

How can NHRIs meaningfully cooperate with older persons and their representative organisations to promote and protect their rights?

Given the rapidly ageing population across Europe, National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) in the region [are increasingly working](#) on the promotion and protection of the rights of older persons. In order to understand specific human rights challenges in old age, it is crucial for NHRIs to directly engage with older persons including through their representative organisations and bring real lived experiences into their work.

Some NHRIs are already cooperating with and learning from older persons' organisations, and have brought forward their cases. NHRIs also acknowledge these organisations' specific expertise, knowledge and direct contact with older persons and their lived experience.

How to start?

- ✓ Look for an older persons' organisation in your country and at [AGE Platform Europe members' directory](#) and get in touch.
- ✓ When monitoring policies related to older persons' rights, identify active organisations, pensioners' associations or trade unions engaging in discussions and advocacy and get in touch.
- ✓ Keep in mind that not all older persons' organisations use human rights in their work. Share information about existing human rights frameworks and discuss the [Human Rights-Based Approach \(HRBA\)](#) including to [long-term care for older persons](#).
- ✓ Given your role as a bridge between the national and international level, inform older persons' organisation about UN processes and their impact, and highlight the added value of this engagement.
- ✓ Be patient. As usual, it may take time to establish and maintain close cooperation based on trust.

What not to forget?

- ✓ Monitor human rights challenges that older persons and their representative organisation face in your country including in [long-term care for older persons](#).
- ✓ Support the participation of older persons, including through their representative organisations in your work and cooperate with them in your monitoring.
- ✓ Mainstream older persons' rights in your work, including by:
 - Reporting on human rights challenges of older persons to parliaments, municipalities and the general public.
 - Reporting on human rights challenges of older persons to UN Treaty Body Mechanisms, Universal Periodic Review, the European Committee of Social Rights and in relevant EU consultations.
 - Addressing the intersection of old age with other forms of discrimination, such as gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, nationality, language, disability, or socioeconomic status.
- ✓ Enter and engage in discussion on an HRBA to old age/ageing policies at the state and municipal level, including with duty-bearers.
- ✓ Team up with older persons through their representative organisations to create and launch common advocacy initiatives, campaigns and events (for example, to mark the International Day of Older Persons or the World Elder Abuse Awareness Day).
- ✓ Involve older persons through their organisations in your NHRI's priority setting.
- ✓ Prepare your input to the UN Open-ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWG) with older persons organisations. You could distribute questionnaires and organise thematic workshops with respective ministries and experts or co-organise and side-events during UN OEWG sessions.

How can we promote the rights of older persons in the COVID-19 context?

- ✓ Gather information and analyse the impact of measures implemented in the context of COVID-19 on the human rights of older persons.
- ✓ Feed into public discussion and raise awareness of ageist aspects of COVID-19 measures and human rights violations of older persons brought by measures taken as a response to the pandemic.
- ✓ Show support for the UN Secretary General recommendation for the adoption of a UN Convention on rights of older persons, explaining how a new treaty would make a difference in the current context of the pandemic.

- ✓ Act as [forums for participation](#) to raise issues at local and national levels and pay attention to groups and individuals at risk of being left behind, such as older persons.
- ✓ Set up hotlines, social messaging groups or other platforms to enable older persons to raise issues and communicate them to state authorities for action.
- ✓ Raise awareness of the diversity of older persons and give examples of those who are at the forefront of the fight against the pandemic (e.g. medical staff returning from their retirement).

Read more about ENNHRI's work on older persons' rights

- [ENNHRI Report "We have the same rights" The Human Rights of Older Persons in Long-term Care in Europe](#)
- [Respect My Rights: An ENNHRI Toolkit on Applying a Human Rights-Based Approach to Long-term Care for Older Persons](#)
- [ENNHRI Handbook on Monitoring the Human Rights of Older Persons and Long-term Care](#)
- [ENNHRI Submission to the OEWG-Ageing: Equality and Non-Discrimination](#)

Read more about COVID-19 and older persons' rights

- [NHRIs call on states to strengthen human rights of older persons during COVID-19 pandemic](#)
- [AGE Europe COVID-19: good practices/initiatives webpage](#)
- [Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights – Older persons need more support than ever in the age of the Covid-19 pandemic](#)
- [Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights- Lessons to be drawn from the ravages of the COVID-19 pandemic in long-term care facilities](#)
- [UN Secretary General policy brief on the impact of COVID 19 on older persons](#)
- [UN Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons – "Unacceptable" – UN expert urges better protection of older persons facing the highest risk of the COVID-19 pandemic](#)