

DELIVERABLE D4.2
Campaigning for equal rights in old age
Report on Campaign for the EP elections (EU Age Equality Strategy) and Report on Campaign for the UN Convention on the Rights of Older People

Beneficiary	AGE Platform Europe
Specific Agreement	101140462
Proposal Acronym	AGE WP 2024
Call **Type of Action**	CERV-2021-OG-SGA CERV-FPA-OG
Work Package	WP 4
Type of deliverable	Report
Dissemination level	Sensitive
Actual date of delivery	2025-01-17

1. Description of the deliverable

This deliverable is part of WP4 Communication, dissemination and campaigning activities. It covers the preparation, kick-off, and various activities of the **two key Campaigns of 2024**, involving all Members of AGE Platform Europe, focused on promoting equal rights for older people:

I. Campaign for the 2024 European Parliament Elections
II. Campaign for the United Nations - Convention on the Rights of Older People

I. Campaign for the 2024 European Parliament Elections

The goal of this campaign was to remind policymakers and the civil society about the importance of working towards a Europe for all ages.
It proposed impactful measures at the EU level, such as implementing an EU Age Equality Strategy. The campaign aimed to ensure that the newly elected Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) address the issues linked to an ageing population.

II. Campaign for a United Nations Convention on the Rights of Older People

This campaign featured two key initiatives:

1) We participated in the **Global Rally**, a key initiative of the "**Age With Rights"** campaign for the drafting of a **United Nations Convention on the rights of older people** organised by the Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People (GAROP), in which we partnered with, bringing the voices of some of our members on social media.

2) AGE Platform Europe's delegation actively participated in the **14th session of the United Nations (UN) Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWG)**. We contributed to the call for written submissions on key focus areas, including:

- Participation in public life and decision-making processes
- Accessibility, infrastructure, and habitat
- Social inclusion
- Health and access to healthcare services

Additionally, we organised a side event exploring the role of the EU in promoting the human rights of older persons.

2. Key outcomes

2.1 Campaign for the European Parliament 2024 Elections

This campaign began in the spring of 2023, involving all Members of AGE Platform Europe. It was decided to use the European Parliament Elections in 2024 as an opportunity to strongly advocate for the adoption of a strategy on age equality. The Manifesto was officially adopted in June 2023 by the General Assembly of AGE after a process of elaboration with the Task Forces, the Executive Committee and our Council of Administration, giving a strong legitimacy to the text.

In this Manifesto, we propose concrete measures to implement the outcomes of recent and fruitful debates and effectively:

- promote age equality,
- foster participation and active ageing,
- ensure autonomy and well-being.

AGE Members have translated it into 12 languages with the help of AGE staff. It is available in Bulgarian, Czech, Dutch, Finnish, French, Greek, Italian, Maltese, Portuguese, Polish, Spanish and Swedish (in addition to English). AGE has decided to have a short, two-pager version of the Manifesto, directed to the general public, and a longer version more directed to policymakers and stakeholders more familiar with EU processes.

This campaign led to the public endorsement of **69 individuals**, including Members of the European Parliament candidates and current members, policymakers, Civil Society Organisation representatives, researchers, and other supporters.

> Read the AGE Manifesto here or by accessing **Annex 1** in this Deliverable

AGE Members involvement in the Campaign

AGE Platform Europe prepared and provided communication materials, campaign resources, good practices, and tools, with a specific focus on our **AGE Manifesto** to encourage and equip our members and civil society to engage with candidates, ensuring that newly elected Members of the European Parliament address challenges related to ageing demographics and contribute to the realisation of an EU Age Equality Strategy and a Europe for all ages.

The Manifesto was successfully disseminated by AGE Members at a national level and thanks to the CERV regranting, among Members of the European Parliament and candidates in several Member States.

At the same time, AGE met with political parties and political groups on EU level to disseminate the Manifesto, make recommendations and discuss potential synergies.

AGE also applied and was accepted as an official campaign partner of the European Parliament, helping to spread the 'use your vote' video, which embodies AGE's vision of dialogue between generations in the context of civic life: in the video older persons share their experience of dictatorship and democracy, urging younger people – their grandchildren – to go and use their vote, and to use it wisely.

AGE Manifesto 2024 Launch Event

The AGE Manifesto 2024 was officially launched on **24 January 2024** together with key EU officials and partners.
The event, hosted by former Members of the European Parliament **Milan Brglez** and **Jarosław Duda**, featured speakers from the Cabinet of former Vice-President of the European Commission and Commissioner for Democracy and Demography, and now EU Commissioner for the Mediterranean, Dubravka Šuica. It also included Members of the European Parliament and other supporters, who provided insights into the challenges and achievements of the previous legislature in protecting the rights of older people and promoting age equality.

Dr. Heidrun Mollenkopf, President of AGE Platform Europe, welcomed participants and addressed several critical issues, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the challenges of implementing rights-based long-term care policies, and the war in Ukraine, which has particularly impacted older people.

Participants in the launch event calling for a European Age Equality Strategy included:

- Mr Marco La Marca, from the cabinet of Former Vice President Šuica;
- Magdalena Rygalska on behalf of Former MEP Jarosław Duda;
- MEP Katrin Langensiepen;
- Former MEP Milan Brglez;
- MEP Sirpa Pietikäinen;
- Sofia Lopez Piqueres, representing MEP Jordi Cañas;
- Former MEP Stelios Kympouropoulos;
- Former MEP Josianne Cutajar;
- Former MEP José Gusmão;
- Annemie Drieskens, President of COFACE-Families Europe;
- Miguel Angel Cabra de Luna, Member of the EESC;
- María José Tarrero, Counsellor at the Permanent Representation of Spain to the EU.

➢ More information about the **AGE Manifesto Launch Event** can be found in our dedicated article

Manifesto Explainers

We have prepared three Manifesto Explainers that provide detailed insights on the following topics: **Age Equality**, **Foster Participation and Active Ageing**, and **Autonomy and Well-Being**. In these policy documents, we explored these calls in details and provided future EU officials with recommendations for changes. As these are policy papers, you can find more information on the explainers in D2.1 and D2.4.

We shared this content on our blog, website, and social media platforms.

- **Manifesto Explainer #1 | AGE EQUALITY**
  - This policy document examines what age equality means, why it is important and what we need to achieve it.

- **Manifesto Explainer #2 | FOSTER PARTICIPATION AND ACTIVE AGEING**
  - This document examines what participation and active ageing means, why fostering participation in old age is important and what do we need on EU level to achieve it.

- **Manifesto Explainer #3 | ENSURE AUTONOMY AND WELL BEING**

- Autonomy means to have control over one's life, well-being means to value it. In this explainer, we dive into policies regarding the labour market, adequate pensions and long-term care and fighting elder abuse.

Meetings and exchanges with political parties and candidates before the election

As of autumn 2023, we have begun to make contact with European political groups and parties. The aim was to present our manifesto and highlight the importance of our calls so that they could be taken into account by the political parties when drafting their own manifestos. These meetings were also an opportunity to meet the people in charge of monitoring the progress of the elections and to see if any potential synergies could be identified in our work programmes.

We aimed to continue building on these contacts and they allowed us to recruit a couple of MEP candidates who supported our manifesto publicly on our campaign blog. (see the point below).

Meetings after the elections

Right after the elections, we contacted those candidates who endorsed our calls and from whom we knew they were elected and tried to reach out to newly elected MEPs and the members of the 2019-2024 interest group on solidarity between generations. The aim was to gather support for strong age equality policies in the next European Commission by weighing on the Commissioner hearings in the European Parliament. We had direct meetings with collaborators of MEPs Tinke Strik and Saskia Bricmont, and a bilateral with MEP Idoia Mendía, who explicitly accepted to carry the fight for age equality throughout the new legislature. Another direct contact was also made with MEP Gordan Bosanac, focussed on a specific question regarding a possible EU Pensioner Card initiative (see D2.4).

Campaign for an EP Intergroup dedicated to "Europe for all ages'

On 2 October 2024, following the EP Elections, **AGE Platform Europe** and **Ms Idoia Mendía Cueva**, S&D Member of the European Parliament, organised an event at the European Parliament to celebrate the International Day of Older Persons (1st October) and to **launch our campaign for an EP intergroup dedicated to "Europe for all ages".**

Members of the AGE Executive Committee, AGE members, civil society partners and Members of the European Parliament from several political groups gathered around the table to promote the recommendations set out in the AGE Manifesto and the Intergenerational Declaration of AGE and the European Youth Forum,
The event was an opportunity to call on the new European Parliament and the European Commission to reaffirm their commitment to ensuring that older people enjoy the same rights and dignity as younger citizens.

The event was attended by the following Members of the European Parliament:

- MEP Marcos Ros, on behalf of Ms Idoia Mendía;
- MEP Marina Kaljurand;
- MEP Marc Angel;
- MEP Katrin Langensiepen;
- MEP Pernando Barrena;
- MEP Gordan Bosanac;
- MEP Elena Kountoura;
- MEP Loucas Fourlas;
- MEP Costas Mavrides;

➢ More information about this event can be found in our dedicated article

The call for the creation of 'Europe for All Ages' EP Intergroup gained the support of **33 Members of the European Parliament**.

Unfortunately, despite the enthusiasm and formal support from 32 Members of the European Parliament for our mission and their interest in participating in this discussion, our proposal for the intergroup was not selected among other topics, due to the limited number of intergroups that can be established. Nonetheless, **we have already begun working on reestablishing an Interest Group on Ageing and Longevity** to ensure that older persons remain a priority for policymakers and that the principle of solidarity between generations is not forgotten. This work will continue into 2025.
The first event of the Interest Group took place on 4 December in the form of a breakfast discussion on Ageism and Ableism as part of the EP's Disability Rights Week, featuring an exchange with the UN Independent Expert on the Human Rights of Older Persons (see an article here)
The first coordination call of the interest group took place on 17 December and paved the way for the next event in early 2025, which will focus on the need for a comprehensive ageing strategy in the EU's policies.

Social media

In 2024, AGE Platform Europe actively used social media to disseminate our **European Parliament Elections Campaign 2024**, centered on the AGE Manifesto. We called on policymakers, future Members of the European Parliament, and civil society to read and endorse our Manifesto on our dedicated blog.

We also showcased various testimonials of endorsements on our social media channels, highlighting the importance of creating a **Europe for all ages** and advocating for the implementation of the **EU Age Equality Strategy**.

These posts generated significant engagement.

On **Linkedin** (1 – 31 December 2024)

- Number of posts: 33
- Total Impressions: 12.189
- Total Reactions: 542
- Total Comments: 5
- Reposts: 82

- On **Facebook** (1 – 31 December 2024)
  - Number of posts: 33
  - Impressions: 6628
  - Post Reach: 5926
  - Engagements: 268
  - Comments: 10
  - Reposts: 56

- On **Twitter** (1 – 31 December 2024)
  - Number of posts: 33

Twitter no longer provides analytics for free user accounts.

Blog

We have created a blog specifically for the **2024 EP Campaign**.
On this blog, we showcased the AGE Manifesto in English and provide various translations in PDF format. The website featured a dedicated section for endorsing our Manifesto, and we have posted articles about the activities of AGE Platform Europe and our members related to this campaign.
Additionally, we highlighted the Manifesto endorsements, including quotes from Members of the European Parliament, stakeholders, and members of civil society.

After the elections, we also used the blog to campaign for gaining support from newly elected Members of the European Parliament and for the creation of an EP Intergroup dedicated to "Europe for All Ages", aimed at discussing policies that protect the rights of older people while promoting intergenerational solidarity.

- On Blog - AGE Manifesto 2024
  (1 January 2024 – 31 December 2024))
  - Views – **5.404**
  - Visitors – **2.776**
  - Views per visitor - **1.95**
  - Posts Published – **42**
  - AGE Manifesto Downloads - **2642** (in all available languages)

  - Most popular pages:
    - AGE Manifesto

    - Intergroup "Europe for all Ages"

- AGE Manifesto launched at the European Parliament

Campaign for the hearings and towards the next European Commission

This work has mainly been described in D2.1 and D2.4, as it involved drafting policy papers on various issues for the cabinets of the next European Commissioners, as inspiration for MEPs during the hearings etc. Still, it is worthwhile to mention them here:

- Social agenda letter with ESIP – see D2.4
- Letter to Ursula von der Leyen, lead candidate (not published)
- Letter to Nicolas Schmit, lead candidate (not published)
- Open Congratulatory letter to Ursula von der Leyen, elected President
- Joint call for Equality Policies – see D2.1
- Documents with questions for the hearings – see annex 2. These documents were not published on AGE's website, but shared with individual MEPs and the political group coordinators of the committees performing the hearings of Commissioners Mînzatu, Micallef and Lahbib
- Emails to Commissioners-elect Lahbib and Micallef (not published), letter to Executive Vice-Prisedent Mînzatu
- Mental Health joint call with MHE – see D2.4

Non-campaign work with the European Parliament

Due to the election year, there were few other, non-campaign meetings with Members of the European Parliament and proposing amendments on various files:

- We provided input in forms of amendments to the EMPL draft report on the European Semester 2025
- We drafted a scoping paper on the possibility of an EU Pensioner's Card at the request of MEP Gordan Bosanac and in the follow-up to a discussion in the PETI committee.

2.2 Campaign for a United Nations Convention on the Rights of Older People

This campaign featured two key initiatives: **"Age With Rights"** campaign and the 14th session of the United Nations (UN) **Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWG)**.

1) "Age With Rights" campaign organised by the Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People (GAROP)

From 8th to 14th April 2024, AGE Platform Europe participated in the **Global Rally**, a key initiative of the **#AgeWithRights** campaign for the drafting of a UN convention on the rights of older people organised by the Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People (GAROP), of which we are a founding member.

We contributed to the campaign by amplifying the voices of our members through social media and our website, advocating for the need for a new UN convention to ensure older people have equal access to health care, education, employment, financial security, and an adequate standard of living. Additionally, we supported and promoted the petition campaign to collect signatures, raising awareness and urging action for the adoption of this United Nations Convention on the rights of older persons.

This campaign took place in the run-up to the **14th session of the United Nations Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing**, held on May 20–24, 2024, in New York, where we also participated. More details about this will be covered in the following section of this Deliverable.

- More information about this campaign can be found in our dedicated article

2) 14th session of the United Nations (UN) Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWG)

The 14th session of the United Nations (UN) Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWG), held from 20 to 24 May of 2024, marked an important milestone in the promotion and protection of human rights in older age, after years of discussion and active advocacy by civil society.

AGE Platform Europe sent a delegation to New York to participate in this session, including our President, **Dr Heidrun Mollenkopf**, our member and Chair of the Task Force on Age-Friendly Environments, **John Kirstein**, our Human Rights Manager**, Nena Georgantzi**, and our Policy and European Parliament Liaison Officer, **Sarah Loriato**.

In her opening statement, AGE Platform Europe President Dr Heidrun Mollenkopf urged Member States to express support for a UN convention and called upon the European Union and its Member States to lead the rally in championing a new treaty on the rights of older persons. She also participated in the panel on *Participation in Public Life and Decision-Making Processes*.

Nena Georgantzi contributed to the *panel on normative elements*, highlighting that the current international human rights framework is conceptually limited, biased, and perpetuates a justice gap. Meanwhile, John Kirstein delivered a statement during the discussion on *Accessibility, Infrastructure, and Habitat* (transport, housing, and access).

Side Event at the OEWG - The role of the European Union as a global human rights actor

Together with BAGSO, the German National Association of Senior Citizens' Organisations and the Federal Republic of Germany, we organised a side event

on 20 May 2024 to *explore the role of the EU in promoting the human rights of older persons*.

The event gathered **Marco La Marca** (Member of Cabinet of the Vice-President of the European Commission for Democracy and Demography 2019-2024), Ambassador **Ana Jiménez de la Hoz** (Deputy Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations), **Tena Šimonović Einwalter** (Ombudswoman of the Republic of Croatia) and **Ken Bluestone** (Policy lead for Age International), to debate on the potential of the EU to promote the human rights in older age internally, to support third countries and its role as a regional actor in the UN and at multilateral level.

