

Letter of commitment from the Mayor, Municipality of Norrköping

Municipality of Norrköping (Norrköpings kommun) intend to join and contribute to the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities. Municipality of Norrköping works towards strengthening the interests, rights and quality of life of older residents and the global membership is important for the municipality in further advancing this work. A survey and several workshops will be made to collect data in all eight subjects that WHO considers fundamental to an age-friendly community and an action plan will be developed.

Municipality of Norrköping will contribute to the global network by sharing ideas, news and insights from its progress efforts. The municipality will work towards implementation of international knowledge that can support the municipality's continued transition to a more inclusive and age-friendly community.

Best regards,

Anna Sotkasiira Wik

Mayor, Municipality of Norrköping

2025-04-13 Norrköping



Application for the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities

Please provide a brief summary (250-300 words) of your city/community's policies, programmes and services targeted at older people and how you are planning to make it more age-friendly.

Norrköping Municipality is actively working to develop the community for the older population, focusing on improving living conditions and safeguarding interests and rights. Below are examples of age-friendly activities introduced by Norrköping Municipality.

Norrköping Municipality offers day activities for people with dementia or physical disabilities. At the day-activity centers, participants can take part in activities based on their interests and abilities. These activities may include baking, walks, or light exercise. The purpose is to practice the skills participants already have and to keep both body and mind active.

The municipal meeting points invite older residents to enjoy an active leisure time and social interaction. Examples of activities at these meeting points include yoga, handicrafts, board games, and dancing. Two of the meeting points offers activities specifically for the Finnish minority population, as Norrköping Municipality is part of the administrative area for the Finnish language.

The "Fixartjänst" service is a free service for residents over the age of 69 who live in their own homes. Older residents can receive help with certain practical tasks, such as learning how to use a smartphone, putting up curtains, or changing light bulbs.

The Municipal Council for Senior Citizens is a forum for information and consultation, with representation from the municipality and pensioners' organizations. The purpose of the council is to give pensioners' organizations the opportunity to be involved in changes made by the municipality that affect their target groups.

Smartoteket is an inspiration environment for assistive devices. Here, residents can receive tips on products that can contribute to increased activity and participation. At Smartoteket, residents can try assistive devices, get tips on smart everyday products, find solutions for an independent daily life, and get inspiration on how to adapt their homes.

Norrköping Municipality will continue its work by involving older residents in current issues and including older residents from different parts of society, with diverse backgrounds, needs and interests.

How are you engaging and involving older people in the process of becoming a more age-friendly city/community?

In connection with the application for membership in the Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities, a survey and several workshops will be conducted with the purpose of highlighting the interests of the older population, to examine how the older population perceives these domains and to identify areas in need of improvement.

The survey encompasses all eight domains that WHO considers fundamental to an age-friendly environment. Questions about exposure to crime as well as questions about alcohol and

gambling habits are also included in the survey. The plan is for the survey to be made available in additional languages, besides Swedish. The purpose is to include and involve more groups within the older population in the survey. The survey will also be made available in public spaces and distributed in various contexts to ensure that it is representative of the target group.

The methodological design of the study aims to generate both quantitative and qualitative data. Data collection will be carried out through a digital questionnaire as well as workshops. All workshops will be conducted in Swedish only. The digital questionnaire is planned to be available from April 2026 to October 2026, while the workshops are planned to be conducted in September-October 2026.

Based on the data collected, an action plan will be developed in which the subjects with the greatest need for development will be prioritized. Follow-up activities, including surveys and workshops with the target group, will be carried out.

The municipality's Senior Ombudsman works continuously with relevant authorities, associations, and organizations to strengthen forms of collaboration and to promote the involvement of the older population. A key focus of the Senior Ombudsman is to ensure the inclusion of older residents with diverse backgrounds and needs, thereby securing a fair and representative foundation for future work on age-related issues. For example, collaboration will be established with minority groups and organizations working with homelessness in Norrköping Municipality.

What mechanisms have you/are you planning to put in place to facilitate collaborative planning and implementation between different departments of the local administration and across sectors?

The Senior Ombudsman holds a strategic role and is responsible for the networks and collaborative structures, both internal and external, that relate to ageing-related issues. The Department of Health and Social Care is responsible for matters connected to healthcare and will be involved as needed, which means that issues related to health and social care are not primarily handled by the Senior Ombudsman. Once the action plan has been developed, based on data from the survey and workshops, the relevant municipal departments will be involved to further develop the areas identified as functioning less effectively.

What motivated your city/community to become a member of the Global Network?

Norrköping Municipality is actively engaged in issues concerning older residents and has highlighted, among other priorities, the importance of dignified elder care and the prevention of involuntary loneliness in its political programme for 2025–2026. In line with this programme, the municipality has appointed a Senior Ombudsman with a strategic mandate to monitor the living conditions, rights, and interests of the older population. The role also includes facilitating collaboration between authorities and organizations, as well as conducting external monitoring and analysis.

For these reasons, Norrköping Municipality has a strong interest in joining the Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities, where there are opportunities for global knowledge exchange and shared learning. Membership in the WHO network would represent an important step toward creating a more age-inclusive society.

How do you hope to contribute to the Global Network?

Norrköping Municipality possesses a range of qualities and offer valuable opportunities for shared learning. In the area of ageing policy, Norrköping Municipality has recently invested in establishing a Senior Ombudsman and in strengthening initiatives related to elder care and the prevention of involuntary loneliness. Projects aimed at reducing social isolation among older residents have been carried out with positive results, and the municipality also operates an outreach service specifically targeting the older population.

For example, the LIMPAN project was launched in August 2022 with the purpose of reducing isolation among older adults and decreasing the feeling of involuntary loneliness. The project was based on using senior coordinators in three selected residential areas, who, together with development officers and strategists at the department, were responsible for driving the project forward.

LIMPAN's objective was that each older person, in the long term, would build at least three social networks or groups to participate in. The strategy has been to meet older residents where they are in their everyday lives, work preventively and proactively against mental ill-health, and focus on health-promoting activities.

During the spring of 2024, the project was evaluated with support from the FoU Centre to provide a basis for future continuation.

Norrköping has also been designated a Music City and is part of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network. This designation means that the municipality places music at the centre of its urban development strategies through the project Musikhuvudstaden, bringing together creative actors and encouraging entrepreneurship within the Östergötland region.

Northern Europe's largest visualization centre is also located in Norrköping. The centre serves as a meeting place for research, industry, the public, and schools, with a focus on visualization technologies and applications.

In summary, Norrköping Municipality is committed to actively contributing its own knowledge and experience to support the continued development of the network.