



## PLATFORMS FOR AGEING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – EXCHANGE AND ENTERPRISE

A transnational partnership of public health agencies, local authorities, academics and ICT experts dedicated to improving the quality of life for older people in rural and isolated areas. It aims to develop and implement locally derived sustainable solutions to encourage Internet use and person-centred e-health.

**Funded by:** The Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme of the European Union (€1.7million)

**Timescale:** Three year project September 2017 – August 2020



**EUROPEAN UNION**  
Investing in your future  
European Regional Development Fund



**Northern Periphery and  
Arctic Programme**  
2014-2020

**April 2020**

## Why is this project important?

Social exclusion and loneliness have significantly negative impacts on physical and mental health. Such problems are increasingly prevalent in remote and sparsely populated regions of Europe. The lives of older citizens are further complicated by growing health and social care needs.

## What regions took part?

The regions taking part in the project are all relatively rural and isolated and while different they share some key characteristics; **economic disinvestment, outward youth migration, limited and expensive transport, loneliness, health vulnerability, and absent or hard to reach services.**



### NORTHERN IRELAND

*Fermanagh & Omagh District Council*

Total Population: **115,000**  
% 65 or older: **15%**  
% under 20: **27%**



### ICELAND

*Fjaröabyggð*

Total Population: **4,777**  
% 65 or older: **14%**  
% under 20: **28%**



### REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

*Limerick City & County Council*

Total Population: **191,809**  
% 65 or older: **14%**  
% under 20: **27%**



### SWEDEN

*Skellefteå kommun*

Total Population: **72,723**  
% 65 or older: **24%**  
% under 20: **22%**

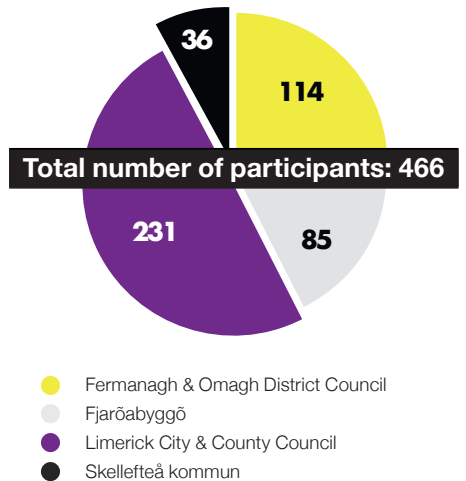
# The older people who took part in PLACE-EE identified specific challenges and concerns

- Loss and disconnection from family and friends
- Disconnection from young people
- Feeling left out, social exclusion and lack of opportunity for social activities
- Limited transport – reduction in local buses / fear of driving or having no car
- Access to health and other services – GP consultation/eye/hearing tests/ shopping

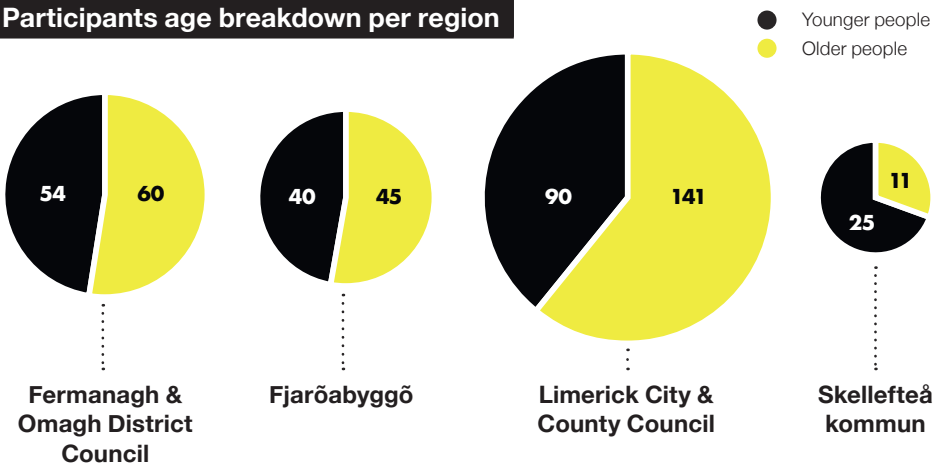
## What the project did

Provide opportunities for the transfer of knowledge, skills and products in health care for the benefit of older people and their communities

- Created community coalitions in 4 demonstrator areas
- Arts based activities
- Engaged schools and students
- Knowledge exchange between older and younger citizens – intergenerational workshops



## Participants age breakdown per region



## Hackathon

**The challenge was to develop proof of concepts (PoC's) for digital solutions/services designed to enable older citizens – especially those in rural areas – to stay engaged and connected.**

5 teams hacked, and over 12 hours came up with novel and exciting ideas that were highly commended.

First place went to Safeshare, an app designed to give independence to older people. In second place, Rejuvenate Connect is an app that identifies emotions in real-time to provide a personalized recommendation system that can assist the elderly.



## Transnational Cultural Heritage Archive

The Archive was generated by the older and younger participants working together and it includes a wide range of cultural artefacts relating to life years ago – traditions, song, music, employment, history and household life. The Archive also hosts material documenting how the two generations worked together. The Archive is currently being populated and will be launched later in 2020.



**I would love to learn how to use the internet so I can engage with others and I really look forward to communicating with the younger generation.**

Pearl Walsh, Elderly participant



## Outputs



### Community Mapping

A Guide to Community Mapping for PLACE-EE (Nov 2018)



### Intergenerational IT Toolkit

Intergenerational Skill Exchange between Students and Older Individuals



### Community Mapping

Transnational Comparisons of Service Provision for Older People in Rural, Sparsely Populated Areas (Feb 2019)



### Systematic Review

Effectiveness of intergenerational exchange programmes between adolescents and elders (Jan 2020)



### Community Mapping

Transnational report and the Needs and Assets of Older Citizens Living in Rural and Sparsely Populated Areas (June 2019)



### PLACE-EE Newsletters



### Transnational Cultural Heritage Archive

(Forthcoming)



## Partners

### Lead partner:



Ulster University, Northern Ireland where the project is based within the Bamford Centre for Mental Health and Wellbeing and Directed by Professor Gerry Leavey.

### Partners:



City of Skellefteå, Sweden  
[demonstrator area]



Fermanagh and Omagh District Council,  
Northern Ireland [demonstrator area]



FJARDBYGGD  
Fjarðabyggð, Iceland  
[demonstrator area]



Limerick County Council, Ireland  
[demonstrator area]



Public Health Agency,  
Northern Ireland



Umeå University,  
Sweden


If older people  
get involved with  
technology, what  
they can really do is  
change their lives.

Julian Cullinan, PLACE-EE Community  
Engagement Officer, Skellefteå



## Contact

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