

Stockholm, January 26, 2026

Suggestion for session at the Pre-Congress Day, June 15th, 2026, for the 3rd World Congress of Age-friendly Cities and Communities, San Sebastián, Spain, 16-18 June 2026.

Concept note

The age-friendly journey of the Nordic region: Progress and future directions

The Nordic region, home to almost 28 million people, spans from dense urban centers to rural and Arctic areas. The first Nordic city, Oslo, joined the WHO Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities in 2014, marking the start of the age-friendly journey of the Nordic region. In 2026, the Nordic Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities has existed for almost 10 years, facilitating support, exchange and collaboration across the region. The Nordic network functions on a mandate from the Nordic Council of Ministers, anchoring the work in age-friendly communities at local level in the vision 2030 of the NCM highlighting an integrated and socially sustainable region.

This session will present and discuss different approaches and ways of organising age-friendly communities from the journey of the Nordic region so far, and discuss the next steps for strengthening sustainable development for the region to become even more age-friendly for all generations, including perspectives from the Baltic region.

Examples can include:

- Norway: A national framework through the Centre for an Age-friendly Norway, a resource- and competence centre leading a network of more than 250 cities across Norway and facilitating partnerships with businesses, organisations and academia.
- Finland: Integrating age-friendly principles into urban development and planning.
- Sweden: A growing movement from local municipalities toward national coordination.

- Denmark: A new, national Council for an Age-friendly Denmark set up by the government is commissioned to create a strategy for how Denmark can become an age-friendly country, to be completed by spring 2026.
- Nordic-Baltic exchange at municipal level: The municipality of Võru, Estonia, has gathered inspiration for an age-friendly initiative bringing generations together in a new community activity house with visits to age-friendly cities in Norway and Sweden.

The session will be led by the Nordic Welfare Centre in collaboration with the Nordic Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities.