



# Senior Explorers of Urban Environments

**SEE U : Senior Explorers of Urban Environments: Reflecting on Two Days of Intergenerational Learning and Digital Exploration**



*Figure 1 SEE U partners at AGE Platform Europe offices in Brussels*

**Brussels, October 2024** – On October 8-9, the *SEE U: Senior Explorers of Urban Environments* project partners gathered at AGE Platform Europe in Brussels for a two-day event filled with reflection, sharing, and forward-thinking. Representatives from queraum (Austria), Letokruh (Czech Republic), Slovenian Third Age University (Slovenia), GERONTOLOGIE CH (Switzerland), and AGE Platform Europe discussed the progress and impact of the Erasmus+ initiative, which aims to empower older adults through digital technology and urban exploration.

The event provided a meaningful space for participants to share personal reflections on how the project opened doors- both figuratively and literally.

“The project gave us new horizons for older people,” said Petra Javrh from the Slovenian Third Age University. “It has shown them how digital technology can be a friend, inviting them to play and explore with joy.”

For Marine Luc from AGE Platform Europe, the project exemplifies the empowerment of older adults through collaboration: “A high number of citizens have received the SEE U developed [manuals](#), [workshop concept](#), [infosheet](#), [factsheet](#) and lately our [handbook](#). There is now a broader awareness of the issues we are tackling. This project has built new possibilities, and I’m sure there will be many more to come in the future.”

### **Entr’âges and Intergenerational Solidarity: A Solution for Inclusive Age-Friendly Environments**



*Figure 2 Anis Ben Hadjali, coordinator of Entr’âges*

The second day of the meeting, held on October 9, focused on a recurring theme in policy discussions: intergenerational solidarity and its potential to create more inclusive, age-friendly environments. Participants were introduced to [Entr’âges, a Belgian member organisation of AGE](#), which plays a crucial role in facilitating intergenerational projects in the field of education, advocacy, and community development. Anis Ben Hadjali, coordinator from Entr’âges, presented their work, highlighting the organisation's focus on bridging the gap between generations.

Entr’âges’ activities include facilitating workshops that bring together seniors, children, and parents, promoting intergenerational bonds through storytelling and reading. Anis explained that “our goal is to raise awareness of ageism and foster dialogue between generations. We believe that through these connections, we can promote a more united and fair society.”

In the discussions that followed, participants explored the role of digital tools in connecting generations, with a specific focus on the barriers and benefits technology presents. Older people often face challenges when navigating digital spaces, such as memory issues or a lack of confidence. However, as Jiří Tuček

from Letokruh noted, “For me, it means ‘never get stuck.’ There is always something new to learn.” Participants discussed how younger generations could support older people by offering technical assistance in a way that is empathetic and respectful.

Dušana Findeisen from the Slovenian Third Age University emphasized the importance of open-mindedness: “It is essential that both young and older people listen to each other. This is the foundation of intergenerational solidarity. Combining knowledge from older generations with new technologies allows for learning without losing the human connection.”

### **Creating Age-Friendly Environments through Intergenerational Solidarity**

The participants agreed that intergenerational solidarity holds the potential to create more inclusive, age-friendly environments. Through their discussions, several key ideas emerged:

- **Empathy and Patience in Teaching:** As noted by Neža Repanšek, young people can play a crucial role in helping older people engage with technology. “It’s important that the support offered is based on the older person's interests and needs. When young people show patience and empathy, it fosters a deeper connection.”
- **Breaking Down Digital Barriers:** Vladka Dvořáková from Letokruh explained that while technology can feel overwhelming for many older adults, community workshops offer a safe space for exploration. “Through workshops, we have given many older participants the opportunity to try new digital tools, like the Actionbound app, and discover hidden places in their cities. These shared experiences build bridges between generations.”
- **Meeting Places for Exchange:** Creating environments where young and old can come together naturally was a key point of the discussion. Katka Karbanová from Letokruh said, “We need to think about spaces like cafés, parks, or libraries where these interactions can happen. In Slovenia, for example, we have reading shelves in the woods where books are shared by people of all ages. These kinds of creative settings encourage dialogue and mutual understanding.”
- **Combining Digital and Human Elements:** Digital tools were seen as a powerful way to connect generations, but participants stressed that the human element must not be forgotten. “Podcasts, social media, and virtual reality can be amazing tools for sharing knowledge and experience,” said Anita Rappauer from queraum. “However, what matters most is the interaction. Older adults can share their knowledge with younger generations, and new technologies allow these stories to be told in innovative ways.”

### **Building an inclusive future together**

