and their caring personnel, to housing and

transportation, to people skills needed, to technological development by boosting innovation.

2. Regulatory and Policy Framework - policy makers should review and update existing policies on a regular basis to provide support for the needs of stakeholders of silver economy, like innovators, end-users, care personnel and families, infrastructure and housing providers, digital solutions etc. by appropriate financing programs. Sometimes, additional funds are even not needed, the existent budgets can be utilized in a smart way, like with procurement of innovation.
3. Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement: for the older people to “enjoy the more years of healthy life” it is very important to have appropriate exercise, appropriate diet and the PURPOSE OF LIFE. It is of utmost importance to enable social care inclusion, prevent social isolation, increase the safety and comfort of the elderly in their own life environment. Deinstitutionalization is already one of the priorities of Slovenian Government, the next steps in practical terms are necessary, like building new communities, developing new care models, etc.
4. Healthcare and Wellness: Promote technological, organizational and social innovation in public services, preventive actions: active life - exercise and healthy habits, appropriate diet, like EU NECTAR project for reskilling cooks and chefs in hospitals and care institutions to prevent malnutrition of older citizens (<https://www.nectar-project.eu/>***). Promote the use of technology for healthcare, communication, and social engagement. Optimize the efficient use of social and health care resources. Promote preventive care and wellness programs.
5. Education and Training are crucial elements for reskilling workforce, or train individuals to keep elderly companionship, promote intergenerational collaboration

Digitalisation: Improve accessibility to services through the use of new technologies, enable health parameters control and remote consulting with the healthcare team, educating on correct monitoring or on the control of chronic diseases, all of these is especially important in rural areas. Older people get personalized attention

8.4 IRELAND

The recommended strategy for Ireland is made on the foundation of the Senior Eco-Nect SWOT Composite Report, Senior Eco-Nect Market Study, and the analysis on the ecosystem and market status in Ireland. The proposed strategy plan for Ireland focuses on the points that are listed below:

- ▶ Exploring emerging markets and industrial sectors with untapped potentials
- ▶ Establishing an extended network with strong collaboration
- ▶ Sustained growth in the labour market and employment
- ▶ Building an ageing friendly external environment

The proposed strategy plan aims to strengthen the competitiveness of Ireland in the silver economy, enhance the focus on the silver economy in a wider society, faster the troubleshooting and problem-solving process, and ultimately build an interconnected, inclusive, and sustainable silver economy at both the regional and national level.

Older people, comparing with people who are in the range of working age, are more likely have free time and have a relatively high financial independency. In Ireland, the median nominal disposable income for people who are aged between 65 years and over is €22,261 per year (Central Statistics Office, 2023). Not having an outstanding mortgage or housing loans means they would have sufficient disposable income for consumption on activities, other than prioritising the payment for housing cost. In Ireland, in 2018 over 80% of older people reported that they were living in self-owned dwelling with no unfinished mortgage or housing loans (Eurostat, 2020). The independency on time and money may allow the older people to have more freedom for the type of lifestyle they are willing to have.

The diverse needs of older people are growing. It would be dangerous to use traditional view to measure and investigate the needs of older people. Hence a strategy for exploring emerging markets and industrial sectors with untapped potentials would be necessary. Based on the analysis of the Senior Eco-Nect SWOT Composite Report and Senior Eco-Nect Market Study, health and care industry, and tourism and hospitality industry have a relatively strong and sustained growth and a relatively mature performance in the recent years. The industries, such as financial services, legal services, and housing sector, did not take advantage of the opportunities arising from the silver economy at both the regional and national level. A more sustainable methodology should be applied for industrial sectors to explore the opportunities in the silver economy and related markets, and to turn the opportunities into sustained growth and returns to fuel the long-term development.

The suggested strategy that supports enterprise and industrial professionals to explore untapped potential of the silver economy is to establish a platform to connect enterprise, industrial professionals, academic and research institutions, and civil society and end users together to build a "Silver Triangle". Cooperation and support from Local Enterprise Office (LEO) would be necessary for establishing such a stable and diverse network.

Academic and research institutions would be able to share the up-to-date research output on the platform which provides enterprise and industrial professionals inspirations and ideas. Enterprise and industrial professionals could also collaborate with interested academic and research institutions to conduct market research, collect and analyse data for developing and launching new products or services to the market. Academic and research institutions could contact civil society and end users for collecting insights and opinions for conducting market study and research. These insights and opinions would provide the researchers a relatively comprehensive picture of the silver economy from the consumers' perspective. Enterprise and industrial professionals could choose to list their company information and developed products and services for older people on the platform. Civil society and end users would also get information from the platform regarding new products and services that are designed for older people, and benefit from it.