The event concluded that the EU has a unique and important position in the UN and worldwide. Panelists highlighted the importance of Member States and EU collaboration to implement meaningful change. They emphasized the need for the EU to lead in creating robust international protections for older persons' rights and called for improved data collection and resource monitoring to ensure effective implementation.

Historic development: UN States recommend a UN convention to better protect rights in old age

This OEWG marked an historic milestone: for the first time since its creation in 2010, the **OEWG adopted by consensus** a set of recommendations that encourage UN Member States to consider – among other options – an international legally binding instrument, namely a convention, to promote, protect and ensure the recognition and realisation of all human rights of older persons.

AGE Platform Europe's advocacy, in collaboration with our Members, GAROP, and National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), played a significant role in achieving this historic decision, paving the way for a new phase of action set to start in 2025.

- More information about this event can be found in our dedicated article

Social Media

On **Linkedin** (1 – 31 December 2024)

- Number of posts: 30
- Total Impressions: 14.409
- Total Reactions: 712
- Total Comments: 17
- Reposts: 74

- On **Facebook** (1 – 31 December 2024)
  - Number of posts: 30

        - Impressions: 4.360
        - Post Reach: 3.783
        - Engagements: 217
        - Comments: 7
        - Reposts: 47

    - On **Twitter** (1 – 31 December 2024)
        - Number of posts: 30

          Important: Twitter no longer provides analytics to free accounts. Throughout this year, many users have left Twitter to migrate to other social media platforms.

Press Release
We issued a press release on this topic to the **183 journalists** in our press contact list, celebrating a **historic milestone: United Nations recommending a UN Convention to protect Human Rights in Old Age**, an achievement reflecting AGE's advocacy work in collaboration with the Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People (GAROP) and National Human Rights Institutions.

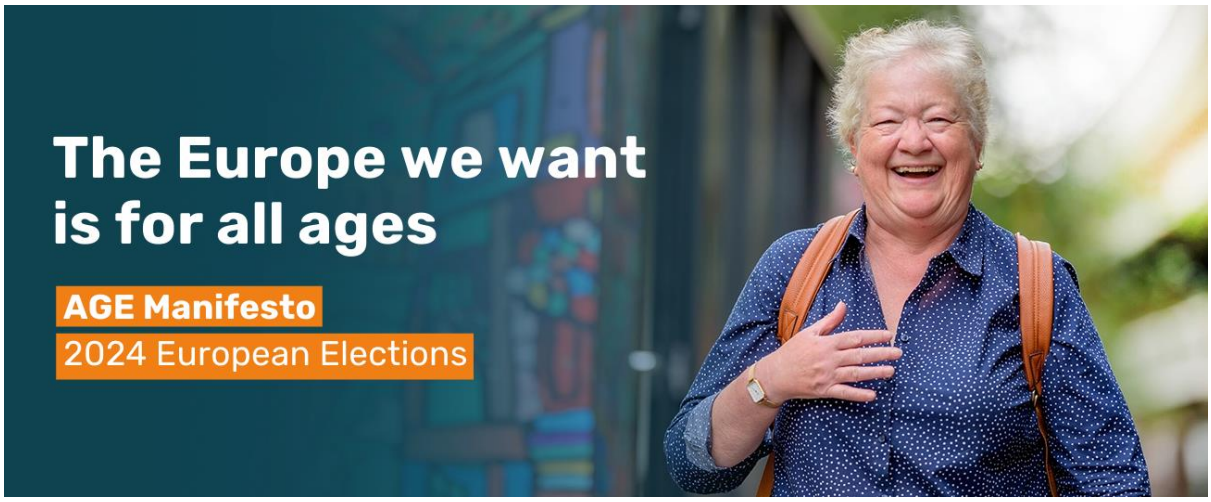
- Historic Milestone: UN States recommend UN Convention to protect Human Rights in Old Age
  20 June 2024

Following our press release, **European Times News** highlighted the historic milestone achieved during the 14th session of the United Nations Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWG) by dedicating an entire article to it.
> Read the full article (20 June 2024)

3. **Prints of relevant proofs**

1. Campaign for the 2024 European Parliament Elections

Communication Materials - Visuals





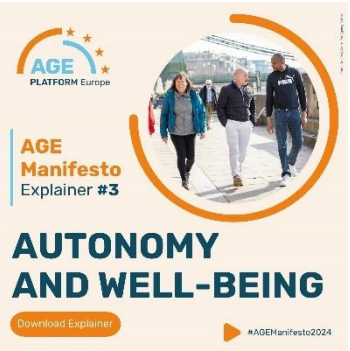




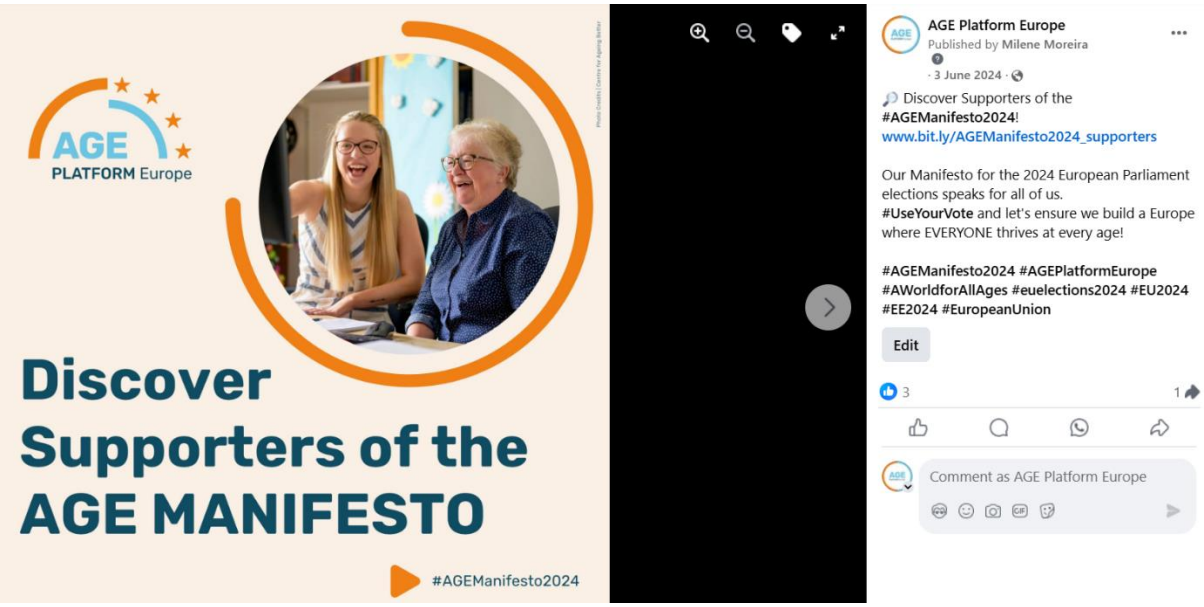








Social Media





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🔑 Meet the Supporters of #AGEManifesto2024!
🖊️ ✅ Vânia de la Fuente-Núñez, MD, MA (Independent Senior Consultant on Healthy Ageing and Ageism) endorses the AGE Manifesto. Join our movement and embrace Vânia's words, "so that we can jointly create a society for all ages in Europe!"

