

DELIVERABLE

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1. Introduction

As part of the work carried out under WP5 of the AFE INNOVNET project, three matchmaking events were organised. These events, each tied to a project workshop or conference event, had the objective of bringing into contact local innovative businesses and other private sector stakeholders with representatives from local and regional authorities in the AFE INNOVNET consortium and network. The aim of the matchmaking events was to have these different stakeholder groups jointly explore possibilities and framework conditions for, and barriers to, collaborative implementation and transfer of innovations.

Substantial effort was invested by both the WP leader (TNO), other steering group partners involved in the task (notably CCRE-CEMR), the project coordinator (AGE Platform Europe) and local partners and their (stakeholder) networks, in preparing and creating favourable conditions for the matchmaking events. Valuable lessons were learned for participants to use in their daily practice. Unfortunately, the barriers to participation by SME's proved such that – despite the effort expended and expertise brought to bear by the partners and others involved – the original ambition to facilitate the emergence of actual transfer pilots has proven to be unattainable within the constraints of the project.

The AFE INNOVNET consortium are confident, nevertheless, that the lessons learned during these matchmaking events will provide a fertile breeding ground to build further on collaborative innovation in age-friendly environments under the umbrella of the Covenant on Demographic Change. The other relevant deliverables produced by the project will support this process and hand stakeholders both insights and practical tools. We are thinking especially of the deliverables under WP5 (particularly, the Repository of notable practices D5.8), the In-depth analysis of pilots (D5.5) and the practical guide to impact assessment (D5.7)); and under WP4 (particularly the SEE-IT socio-economic and environmental impact analysis tool (D4.2) and the participatory method to involve older citizens in co-production of solutions (D4.3).

In this short report, the following issues are addressed in turn.

- The sites and events selected for the matchmaking events, and the rationale for selection.
- Approach and effort expended in preparation of the matchmaking events.
- A brief rundown of the events themselves.
- Lessons learned from each event.

2. Selection of sites and events

After consultation with the EC project officer a change was made to the schedule of matchmaking events envisaged at the time of finalisation of the grant agreement. That schedule included a matchmaking event at the project workshop in Udine on the 30th and 31st of March 2015. On reflection, this event was deemed less suitable. Reservations were expressed by the partner taking on the organisational tasks in situ (Friuli Venezia Giulia) about their ability to reach out to relevant stakeholders in a sufficient degree. Also, reservations were expressed regarding the reachability of the city of Udine by stakeholders from outside the region. It was therefore decided to capitalize instead on the opportunity to fill a presentation slot at the Deutsche Seniorentage in Frankfurt on the 2nd of July 2015.

The amended list of dates and host events for the matchmaking events has been as follows

Date	Host Event	Host Locality
June 10 th 2015	AFE INNOVNET Themed Workshop	Groningen (Netherlands)
July 2 nd 2015	Deutsche Seniorentage	Frankfurt am Main (Germany)
October 8th 2015	AFE INNOVNET Themed Workshop	Warsaw (Poland)

Below a brief rationale is presented for the selection of each host event.

Groningen

Both the host organization University Medical Centre Groningen (UMCG) and the City of Groningen are active members of the AFE INNOVNET network. The UMCG is a partner in the AFE INNOVNET project consortium, as a delegated representative of the City. The City of Groningen has healthy ageing as one of its two major strategic policy and profiling objectives. Moreover, the Northern Netherlands region is a 3-star Reference Site of the EIP on Active and Healthy Ageing. In the region, a large and dynamic networking organization is active, the Healthy Ageing Network Northern Netherlands (HANNN) that specifically targets public sector – private sector collaboration and innovative business activity in the field of active and healthy ageing. The HANNN had expressed willingness to utilize its network to encourage private sector actors to attend the event.

Frankfurt am Main

It had not been foreseen before project start that the opportunity would present itself to host a presentation slot at the Deutsche Seniorentage, a tri-annual event, which in 2015 took place in the City of Frankfurt. The Seniorentage are the largest event addressing ageing issues in Germany. Attendances over the 3-day programme are generally in the tens of thousands. Last year's edition was officially opened by

Bundeskanzlerin Angela Merkel herself. Next to a show floor (exchange) of over 10.000 m², the Seniorentage presented an extensive programme of lectures, presentations and workshop on a diverse range of topics, including Political and Societal Issues, Health and Active Living, Work and Employment, the Home and Home Life, and Education, Lifelong learning and Social engagement. The combined efforts of the AGE Platform Europe board and the EC project officer for AFE INNOVNET were instrumental in securing a slot in this programme. Specific considerations for choosing the Frankfurt event were:

- The large expected attendance and high public profile of the event.
- The expected attendance to the event of representatives of industry, public sector, not-for-profit private sector and advocacy and non-governmental organisations as well as a very sizable attendance from older citizens themselves.
- The chance to reach out to, and get relevant feedback from, the country of Germany and its (social enterprise) market for innovation in age-friendly environments. This addresses an odd gap that has been spotted both within the context of the AFE INNOVNET project and the EIP on Active and Healthy Ageing: Germany is very subdued in international networks on active and healthy ageing, while at the same time a lot of high-quality, innovative activity is going on. Language barriers and an underestimation of the relevance of local work for international networks may play a role here. In any case it was felt that a matchmaking event in Germany would prove a valuable opportunity to engage with relevant stakeholders there.