This platform, "Silver Triangle" could also become an extended network, "Silver Pentagon", by connecting with policy makers and public authorities and other innovation actors. Information regarding funding opportunities, financing options and benefits, and policy supports could be shared on the platform with the information of the contact coordinators. Enterprises, industrial professionals, and academic and research institutions could be directed to certain funding or support for research, development, and innovation. Moreover, other innovation actors, such as charities, non-government organisations, and non-profit organisations could also share their insights, such as the links to annual reports, factsheets, and conference details, on the platform. It could raise awareness of the development progress, the needs, and the challenges to a wider stakeholder group. Age Friendly Ireland, one of the civil society and end user organisation, could also promote the *Age Friendly Business Recognition Programme* to help the businesses to make changes with low cost or zero cost to serve their older customers in a better way ([Age Friendly Ireland, 2023](#)).

Moreover, Central Statistics Office, the library and database of silver economy, could also choose to connect with the platform to promote the data and information availability to a bigger range of audience. For example, the "Older Persons Information Hub" is not only useful to academic and research institutions for understanding the living status and well-being level of older people, but also helpful to other stakeholders who would like to understand the potential needs of the older people and investigate the possible solutions to the challenges.

The dwindling labour supply in the next 50 years would pose a significant challenge to the national economy and to the silver economy. Hence it is important to consider what we could do to maintain the growth in the labour market. To the older people who are willing to and

capable to continue to work, the proposed strategy suggests a promotion for age friendly working conditions and working schedule. A toolkit would be necessary to give employers useful information and help on how to improve the design of working environment, adjust working conditions and working schedules, for example, the availability of hybrid-working options, accessibility of business premises and other essential facilities. The improvement on the design and the facilities can benefit not only older people, but also the people who may have physical difficulties, such as mobility difficulties and vision impairments.

Moreover, education and lifelong learning should also be paid attention to. Education and lifelong learning programmes that provide supports on eliminating the barriers for technology, digital services, financial literacy and other areas are necessary to older people who may not be familiar with them. Such an education or lifelong learning programme is essential to encourage older people to connect with the local communities and society actively and to participate in social activities. To other generations, education on the silver economy is also necessary for reduce the negative impact of ageism. Misunderstanding and stereotypical opinions is one of the reasons that cause stigma for the ageing. Via the education on silver economy and related markets, and the related economic values and social values, it is possible to encourage individuals and organisations to practice social responsibilities and to generate sustainable value for the silver economy in the long run. The proposed strategy suggests academic, education and training institutions could develop related programmes that benefit older people and a wider society, to not only raise the awareness of silver economy, but also provide support on how to embed the understanding into practices.

Last but not least, to respond to the initiatives from World Health Organization on healthy ageing ([World Health Organization, 2021, 2023](#)), an ageing friendly environment is essential and important. The proposed strategy suggests to promote the guide and toolkit that are developed by World Health Organization ([World Health Organization, 2023](#)), and by Age Friendly Ireland ([Age Friendly Ireland, no date](#)). Establishing age friendly cities and communities need joint action and effort from stakeholders. Promotion of the importance of building an age friendly external environment would be necessary. Moreover, supports for sustainable improvement and development with consideration of energy usage, carbon footprints, digitalisation and impact of local employment would also be significant.

8.5 EUROPEAN SPORTS SECTOR

The development of an effective strategy for the silver economy within the sport sector requires a multi-faceted approach. The following strategies encompass policy development, healthcare reforms, technology adoption, research and development, community programs, education, and awareness initiatives tailored to the unique needs of the aging population.

Policy Development

National Level:

- ▶ Propose tax incentives for businesses promoting senior sports, encouraging investment in the sector.
- ▶ Develop regulatory frameworks that facilitate the establishment and operation of senior-friendly sports facilities and programs.
- ▶ Create social programs that support access to sports activities for seniors, ensuring inclusivity.

Regional and Local Level:

- ▶ Tailor policies to address regional variations in sports preferences and accessibility.
- ▶ Collaborate with local governments to implement incentives for businesses supporting senior sports initiatives.

Healthcare Reforms

National Level:

- ▶ Identify and advocate for healthcare reforms that prioritize preventive care, aligning with the holistic well-being goals of senior sports.
- ▶ Ensure that healthcare policies address the unique healthcare needs of seniors engaged in sports activities.

Regional and Local Level:

- ▶ Collaborate with regional healthcare providers to establish partnerships promoting integrated healthcare services for senior athletes.
- ▶ Develop local healthcare initiatives addressing sports-related health concerns specific to certain regions.

Innovation and Technology Adoption

National Level:

- ▶ Identify and promote the adoption of technologies that enhance healthcare delivery for senior athletes.
- ▶ Encourage the development of wearable technologies and digital solutions for monitoring health metrics during sports activities.

Regional and Local Level:

- ▶ Leverage technology to connect seniors in remote areas with sports programs, fostering inclusivity.
- ▶ Collaborate with local tech innovators to develop region-specific solutions for senior sports engagement.

Research and Development

National Level:

- ▶ Allocate resources for research initiatives focused on innovations benefiting senior athletes, including sports equipment, training methods, and injury prevention.
- ▶ Support partnerships between sports organizations and research institutions to drive advancements in senior sports.

Regional and Local Level:

- ▶ Tailor research initiatives to address specific challenges and opportunities in local senior sports, considering regional preferences and health considerations.

Community Programs

National Level:

- ▶ Identify and promote community-based sports programs that cater to the diverse interests of senior athletes.
- ▶ Establish partnerships with local sports clubs, retirement communities, and community centres to facilitate sports engagement.

Regional and Local Level:

- ▶ Develop localized community sports events, encouraging participation from seniors with varying sports interests.

- ▶ Collaborate with local organizations to ensure sports programs align with cultural preferences in different regions.

Education and Awareness

National Level:

- ▶ Launch educational campaigns raising awareness about the benefits of senior sports and addressing stereotypes about aging.
- ▶ Integrate sports-related education into school curricula to instil a positive attitude towards sports participation among the younger population.

Regional and Local Level:

- ▶ Customize educational campaigns to address local perceptions and highlight the cultural significance of senior sports.
- ▶ Engage local schools and community organizations in promoting the positive impact of senior sports.

Other Strategies

National Level:

- ▶ Establish a national governing body for senior sports, ensuring standardized guidelines and quality control.
- ▶ Advocate for the inclusion of senior sports in national sports events, increasing visibility and recognition.

Regional and Local Level:

- ▶ Develop region-specific marketing campaigns to promote local senior sports initiatives.
- ▶ Collaborate with regional sports organizations to create a network supporting the growth of senior sports in different localities.

In conclusion, a comprehensive strategy for the silver economy in the sport sector involves the integration of policies, healthcare reforms, technology adoption, research and development, community programs, education, and other region-specific initiatives. By addressing the unique challenges and opportunities within the aging population, this strategy aims to foster a vibrant and inclusive senior sports sector at both the national and local levels.

8.6 EUROPEAN TOURISM SECTOR

Observations for a strategy apply generally to senior travellers in EU member states, although there will be variations in the numbers of visitors and the economic contribution of these tourists according to structural factors such as the pension age, the proportion of people taking early retirement, the size of the disposable income of older persons, family size and the cost of transport, tourism packages and tourism services as a whole. While these factors are important, despite the limiting effects of travel restrictions during the Covid-19 pandemic, the general trend in accessible tourism is that the senior market continues to grow in strength and senior travellers wish to travel for pleasure, day visits, and visiting friends and family for as long as they can do so in comfort and safety and a supporting strategy is important to facilitate this.

13. Research Methodology

The data that are used in the Strategy Report include both primary data and secondary data. Primary qualitative data were generated via SWOT study which was distributed online across four partner regions. 108 effective responses were collected in the data collection process. This is an anonymous survey which was designed by Hincks Centre for Entrepreneurship Excellence in Munster Technological University in Ireland (Robinson and Xiong, 2023a). By using Quadruple Helix approach, four main stakeholder groups were determined which are shown below. A fifth category, other innovation actors, was also included considering the inclusiveness and diversity of the stakeholder groups.

- ▶ Civil society/end users
- ▶ Education/research/training
- ▶ Policy makers/public authorities/supporting institutions
- ▶ SMEs/industrial sectors
- ▶ Other innovation actors

Through 16 in-depth questions, the understandings, perceptions and opinions on the silver economy development at regional and EU level from the varied stakeholders from different regions were captured. Statistical analysis tools, SPSS and NVivo (Version 12) were used to process and analyse the collected data. A detailed SWOT analysis is available to view in the Senior Eco-Nect SWOT Composite Report (Robinson and Xiong, 2023a).

Moreover, secondary data which was collected from government portals, statistics offices at both EU level and national level, government public releases, research papers and other reliable resources were also analysed in the report.

The processing and analysis of both primary and secondary data were conducted concurrently. No special attention is given to either type of data to maintain the unbiasedness to the greatest extent to ensure the analysis, forecast, and recommendations to be neutral, which would support the key stakeholders in the partner regions and the corresponding ecosystem to conduct a joint action plan to develop a robust, inclusive and interconnected silver economy.

14. Conclusion

The Senior Eco-Nect Strategy Report: The Blueprint of Silver Economy Future Development aims to produce a joint strategy plan not only for the four partner countries, France, Slovenia, Spain and Ireland, but also for any other European countries that are interested in developing an inclusive and sustainable silver economy.

It presented an overview of the market and different sectors. Moreover, it also displayed the key players and stakeholders in the ecosystem in the partner countries which may inspire other European countries to explore the stakeholders and beneficial groups in their regional and national ecosystem. Moreover, the report explores the needs in different sectors and discusses the current policies at the European level. Several good practice cases were carefully selected and added to the report to inspire more stakeholders to participate in developing an inclusive, inter-connected and sustainable silver economy. An outlook of the overall market is also provided to give audiences a brief projection about the future trend in the silver economy and related sectors.

On the foundation of the Senior Eco-Nect SWOT composite report (Robinson and Xiong, 2023a) and the Senior Eco-Nect Market Study (Robinson and Xiong, 2023b), the strategy report also includes an analysis of the opportunities, challenges and strategies at the regional and national level in the partner countries. Moreover, it provides the reflective insights on what would be essential and necessary to a robust and sustainable silver economy at the European level. The analysis on the opportunities and challenges, and the suggested strategies were produced under the joint effort of all partners. From the discussion of the strategies, the similarities on the needs and “necessities” in the silver economy development would be displayed. Audiences may find some of the similarities may also apply to the current status of the silver economy development at the regional or national in where they are located.

The research methodology is also provided to describe how both the primary and secondary data were collected and processed to show the creditability of the data analysis.

Facing a rapid increasing ageing population, and growing and diverse needs from the group, it is important to think together and to act together to keep the positive synergy between sectors to develop an inclusive and inter-connected silver economy. This is a long journey to go and there is no short cut for tackling any challenges. Closely working together with partners,

stakeholders, beneficial groups with a determined vision and foresighted and practical strategy plan, a sustainable and robust silver economy would be developed in the near future.

15. References

Age Friendly Ireland (2022) *Developing an Age Friendly Tourist Destination*. Available at: <https://agefriendlyireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/AFI-Tourism-Case-Study-online.pdf>.

Age Friendly Ireland (2023a) *Age Friendly Business Recognition Programme*.

Age Friendly Ireland (2023b) 'Age Friendly Ireland-Transportation'. Available at: <https://agefriendlyireland.ie/category/transportation/why-its-important-transportation/> (Accessed: 15 November 2023).

Age Friendly Ireland (no date a) 'Guidelines/Toolkits – Main'. Available at: <https://agefriendlyireland.ie/category/publications/guidelines-toolkits/> (Accessed: 30 November 2023).

Age Friendly Ireland (no date b) 'Research – Main'. Available at: <https://agefriendlyireland.ie/category/publications/research/> (Accessed: 25 November 2023).

AGE Platform Europe (no date) *EU steps up its ambitions for life-long learning – but age barriers remain*, <https://www.age-platform.eu/>. Available at: <https://www.age-platform.eu/eu-steps-up-its-ambitions-for-life-long-learning-but-age-barriers-remain/> (Accessed: 30 November 2023).

ALONE (2021) *ALONE Annual Report 2021*. Available at: <https://alone.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Alone-Annual-Report-2021.pdf>.

ALONE (2023) *Annual Report 2022: Changing an ageing Ireland*.

Arranz, J.M., Burguillo, M. and Rubio, J. (2022) 'Are public transport policies influencing the transport behaviour of older people and economic equity? A case study of the Madrid Region', *Research in Transportation Economics*, 95, p. 101218. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.retrec.2022.101218>.

Bank of Ireland (no date) *Financial advice for older customers | Customers, Families and Carers | Bank of Ireland*, <https://personalbanking.bankofireland.com/>. Available at: <https://personalbanking.bankofireland.com/financial-wellbeing/support-centre/financial-inclusion/extra-help-for-customers-families-and-carers/financial-advice-for-older-customers/> (Accessed: 25 November 2023).

Central Statistics Office (2017) *Census of Population 2016 - Profile 3 An Age Profile of Ireland* - CSO - Central Statistics Office. CSO. Available at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cp3oy/cp3/> (Accessed: 29 August 2023).

Central Statistics Office (2020) *Projected Population aged 65+ - CSO - Central Statistics Office*. CSO. Available at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/hubs/p-opi/olderpersonsinformationhub/ageingpopulation/projectedpopulationaged65/> (Accessed: 30 August 2023).

Central Statistics Office (2022a) *Farm Holders - CSO - Central Statistics Office*. CSO. Available at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/hubs/p-opi/olderpersonsinformationhub/employment/farmholders/> (Accessed: 30 August 2023).

Central Statistics Office (2022b) *Healthy Life Years - CSO - Central Statistics Office*. CSO. Available at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/hubs/p-opi/olderpersonsinformationhub/health/healthylifeyears/> (Accessed: 30 August 2023).

Central Statistics Office (2022c) *Holiday Travel - CSO - Central Statistics Office*. CSO. Available at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/hubs/p-opi/olderpersonsinformationhub/travelandtourism/holidaytravel/> (Accessed: 30 August 2023).

Central Statistics Office (2022d) *Pension Coverage - CSO - Central Statistics Office*. CSO. Available at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/hubs/p-opi/olderpersonsinformationhub/incomeandpoverty/pensioncoverage/> (Accessed: 25 November 2023).

Central Statistics Office (2022e) *Press Statement Older Persons Information Hub 2022 - CSO - Central Statistics Office*. CSO. Available at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/csolatestnews/pressreleases/2022pressreleases/presstatementolderpersonsinformationhub2022/> (Accessed: 29 August 2023).

Central Statistics Office (2023a) *Census of Population 2022 - Summary Results - CSO - Central Statistics Office*. CSO. Available at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cpsr/censusofpopulation2022-summaryresults/> (Accessed: 29 August 2023).

Central Statistics Office (2023b) *In Employment aged 65+ - CSO - Central Statistics Office*. CSO. Available at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/hubs/p-opi/olderpersonsinformationhub/employment/inemploymentaged65/> (Accessed: 30 August 2023).

Central Statistics Office (2023c) *Income - CSO - Central Statistics Office*. CSO. Available at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/hubs/p-opi/olderpersonsinformationhub/incomeandpoverty/income/> (Accessed: 30 August 2023).

Central Statistics Office (2023d) *Older Persons Information Hub - CSO - Central Statistics Office*. CSO. Available at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/hubs/p-opi/olderpersonsinformationhub/> (Accessed: 30 August 2023).

Central Statistics Office (2023e) *Poverty - CSO - Central Statistics Office*. CSO. Available at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/hubs/p-opi/olderpersonsinformationhub/incomeandpoverty/poverty/> (Accessed: 30 August 2023).

Central Statistics Office (2023f) *Tenure Status - CSO - Central Statistics Office*. Available at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/hubs/p-opi/olderpersonsinformationhub/housing/tenurestatus/> (Accessed: 30 August 2023).

Citizens Information Board (2023) *Free travel in Ireland*. Citizensinformation.ie. Available at: <https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/social-welfare/social-welfare-payments/extra-social-welfare-benefits/free-travel/> (Accessed: 15 November 2023).

ConwayLenihan, A., McGuirk, H. and McAleer, J. (2018) *Composite SWOT Analysis of all Partner Territories (PG105205)*. Available at: https://projects2014-2020.interregeurope.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/tx_tevprojects/library/file_1550487648.pdf.

Cunningham, L. and Sweetman, N. (2022) *2022 Annual Report*. Available at: <https://thehomeshare.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/THE-HomeShare-Annual-Report-2022.pdf>.

Department of Health and Age Friendly Ireland (2022) *Healthy Age Friendly Homes*. Available at: <https://agefriendlyireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Healthy-Age-Friendly-Homes-Interim-Report-August-2022.pdf>.

Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs (2023) *2024 Ageing Report. Underlying Assumptions and Projection Methodologies*. Available at: https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/publications/2024-ageing-report-underlying-assumptions-and-projection-methodologies_en (Accessed: 23 November 2023).

