

3RD WORLD CONGRESS ON AGE-FRIENDLY CITIES AND COMMUNITIES  
**FORUM OF MAYORS**

HIRI ETA KOMUNITATE LAGUNKOEN 3. MUNDU KONGRESUA  
**ALKATEEN FOROA**

3.ER CONGRESO MUNDIAL DE CIUDADES Y COMUNIDADES AMIGABLES  
**FORO DE ALCALDES Y ALCALDESAS**



## **Message from the Mayors' Forum**

### *3rd World Congress of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities*

Gathered in Donostia / San Sebastián, cities, municipalities and territories from different parts of the world affirm that population ageing is one of the major transformative forces of our time and a historic opportunity to rethink how we want to live together.

Demographic change is reshaping our communities and affects every aspect of urban life—from housing, public space, mobility and care, to democratic participation, employment, lifelong learning, education, the local economy, climate action and even the way we organise collective life. It calls on us to move beyond fragmented responses towards integrated approaches that are capable of anticipating change, fostering care and driving innovation. It also invites us to ask new questions, strengthen the learning capacity of our institutions and plan transformations beyond electoral cycles.

From this perspective, we affirm that local governments have a decisive role to play. It is at the local level that these challenges become tangible, and where many of the most valuable solutions emerge. Municipal leadership can and should be a driving force for public innovation, social cohesion and democratic renewal, capable of fostering new forms of governance, connecting diverse actors and enabling collective responses to complex challenges.

We therefore commit to five shared priorities for the future:

1. **Create the conditions for the voices, talent, diversity and participation of older people**—including those living in situations of frailty or vulnerability—to become a genuine part of how cities are imagined, designed and governed, recognising them as full citizens with rights and responsibilities and as an essential part of democratic life.
2. **Integrate demographic change across the whole of public action**, promoting a transversal and systemic approach in urban planning, municipal policies, public services and decision-making, while strengthening institutional capacities for anticipation, learning and long-term planning.
3. **Strengthen broader alliances in the context of increasingly long-lived societies**, connecting institutions, citizens, communities, science, culture, education and the local economy around the shared purpose of building cities and communities for all ages, where relationships, social networks, intergenerational relationships and community life are recognised as essential conditions for quality of life and well-being. In this context, local governments also strengthen their role as facilitators, connectors and enablers of collaboration among diverse actors.

4. **Design more liveable, connected, sustainable and healthy territories**, understanding health in its broadest sense as something closely linked to living conditions, everyday environments, relationships and opportunities for participation, enabling fulfilling lives, autonomy, connection, well-being, intergenerational relationships and social cohesion throughout the life course, including in older age.
5. **Strengthen a global learning network among cities, municipalities and territories**, sharing practices, questions, learning, narratives and public innovation in response to the challenges of population ageing.

Today, the Age-Friendly Cities and Communities movement represents far more than a sector-specific agenda. It offers a practical pathway towards societies that are more just, inclusive, sustainable, healthy and better prepared for longevity.

From this gathering of mayors and local representatives, we reaffirm age-friendliness as a shared responsibility and as a continuous process of collective learning among cities, municipalities and territories. It is an agenda built from local experience, one that promotes active citizenship throughout life and gains strength when connected with other places, perspectives and pathways for transformation.

We also recognise that the way we talk about ageing and longevity shapes the way we act. Building narratives that recognise the diversity, contributions and active role of older people is an essential part of the transformation we seek to achieve.

This meeting does not bring the conversation to a close. It opens it.

Faced with the demographic transition, local governments have a decisive role to play: fostering cities that care, democracies that engage in dialogue, and territories capable of adapting and transforming for the future. Many of the responses we are developing through the lens of longevity are also helping us address other major challenges facing our cities and communities.

Donostia / San Sebastián, 15 June 2026

This message has been developed from the conversations held during the Mayors' Forum, with the participation of representatives from the following municipalities, cities, territories, institutions and networks:

**Municipalities, cities and territories:** Alcoi (Spain); Almendralejo (Spain); Amurrio (Basque Country); Avilés (Spain); Azkoitia (Basque Country); Banjul (The Gambia); Barakaldo (Basque Country); Changunarayan (Nepal); Curridabat (Costa Rica); Donostia / San Sebastián (Basque Country); Fuenlabrada (Spain); Fuentes de Ebro (Spain); Hamburg (Germany); Heredia (Costa Rica); La Vellés (Spain); Los Alcarrizos (Dominican Republic); Penang (Malaysia); Sandnes (Norway); San Javier (Spain); São Paulo (Brazil); Singapore; Vallirana (Spain).

**Institutions and networks:** Basque Government / Euskadi Lagunkoia Berria; Centre for Age-Friendly Norway; IMSERSO; Ministry of Social Rights, Consumer Affairs and 2030 Agenda; Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP); World Health Organization (WHO).