Have you endorsed our Manifesto yet?
📜 Endorse the Manifesto now: age-manifesto.eu

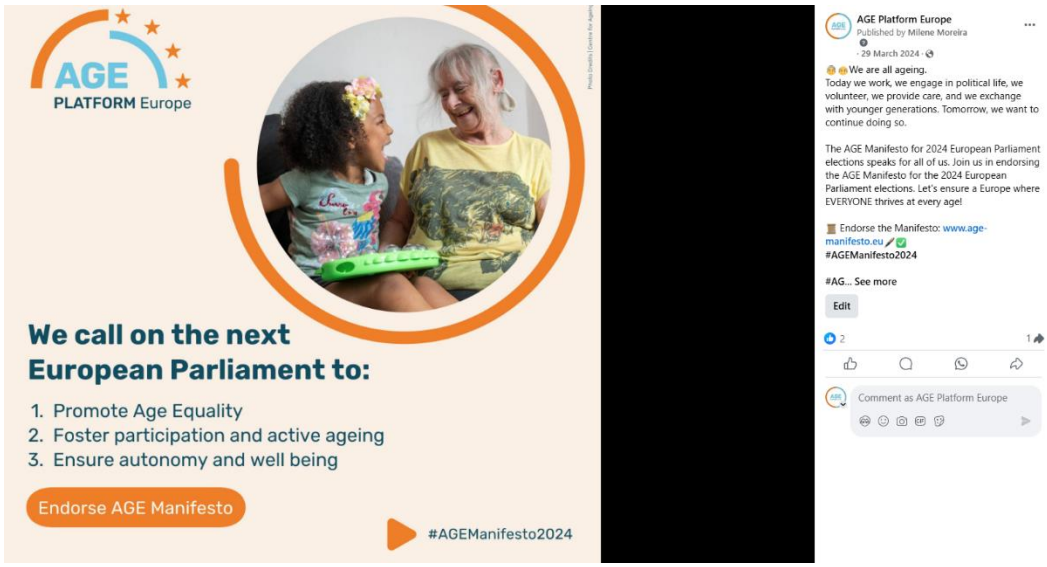
👉 Check out the full quote and all the supporters of the AGE Manifesto here: https://lnkd.in/eTBTYmwb

#AGEManifesto2024 #AGEPlatformEurope #AWorldforAllAges #euelections2024 #EU2024 # ...more

7 2 reposts

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AGE Platform Europe
Published by Milene Moreira
· 29 March 2024 ·

👴👵We are all ageing.
Today we work, we engage in political life, we volunteer, we provide care, and we exchange with younger generations. Tomorrow, we want to continue doing so.

The AGE Manifesto for 2024 European Parliament elections speaks for all of us. Join us in endorsing the AGE Manifesto for the 2024 European Parliament elections. Let's ensure a Europe where EVERYONE thrives at every age!

📙 Endorse the Manifesto: www.age-manifesto.eu 🖊️✅
#AGEManifesto2024

#AG... See more

Edit

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🔑 Meet the Supporters of #AGEManifesto2024!
🖊️ ✅ Rasmus Nordqvist (Committee member of the The Greens/EFA in the European Parliament) wrote an article emphasizing the significance of celebrating longevity and backing initiatives that foster opportunities for inter-generational exchange: www.bit.ly/3PID1z9

Have you endorsed our Manifesto yet? 📜 Endorse the Manifesto now: www.age-manifesto.eu

#AGEManifesto2024 #AGEPlatformEurope #AWorldforAllAges #euelections2024 #EU2024 #EE2024 #EuropeanUnion



Event – AGE Manifesto Launch









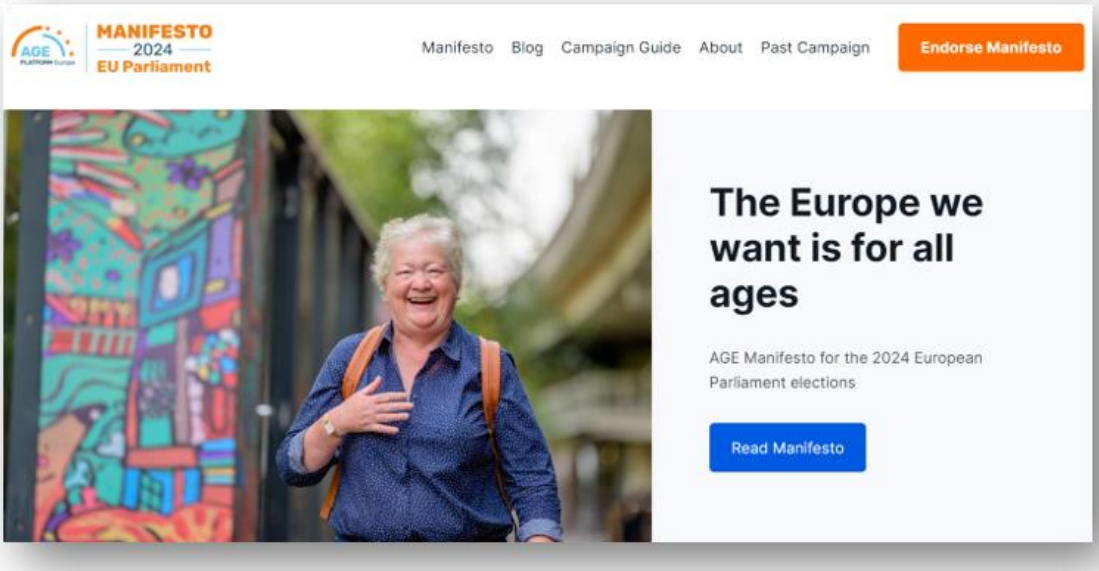
Event –Launch of the campaign for an EP intergroup dedicated to "Europe for all ages".

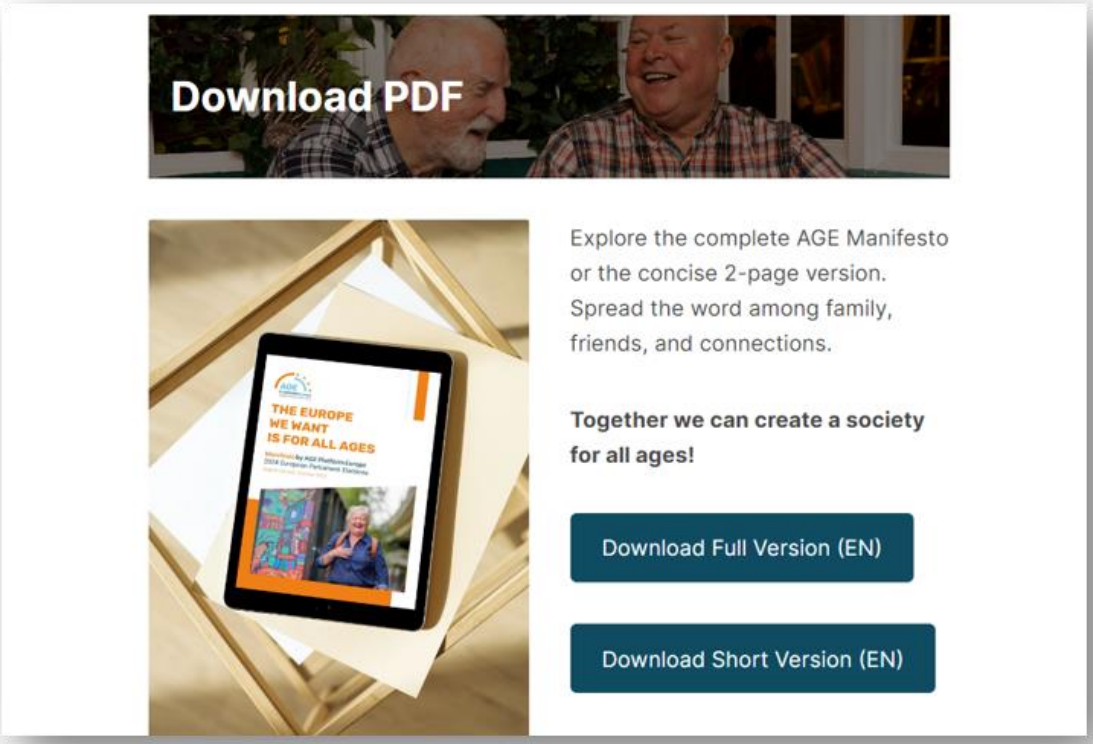






Blog


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AGE Manifesto for the 2024 European Parliament elections
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THE EUROPE WE WANT IS FOR ALL AGES
Explore the complete AGE Manifesto or the concise 2-page version. Spread the word among family, friends, and connections.
Together we can create a society for all ages!
Download Full Version (EN)
Download Short Version (EN)

Manifesto Supporters



Milan Brglez

Member of the European Parliament
Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats

"The AGE Manifesto 2024 is an indispensable guide that should inspire policymakers in the forthcoming Parliamentary term putting the rights of older persons at the forefront of EU decision-making, as well as unite MEPs in their continuous work in the format of the parliamentary Intergroup on Solidarity between Generations."