Dublin City University (2023) *Age Friendly University | Dublin City University | Age Friendly University*. Available at: <https://www.dcu.ie/agefriendly> (Accessed: 25 November 2023).

Eurofound (2011) *Older people and volunteering*, Eurofound. Available at: <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/information-sheet/2011/quality-of-life-social-policies/older-people-and-volunteering> (Accessed: 31 August 2023).

Euromontana (2021) *ACCELERATORS OF SILVER SMES: COLLECTION OF BEST PRACTICES FROM RURAL AND MOUNTAINOUS AREAS*.

Europass (no date) *European Digital Credentials for Learning | Europass*. Available at: <https://europa.eu/europass/en/europass-alati/european-digital-credentials> (Accessed: 30 November 2023).

European Commission (2021a) *The 2021 Ageing Report: Economic and Budgetary Projections for the EU Member States (2019-2070)*. Publications Office of the European Union. Available at: https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/publications/2021-ageing-report-economic-and-budgetary-projections-eu-member-states-2019-2070_en (Accessed: 18 September 2023).

European Commission (2021b) *The European pillar of social rights action plan*. LU: Publications Office. Available at: <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2767/89> (Accessed: 31 August 2023).

European Commission (2022a) *A European Care Strategy, European Commission - European Commission*. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_22_5169 (Accessed: 19 September 2023).

European Commission (2022b) *Lifelong learning strategy*. Available at: <https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-education-systems/ireland/lifelong-learning-strategy> (Accessed: 25 November 2023).

European Commission (2023a) *European care strategy - One year after the adoption*. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=10654&furtherNews=yes> (Accessed: 9 November 2023).

European Commission (2023b) *Population: demographic situation, languages and religions*. Available at: <https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-education-systems/spain/population-demographic-situation-languages-and-religions> (Accessed: 13 September 2023).

European Commission. Statistical Office of the European Union. (2020) *Ageing Europe: looking at the lives of older people in the EU: 2020 edition*. LU: Publications Office. Available at: <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2785/628105> (Accessed: 16 August 2023).

Eurostat (2018) *Glossary:Old-age dependency ratio*. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Old-age_dependency_ratio (Accessed: 30 November 2023).

Eurostat (2020a) *Ageing Europe - statistics on health and disability*. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Ageing_Europe_-_statistics_on_health_and_disability (Accessed: 31 August 2023).

Eurostat (2020b) *Ageing Europe - statistics on housing and living conditions*. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Ageing_Europe_-_statistics_on_housing_and_living_conditions (Accessed: 31 August 2023).

Eurostat (2020c) *Ageing Europe - statistics on working and moving into retirement*. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Ageing_Europe_-_statistics_on_working_and_moving_into_retirement (Accessed: 31 August 2023).

Eurostat (2021a) *File: Healthy life years (2021). png*. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Healthy_life_years_\(2021\).png](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Healthy_life_years_(2021).png) (Accessed: 30 August 2023).

Eurostat (2021b) *Glossary:Under-occupied dwelling*. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Under-occupied_dwelling (Accessed: 5 December 2023).

Eurostat (2021c) *Tourism trends and ageing*. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Tourism_trends_and_ageing (Accessed: 31 August 2023).

Eurostat (2023a) *Older people report better health status in cities - Products Eurostat News - Eurostat*. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/w/ddn-20230413-1> (Accessed: 31 August 2023).

Eurostat (2023b) *Population structure and ageing*. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Population_structure_and_ageing (Accessed: 28 August 2023).

Eurostat (2023c) *Statistics / Eurostat*. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/DEMO_PJANIND_custom_7283890/default/table?lang=en (Accessed: 30 August 2023).

Femenias, P. and Geromel, F. (2020) 'Adaptable housing? A quantitative study of contemporary apartment layouts that have been rearranged by end-users', *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 35(2), pp. 481–505. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10901-019-09693-9>.

Gauret, F. (2023) 'How is Europe addressing challenges in long-term care?', *euronews*, 23 February. Available at: <https://www.euronews.com/next/2023/02/22/how-is-europe-addressing-challenges-in-long-term-care> (Accessed: 19 September 2023).

ILOSTAT (2023) *ILO Data Explorer*. Available at: https://www.ilo.org/shinyapps/bulkexplorer57/?lang=en&segment=indicator&id=EAP_2WAP_SEX_AGE_RT_A (Accessed: 30 August 2023).

INSEE (2021) *68.1 million inhabitants in 2070: a population that would be slightly larger, but older, than in 2021 - Insee Première - 1881*. Available at: <https://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/6013996#titre-bloc-9> (Accessed: 31 August 2023).

Instituto Nacional de Estadística (2023) *Pyramid of registered population in Spain*. Available at: <https://www.ine.es/covid/piramides.htm?L=1> (Accessed: 22 September 2023).

Interreg Europe (2023) *SILVER SMEs, Interreg Europe*. Available at: <https://projects2014-2020.interregeurope.eu/silversmes/> (Accessed: 19 September 2023).

Jamet, M. and EI-Atillah, I. (2023) *Greying but staying: The Europeans still working in their 70s*, *euronews*. Available at: <https://www.euronews.com/next/2023/02/22/the-rise-of-elderly-workers-who-works-beyond-the-age-of-65-or-75-in-europe> (Accessed: 31 August 2023).

Madeline, B. (2023) 'France's aging population is a challenge that goes far beyond the pensions issue', *Le Monde.fr*, 15 March. Available at: https://www.lemonde.fr/en/france/article/2023/03/15/france-s-aging-population-is-a-challenge-that-goes-far-beyond-the-pensions-issue_6019391_7.html (Accessed: 31 August 2023).

Makindu, A. (2021) 'Ageing policies – access to services in different Member States. Country study on France (Annex II)', *Publication for the committee on Employment and Social Affairs, Policy Department for Economic, Scientific and Quality of Life Policies, European Parliament, Luxembourg* [Preprint].

McGuirk, H., Conway Lenihan, A. and Lenihan, N. (2022) 'Awareness and potential of the silver economy for enterprises: a European regional level study', *Small Enterprise Research*, 29(1), pp. 6–19. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13215906.2021.1919915>.

Munster Technological University (no date) *Munster Technological University (MTU) Age-Friendly University, Cork Institute of Technology*. Available at: <https://www.cit.ie/mtu-age-friendly-university> (Accessed: 25 November 2023).

Nielsen, C.W. and Ambrose, I. (1999) 'Lifetime adaptable housing in Europe', *Technology and Disability*, 10(1), pp. 11–19. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3233/TAD-1999-10103>.

OECD (no date) *Demography - Old-age dependency ratio - OECD Data, the OECD*. Available at: <http://data.oecd.org/pop/old-age-dependency-ratio.htm> (Accessed: 30 November 2023).

Robinson, R. and Xiong, W. (2023a) *Senior EcoNect Composite Regional SWOT Analyses Report*.

Robinson, R. and Xiong, W. (2023b) *Senior EcoNect Market Study*.

Senior Eco-Nect (2023) *Handbook on Silver Economy, Sustainable Development and Innovation Ecosystem*.

Silberman-Beltramella, M. *et al.* (2022) 'Social relations and health in older people in Spain using SHARE survey data', *BMC Geriatrics*, 22(1), p. 276. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12877-022-02975-y>.

Skills and Labour Market Research Unit (2023) *Lifelong learning in Ireland*,

Solicitors for the Elderly Ireland (no date) *Solicitors for the Elderly Ireland, Solicitors for the Elderly Ireland*. Available at: <https://www.solicitorsfortheelderly.ie> (Accessed: 25 November 2023).

Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (2023) *The European Mobility Week will take place from 16 to 22 September*. Available at: <https://www.stat.si/StatWeb/en/News/Index/11319> (Accessed: 14 September 2023).

Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (no date) *Population Pyramid of Slovenia 1971 -- 2061*. Available at: <https://www.stat.si/PopPiramida/eng/Piramida2.asp> (Accessed: 14 September 2023).

THE HomeShare (2020) *THE HomeShare Annual Report 2020*. Available at: <https://thehomeshare.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/THE-HomeShare-Annual-Report-2020.pdf>.

THE HomeShare (2021) *THE HomeShare Annual Report 2021*. Available at: <https://thehomeshare.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/THE-HomeShare-Annual-Report-2021.pdf>.

Trinity College Dublin (2022) *Age - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion | Trinity College Dublin*. Available at: <https://www.tcd.ie/equality/themes/age/> (Accessed: 25 November 2023).

United Nations (2023) *World Social Report 2023: Leaving No One Behind in an Ageing World, UN DESA Publications*. Available at: <http://desapublications.un.org/publications/world-social-report-2023-leaving-no-one-behind-ageing-world> (Accessed: 23 November 2023).