Radka Maxová

Member of the European Parliament
Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats

"Older people, particularly women, face significant underrepresentation in public spaces and media, frequently confined to health product ads. Launching more active ageing campaigns, and integrating older actors and actresses into commercials and cinema, can challenge stereotypes and illustrate the potential for a significant role, regardless of age."
Read full article



Sirpa Pietikäinen

Member of the European Parliament
European People's Party (EPP)

"Ageing population is an asset and invaluable resource for all of us: ageing means accumulating wisdom, experiences and comparative knowledge, and for this we need intergenerational cooperation. We cannot bring our world forward without having connections between younger and older professionals. This is why I am supporting having in place EU Age Equality Strategy."

See more

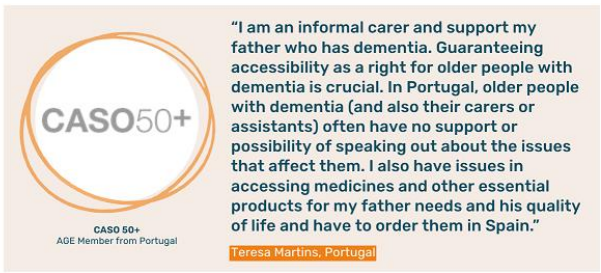
- Annex 1 – AGE Manifesto
- Annex 2 - Questions for the Commissioners-elect during the hearings

2. Campaign for a United Nations Convention on the Rights of Older People



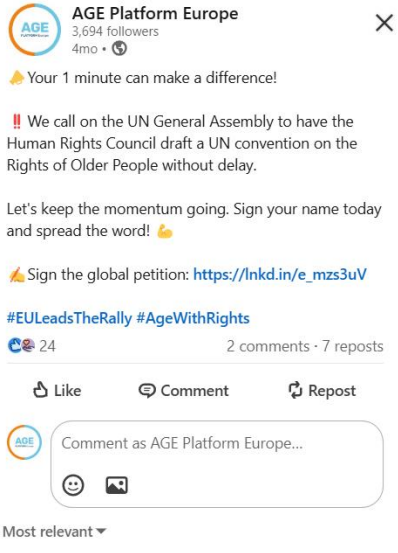






Social Media





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🚨 Historic Progress: A Major Step Toward a UN Convention to protect Older People's Rights! 🌎 👴 ✊

For the first time ever, the United Nations - Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing, **adopted by consensus** a decision recommending that UN Member States, consider, among other options, **the adoption of an "international legally binding instrument"**- a Convention - which means an international protection regime to ensure everyone can #AgewithRights.

But what does this mean, and what are the next steps to make this convention a reality? 🤔

🔗 Read the article by Nena Georgantzi and Sarah Loriato from AGE, currently in New York with our delegation: www.bit.ly/4aBFSLX

#OEWG14 #AgeWithRights #EULeadsTheRally



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Today marks the beginning of the United Nations - **Open-ended Working Group on Ageing** in New York! AGE is on site to advocate for a United Nations' Convention on the rights of older people.

Here's the schedule for the week:
When: May 20th-22nd & 24th, 2024

Monday (Today)
- 4 p.m. – 7 p.m. (CET) - Opening session
- 7:15 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. (CET) - Side Event organized by the Federal Government of Germany, BAGSO (German National Association of Senior Citizens' Organizations), and AGE Platform Europe ...more

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👋Great news from New York! For the first time since the establishment of the United Nations - Open-ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWG), recommendations that include drafting an International Convention on the rights of older people **have been adopted**.

The #OEWG14 has just adopted recommendations that propose an international legally binding instrument on the rights of older people as an option to address gaps in the international human rights framework.

👵 👴 We welcome this decision and celebrate together with Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People.

It's time for all of us to #AgeWithRights! ...more

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🤙 The UN Open-ended Working Group on Ageing is now in session in New York, focusing on **Accessibility**, **Infrastructure**, **and Habitat**. ...more



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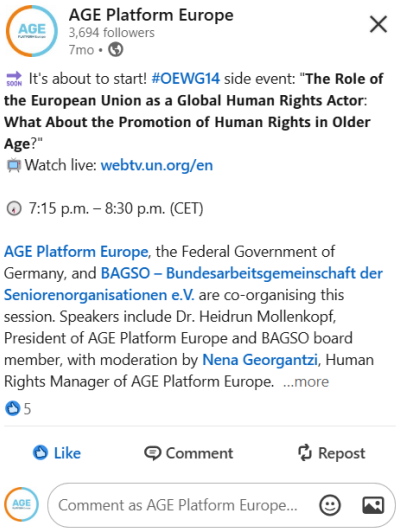
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🗣 The opening session of the United Nations - Open-ended Working Group on Ageing in New York is about to begin! ...more

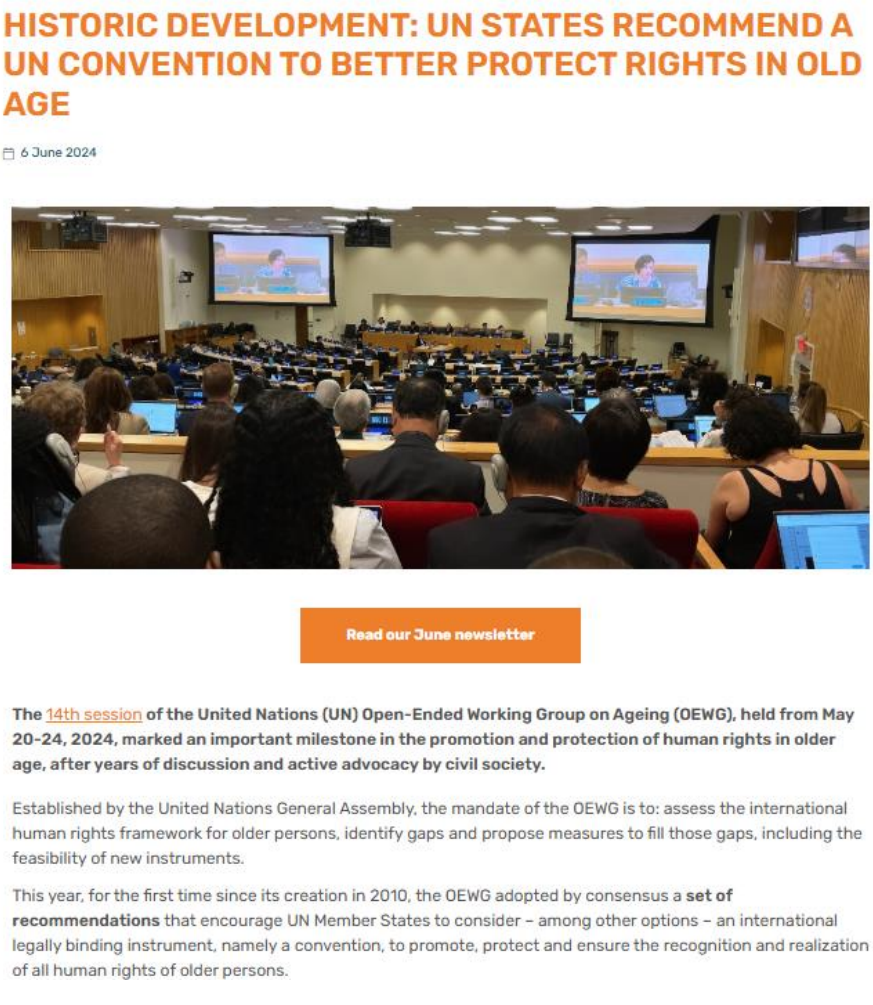


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HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT: UN STATES RECOMMEND A UN CONVENTION TO BETTER PROTECT RIGHTS IN OLD AGE

6 June 2024

Read our June newsletter

The 14th session of the United Nations (UN) Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWG), held from May 20-24, 2024, marked an important milestone in the promotion and protection of human rights in older age, after years of discussion and active advocacy by civil society.

Established by the United Nations General Assembly, the mandate of the OEWG is to: assess the international human rights framework for older persons, identify gaps and propose measures to fill those gaps, including the feasibility of new instruments.

This year, for the first time since its creation in 2010, the OEWG adopted by consensus a **set of recommendations** that encourage UN Member States to consider – among other options – an international legally binding instrument, namely a convention, to promote, protect and ensure the recognition and realization of all human rights of older persons.

EQUAL RIGHTS FOR ALL AGES: AGE CONTRIBUTION TO UN OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON AGEING

7 May 2024



In the run-up to the 14th session of the United Nations' Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing on 20-24 May in New-York, we actively prepared the ground to make the most of this key global event for the rights of older people.

Global mobilisation for a UN Convention

From 8th-14th April 2024, we participated in the Global Rally, a key initiative of the #AgeWithRights campaign for the drafting of a UN convention on the rights of older people organized by the Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People (GAROP). As a founding member of the Global Alliance, AGE and its members joined their forces to older people' human rights defenders around the world to call on governments to take concrete actions ahead of the upcoming UN Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG).

We participated in the campaign bringing the voices of some of our members on social media, arguing for the need for a new UN convention for older people to have equal access to health, education, work, financial security and adequate standard of living.

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Annex 1

AGE PLATFORM Europe
TOWARD A SOCIETY FOR ALL AGES

THE EUROPE WE WANT IS FOR ALL AGES

Manifesto by **AGE Platform Europe**

2024 European Parliament Elections

English Version | October 2023



We are all ageing.
The majority of children born in the European Union today can expect to live to more than 100 years.[1]

Longevity is an achievement. However, unless we reshape how our societies view and address ageing, we will all miss the benefits and opportunities of a longer life.





We are all ageing, but inequalities accumulate over our lifetime.

Unless we consider a **life course approach**, we will continue leaving people behind and we will miss the opportunity to celebrate diversity in old age.

We are all ageing, but ageism prevents us from living to our full potential and may even affect our health, wellbeing, and life expectancy.[2]

COVID-19 has shown just how badly things can go wrong when our human rights are not equally protected in old age.[3] Unless we treat age discrimination with the same gravity in law and practice as other forms of discrimination, we will deny ourselves the opportunity to fully participate in society on an **equal basis** with others.



[1] Data in Human Mortality Database | [2] Global report on Ageism | [3] AGE report on Human Rights and COVID-19

Annex 1

WHAT IS AGEISM?

Ageism refers to **stereotypes** (how we think), **prejudice** (how we feel) and **discrimination** (how we act) towards people on the basis of their age. Institutional ageism refers to the laws, rules, social norms, policies and practices of institutions that unfairly restrict opportunities and systematically disadvantage individuals because of their age. Interpersonal ageism arises in interactions between two or more individuals, while self-directed ageism occurs when ageism is internalised and turned against oneself.

Source: Global Report on Ageism (WHO, 2021)



We are all ageing, but too often we are portrayed as vulnerable, dependent, frail, and incapable, even as a cost to our societies.

Unless our contributions and experiences are better recognised, valued, and supported, we will not achieve a society for all ages.

Today we work, we engage in political life, we volunteer, we provide care, and we exchange with younger generations. Tomorrow, we want to continue doing so.

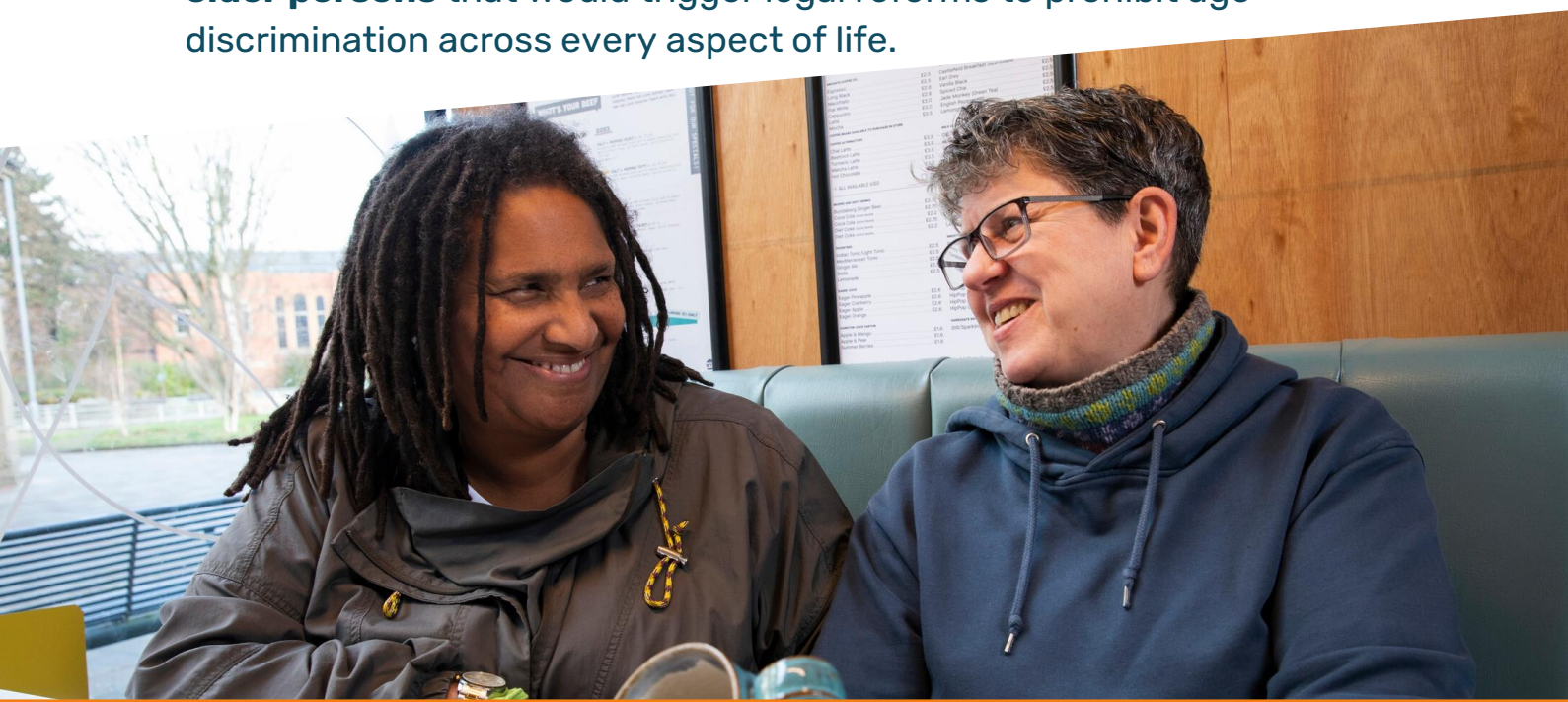
As a future **Member of the European Parliament**, you can make sure that the European Union addresses adequately population ageing and works toward a society for all ages.

Annex 1

We call on the next European Parliament to:

1. Promote Age Equality

- Extend the existing EU legal framework on age discrimination beyond the field of employment.
- **Raise awareness on ageism** by promoting initiatives to eliminate ageist practices and educational campaigns to dismiss stereotypes on older age.
- **Address the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination** that people experience based on a combination of factors such as age, gender or disability, and the cumulative forms of discrimination that build up over time.
- Gather and publish inclusive age-disaggregated data without age limits to assess the potential impact of policies and programmes, to deliver effective policies and monitor their implementation.
- Support the drafting of a **United Nations convention on the rights of older persons** that would trigger legal reforms to prohibit age discrimination across every aspect of life.



We call on the next European Parliament to:

2. Foster participation and active ageing

- Ensure meaningful involvement of older people in **political participation**, equal access to **culture**, **justice**, **employment**, **life-long learning**, and vocational training, including digital literacy.

- Guarantee older people full, affordable, and **equal access to key essential services and goods like health and care services**, food, housing, public transport, and banking services; maintain alternative options to digital services.

- Encourage approaches where **transition** between learning, working, family care, periods of unemployment, and retirement can take place seamlessly and **at different ages**.

- Promote **intergenerational solidarity**, including exchange of cultural, professional, technological knowledge and skills between younger and older people.



We call on the next European Parliament to:

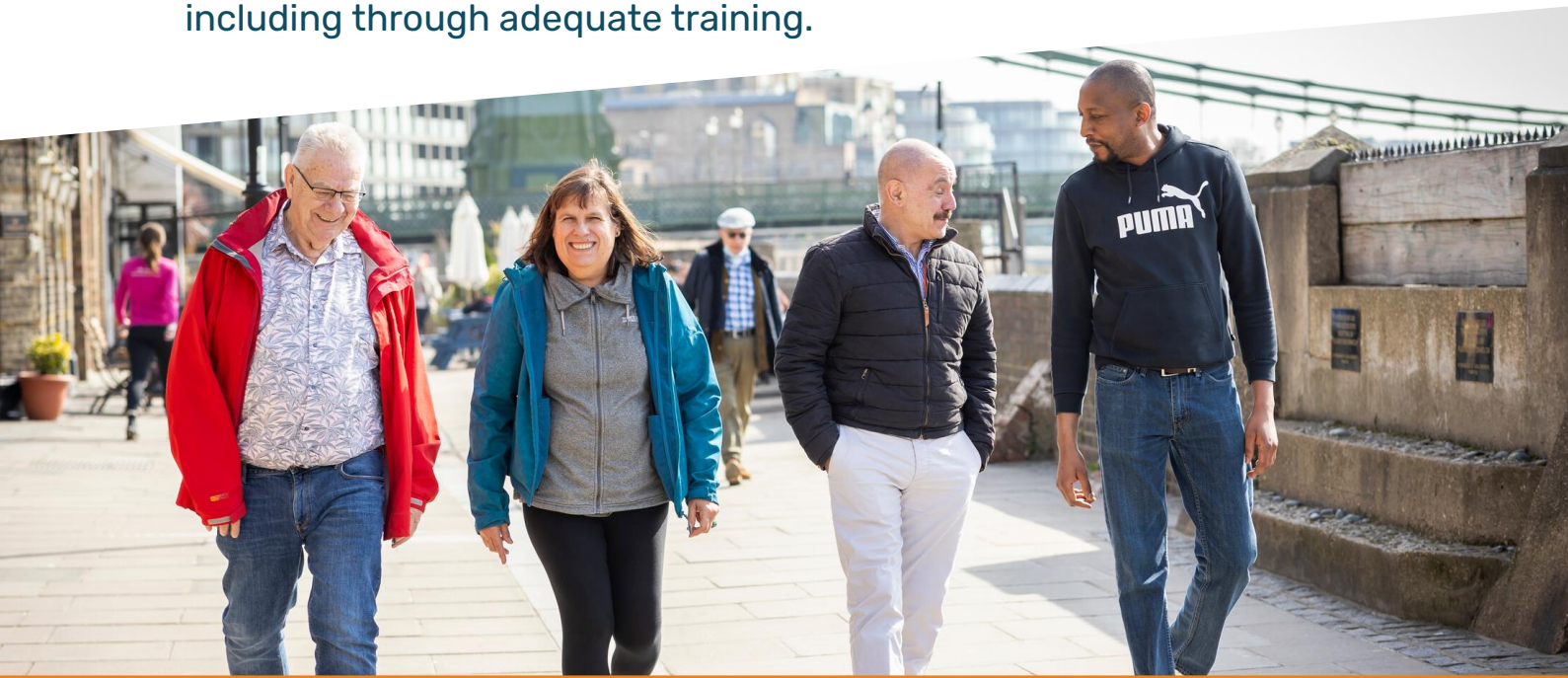
3. Ensure autonomy and well being

- Empower older workers for **sustainable and quality working lives**, by removing barriers such as mandatory retirement, tackling age discrimination in the labour market, and adapting the workplace for all ages.

- Secure **adequacy of pensions and old-age minimum income schemes**, address their erosion over time, to provide older people with financial security, allow them to cover their needs, and access adequate healthcare and housing, including by paying attention to the issues of cross border transferability and migration within the EU.

- **Protect older people against all forms of abuse and violence**, including financial exploitation, neglect, and isolation.

- Ensure **autonomy**, **independence**, **participation**, and **inclusion** of older people in long-term care; improve the quality and working conditions of formal carers in long-term services and support informal carers, including through adequate training.



Annex 1

How?

- By working towards the adoption of an **EU Age Equality Strategy**[4], to uphold human rights equally at all ages and address barriers that keep us from living fairly and freely when we are older.

- By requesting a strong coordination between European Commission's services whose work has a critical impact on ageing policies. This coordination shall be ensured by the Directorate General Justice and Consumers, responsible for equality.

- By re-establishing the Intergroup on Ageing and Solidarity between Generations encouraging Members of the European Parliament to be champions for the rights of older persons.

[4] See our proposal

AGE PLATFORM Europe
TOWARD A SOCIETY FOR ALL AGES

This manifesto was put together by **AGE Platform Europe Members**.



Annex 1

About us

AGE Platform Europe is an European network of organisations working for the interests and rights of older people. With the vision of "Toward A society for ALL ages," AGE advocates for an inclusive society that focuses on well-being, autonomy, and equal participation in all stages of life. The organization aims to combat ageism, promote human rights, and raise awareness on issues that affect older persons across the European Union.

In our fight against prevailing age stigma and ageism, we promote a more realistic image of older age. Read our **short guide** to avoid stereotypical communication when talking about ageing and older people.

Website: www.age-platform.eu

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Support Age Equality and Solidarity throughout life

Empower our mission to create a society for all ages

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Annex 1

AGE PLATFORM Europe

TOWARD A SOCIETY FOR ALL AGES



Annex 2

Questions for candidate-Commissioners form AGE Platform Europe

Priority questions:

Executive Vice-President for People, Skills and Preparedness, Roxana Mînzatu

Committees: EMPL, CULT (invited: FEMM, LIBE)

1.) *Question coordinated with other Equality Networks*

How do you plan to ensure fruitful alignment between overarching frameworks such as the European Semester, the Social Pillar Action Plan, or the upcoming EU anti-poverty strategy and the Union of Equality- concerning combatting discrimination on all grounds, including **sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, or sexual orientation.** Can you elaborate on how these frameworks will complement each other to create cohesive, intersectional policies that tackle both economic inequalities and discrimination?

2.) *AGE own question:* On the absence of the EU Care Strategy from the mission letter

The European Commission adopted in 2023 the EU Care Strategy, a major outcome of the consultation on the Green Paper on Ageing. Far from being a strategy on ageing as such, it put on the European policy landscape long-term care policies and heightened the ambition for early childhood education and care. In the follow-up, the Council adopted the Council recommendation on access to affordable, quality long-term care, including objectives to increase access, affordability and quality of long-term care, quality principles based on the needs of the individuals rather than institutions, improvement of the working conditions of care workers and support for informal carers.

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info@age-platform.eu

This was a major step for securing dignity at all ages, support labour market integration of informal carers and ensure a transition to community-based and home care, in line with international human rights standards. However, the EU Care Strategy is not mentioned in your mission letter.

- Which priority will the implementation of the EU Care Strategy have in your portfolio and did you ask it to be explicitly included in your portfolio?
- How will you ensure that Member States deliver on their own commitments?
- How will you ensure that long-term care remains available, affordable, and secures independence and autonomy in light of budgetary constraints on Member States' budgets and the increasing number of people with care needs?

3.) AGE own question: On integration of older workers in the labour market

The action plan for the European pillar of social rights has set the target of having at least 78% of the population aged between 20 and 64 in employment by 2030. Older workers (aged 55 and over) are far from well off in the labour market. Today, the employment rate in Europe for people aged 55-64 is just 62.3%. In many Member States, such as Greece and Romania, this figure is close to or below 40% for women in this age group. At European level, the long-term unemployment rate of 49.3% among 55-64 year-olds is particularly high. Given the ageing of the EU's working population, the objective of the action plan for the European pillar of social rights cannot be achieved without a significant improvement in the employment rates of older people. Your mission statement includes a new action plan to implement the European pillar of social rights:

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- How do you intend to improve the employment rate of older people, and tackle the specific and intersecting barriers that older women face in the field of employment?