University College Cork (no date) *Age, University College Cork*. Available at: <https://www.ucc.ie/en/edi/hub/grounds/age/> (Accessed: 25 November 2023).

University College Dublin (no date) *Age Friendly University - UCD Access and Lifelong Learning*. Available at: <https://www.ucd.ie/all/cometoucd/applying/lifelonglearning/agefriendlyuniversity/> (Accessed: 25 November 2023).

University of Galway (no date) *Age Friendly Campus*. Available at: <https://stories.nuigalway.ie/age-friendly-campus/> (Accessed: 25 November 2023).

University of Limerick (2020) *Ageing Research Centre (ARC) | University of Limerick*. Available at: <https://www.ul.ie/hri/ageing-research-centre-arc> (Accessed: 25 November 2023).

University of Medicine and Health Sciences (no date) *Age*. Available at: <https://www.rcsi.com/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/implementation/age> (Accessed: 25 November 2023).

Varnai, P. *et al.* (2018) *The silver economy*. LU: Publications Office of the European Union. Available at: <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2759/338976> (Accessed: 16 August 2023).

Vodafone (2021) *Vodafone Ireland Foundation launches Hi Digital*. Available at: <https://n.vodafone.ie/aboutus/press/vodafone-ireland-foundation-launches-hi-digital.html> (Accessed: 25 November 2023).

World Health Organization (2007) 'Computer literacy lessons for the elderly in the City of Ljubljana', *Age-Friendly World*. Available at:

<https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/afp/computer-literacy-lessons-for-the-elderly-in-the-city-of-ljubljana/> (Accessed: 21 September 2023).

World Health Organization (2013) 'Free rides with the local bus', *Age-Friendly World*. Available at: <https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/afp/free-rides-with-the-local-bus/> (Accessed: 14 September 2023).

World Health Organization (2021) *Decade of healthy ageing: baseline report*. Available at: <https://www.who.int/publications-detail-redirect/9789240017900> (Accessed: 29 November 2023).

World Health Organization (2023a) *By 2024, the 65-and-over age group will outnumber the youth group: new WHO report on healthy ageing*. Available at: <https://www.who.int/europe/news/item/11-10-2023-by-2024--the-65-and-over-age-group-will-outnumber-the-youth-group--new-who-report-on-healthy-ageing> (Accessed: 23 November 2023).

World Health Organization (2023b) *National programmes for age-friendly cities and communities*. Available at: <https://www.who.int/teams/social-determinants-of-health/demographic-change-and-healthy-ageing/age-friendly-environments/national-programmes-afcc> (Accessed: 23 November 2023).

World Health Organization (2023c) *Number of countries that have a long-term care policy / plan / strategy / framework (stand-alone or integrated within an ageing and health plan), WHO Data*. Available at: [https://platform.who.int/data/maternal-newborn-child-adolescent-ageing/indicator-explorer-new/mca/number-of-countries-that-have-a-long-term-care-policy-plan-strategy-framework-\(stand-alone-or-integrated-within-an-ageing-and-health-plan\)](https://platform.who.int/data/maternal-newborn-child-adolescent-ageing/indicator-explorer-new/mca/number-of-countries-that-have-a-long-term-care-policy-plan-strategy-framework-(stand-alone-or-integrated-within-an-ageing-and-health-plan)) (Accessed: 29 November 2023).

World Health Organization (2023d) *Progress report on the United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing, 2021-2023*. Available at: <https://www.who.int/publications-detail-redirect/9789240079694> (Accessed: 23 November 2023).

Fernández Palacios, J. y Ortega Cachón, I. (dirs.), *Ranking de territorios por la economía sénior 2021*, Fundación MAPFRE, Madrid, 2022.

Instituto Nacional de Estadística. Ministerio de Asuntos Económicos y Transformación Digital (2008, 2019, 2020 y 2021).

Instituto de Mayores y Servicios Sociales. Ministerio de Derechos Sociales y Agenda 2030 (2019 y 2021).

Instituto Nacional de la Seguridad Social. Ministerio de Inclusión, Seguridad Social y Migraciones (2021).

Observatorio Inverco (2019) y Federación de EPSV (datos del País Vasco).

Instituto BBVA (2018).

European Commission, (2014) Study: [Economic Impact and Travel Patterns of Accessible Tourism in Europe](#) (PDF download)

European Commission. (2015) Study: [Mapping and Performance Check of the Supply of Accessible Tourism Services in Europe](#) (PDF download, added 19 April 2015)