4.) AGE own question: age-friendly labour markets

In light of your mission to develop a Quality Jobs Roadmap promoting fair wages, high standards for health and safety, good working conditions, training and fair job transitions for workers and the self-employed, and to continue working on building a Union of Equality:

- How do you plan to guarantee quality jobs throughout life, lifelong learning opportunities and workplaces that are inclusive of older persons in all their diversity?
- How do you intend to make the labour market age-friendly, tackling the obstacles that older workers currently face to remain in employment?

5.) AGE own question: on equal treatment in employment and occupation

In 2000, the EU adopted the Employment Framework Directive, which aims to ensure equal treatment of people in employment and occupation, regardless of age, among other grounds. The EU Directive also led to the introduction of age discrimination legislation in many EU Member States for the first time and established minimum standards across Europe. Although the adoption of the Employment Equality Directive has increased general awareness of the unacceptability of age limits in recruitment, maximum age requirements for access to employment, training or employment-related social protection are still accepted.

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- How do you intend to ensure that the European directive on equal treatment in employment is implemented on an equal basis for all age groups and monitored at Member State level?

6.) AGE own question: on coordination with other Commissioners on ageing and age equality

The commissioners on equality and on intergenerational fairness are reporting to you, however, despite age being included in the grounds of discrimination which the EU should tackle according to the Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, discrimination is not mentioned in either Commissioner-designates' mission letter. The European Union has started a process to define its policy on Ageing with the Green Paper on Ageing, but there have been only some scattered actions to follow it up, notably the EU Care Strategy and discussions in the High-Level Group on Non-Discrimination.

- Which actions do you plan to follow up on the Green Paper on Ageing and on strengthening equality for people of all ages, in particular in light of the recent conclusion paper of the High Level Group on Non Discrimination, Equality and Diversity on Age Equality and Non Discrimination on the grounds of Age?

7.) Supported question by ESIP:

As stated in the La Hulpe Declaration, which was signed by all institutions in April 2024, the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) is "*recognised as a compass providing guidance in addressing common employment, skills, and social challenges*". It shall "*continue to provide the map to shape related policy responses*". Additionally, according to the 2024 EU Barometer, 88% of people in the EU expect that European institutions will implement social policies.

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Nevertheless, the mission letter addressed to you differs from the recent years' approach by exclusively proposing non-binding strategies rather than legislative initiatives in social affairs.

With this in mind, we would like to know what will be the difference between the new EPSR Action Plan and the previous one, particularly as regards the implementation and monitoring by Member States of strategies already adopted?

Additionally, can we expect any concrete and legally binding legislative initiatives from this new EPSR action plan?"

8.) Supported question by Lire & Ecrire

Part of your mission is to lead the EU Anti-Poverty Strategy, which includes ensuring people have access to essential protections and services to alleviate poverty and address its root causes. People already suffering from social inequality are among the groups more exposed by the digital divide (older people, persons with disabilities, low skilled people, unemployed citizens, migrants and people in rural areas). However, the EU's Digital Decade strategy aims to bring 100% of public services online by 2030. In the EU Anti-Poverty Strategy how will account for the fact that 40% of the population, esp. people experiencing poverty, remain unable to access and use digital technologies? As digital deprivation is rooted in material deprivation, how can you ensure that people have, first and foremost, access to digital materials and skills needed for them to not be digitally excluded? Lastly, how will you guarantee human and non-digital access to essential services across the EU?

Commissioner for Preparedness and Crisis Management and Equality, Hajda Lahbib

Committees: DEVE, FEMM, LIBE, ENVI (invited: EMPL, SANT)

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Annex 2

1) *Supported question by Equality networks (version sent by Maciej, 07/10/2024)*

As the Commissioner Designate in charge of equality, how do you plan to strengthen the Union's commitment to inclusion and equality for all, by addressing **all grounds** under the EU treaties, including the grounds of **age and religion and belief**, which are not currently covered by existing strategies, nor explicitly mentioned in your mission letter from President von der Leyen? What further action are you foreseeing to strengthen the fight against discrimination on all grounds, to tackle intersectional and multiple forms of discrimination and racism wherever they exist, both in policy and practice? In addition, how will you ensure full engagement of all the College of Commissioners to mainstream equality across all policy areas and close gaps in EU non-discrimination legislation?

2) *AGE own question: capacity and portfolio*

As Commissioner Designate in charge of equality, you are expected to lead the work on mainstreaming equality in all EU policies.

- How will you ensure that your tasks as Commissioner-designate for Preparedness and Crisis management do not sideline the equality portfolio?
- How will you work transversally with other Commissioner and different Commission services to design and monitor equality and non-discrimination laws and policies?
- How will you increase capacity within the Commission to deliver the broad mandate of a Union of equality?
- How will you ensure a focus on intersectionality during your term?
- How do you plan to collaborate with and support civil society organizations and networks and equality bodies?

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- How will you ensure that the Task Force on Equality has a strong mandate and works transparently?

3) *Alternative questions from AGE on age-discrimination <u>if requested by some MEPs; e.g Marc Angel and Mendia</u>*

- Although age is included in the treaties as a ground of discrimination that should be combated by the European Union, and a specific article of the Charter of Fundamental Rights covers the rights of older persons, it is completely missing from your mission letter. How do you feel about this omission and how will you ensure that the Union of Equality does not leave people experiencing age discrimination – alone or in combination with other grounds- behind?
- What are your plans with regard to the adoption of the long-awaited draft horizontal equal treatment directive which will fill in existing gaps in equality legislation ?

Commissioner for Intergenerational Fairness, Youth, Culture and Sports, Glenn Micallef

Committees: CULT (invited: EMPL, LIBE, JURI)

1.) *AGE own question: On the follow-up to the Green Paper on Ageing*

The European Commission published, during the past mandate, the Green Paper on Ageing, followed by a consultation driving many responses from civil society organisations. However, the follow-up of this process, despite the increasing transformation of society through longevity, has not been a comprehensive

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strategy on ageing, but rather some limited measures, such as the EU Care Strategy and discussions in the High-Level Group on Non-Discrimination.

- Which actions do you plan to follow up on the Green Paper on Ageing and on strengthening equality for people of all ages in light of the recent conclusion paper of the High-Level Group on Non-Discrimination, Equality and Diversity on Age Equality and Non-Discrimination on the grounds of Age?

2.) AGE own question: Strategy on generational fairness

Context: Your mission letter contains the call for a Strategy on Intergenerational Fairness, to 'map out how we can strengthen communication between generations and ensure the interests of present and future generations are respected throughout our policy and law-making'. The world's future population is projected to be older and more heterogeneous than ever. Longevity is an unprecedented success story that requires changes that leverage the diversity of people of all generations and their potential to contribute and ensure the full enjoyment of their human rights. Unfortunately, we witnessed during the pandemic the worrying trend of dividing generations in political discourse and culture, as well as hate speech and hate crime against older generations. This goes against the inclusive society based on solidarity between generations. Meanwhile, the World Health Organization (WHO) has found that ageism reduces social cohesion, drives human rights violations and adversely affects healthy life expectancy. WHO identified fostering intergenerational exchanges as one of the main strategies to tackle ageism . The EESC has recently adopted an opinion calling for Solidarity between Generations, following an opinion in favour of an EU strategy for older persons.

Question:

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- How will you ensure that your mandate focuses on bringing together all generations, both young and old, present and future, with due regard for the opportunities and challenges and of longevity and the accumulation of disadvantages throughout life?
- How will you foster social cohesion and fight ageism towards both young and old generations?
- Which means will you have or request to have at your disposal to put in place a meaningful strategy to encourage solidarity between generations, prevent intergenerational conflicts, reduce age-related stereotypes and foster a genuine dialogue between the generations?
- How will you coordinate with the mission on equality of Commissioner-designate Lahbib and the social policies under the responsibility of Executive Vice-President-Designate Mînzatu to mainstream intergenerational solidarity in the Commission's work?

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