Warsaw

The City of Warsaw is an active member of the AFE INNOVNET network. As a city, Warsaw is emblematic both of the problems rising to the surface and the social and entrepreneurial dynamism present in many cities and regions in the EU13 Member States. Warsaw as the biggest city in Poland both has a strong set of policies on healthy ageing, social support and citizen involvement; and a thriving community of start-ups and innovative small businesses. A number of these businesses are in some way linked to the Polish-Japanese Institute of Technology that acted as the host to both the AFE INNOVNET Thematic Workshop and the matchmaking event.

3. Approach and effort in preparation of matchmaking events

Groningen matchmaking event

The matchmaking event was scheduled for the end of the programme of the second day of the AFE INNOVNET Thematic Workshop, before and during lunch. A two-hour session was planned, divided into two blocks. One where representatives of local and regional authorities from the AFE INNOVNET network would be asked to pitch a major innovation challenge or problem they had encountered in their own locality. And a second one-hour block where attendees of the event would have the opportunity to engage in discussion with the representatives of Local and Regional Authorities (LRAs) and explore possible approaches to solutions. The idea behind this set-up was that through facilitation of semi-structured interactive discussion around real-life challenges a favourable environment for fostering public-private collaborations could be created. Preparation of the content of the matchmaking event and of dissemination materials for the workshop was handled by the WP5 leader TNO; recruitment of LRA's for the event was handled by WP2 leader CEMR-CCRE. The HANNN network in the Northern Netherlands handled publicity and recruitment of local and regional innovative business partners. Event advertisements and invitations were sent out to a selected group of network members, including reminder emails shortly before the event. Additionally, the event was advertised on the HANNN website and in the HANNN periodic newsletter. The latter both reach beyond the immediate membership of the network to further interested parties both in the region and beyond. Additionally, the HANNN network advertised the event to selected international contacts through its Brussels-based networks.

Frankfurt matchmaking event

The Frankfurt event had to conform to a contracted time scale, as only about half the time scheduled for both the Groningen and Warsaw workshops would be available, and the setting for the event and the mechanism for soliciting attendance would be different. Accordingly, a condensed programme was compiled comprising:

- A short presentation by TNO on the role of research institutes in collaborative innovation
- A short presentation by TNO on barriers to collaborative innovation (taking on board the findings and lessons from the Groningen matchmaking event, see below)
- A short presentation by the EC of its programmes and instruments for public procurement of innovations
- A timeslot for discussion and feedback from attendees.

Before this programme, scene-setting presentations were given by: Ursula Krickl from the Deutsche Städte- und Gemeindebund, on German local initiatives and the need to share knowledge and results with the rest of Europe; and by Angelika Poth-

Mögele of CEMR on the important role European LRA's have to play in leading the way in making age-friendly environments innovation possible.

The organization of the session was jointly handled by AGE Platform Europe, CEMR and TNO. Publicity for the session was necessary handled through the main communication channels of the Deutsche Seniorenstage. Additionally, each organizing partner used its own networks to encourage attendance. Also, representatives from AGE Platform Europe and TNO toured the show floor to encourage visitors and stand holders to attend the session.

Warsaw matchmaking event

The event was scheduled for the end of the programme on the first day of the AFE INNOVNET Thematic Workshop. Like the workshop, the session was hosted by the Polish-Japanese Institute of Technology. To encourage participation in the event by workshop attendees, it was decided to schedule an introductory presentation during the plenary workshop session.

A two-hour programme set-up was devised, based on but upgraded from the set-up of the Groningen matchmaking event. The set-up kept the pitches by public authority representatives as a valuable "real-life use case" element, but introduced a more structured approach for the follow-on discussion and exploration. It was planned over the two-hour session to cover the following items in sequence:

- Pitches by public authorities
- Interview round: questions and fact finding by event participants
- Exploration by participants of possible approaches to key elements identified in the previous session
- Moderated discussion of and feedback on approaches proposed. What is likely to work? And what won't?
- Lessons learned

Recruitment of members from the AFE INNOVNET network for pitches and participation as panellists in the event was jointly handled by CEMR-CCRE and TNO. Recruitment of participants, from local business and other local stakeholder groups was handled by the City of Warsaw. Event advertisements and invitations were sent out through City of Warsaw networks. This was followed up and complemented with personal approaches to a number of likely participants by a representative of the City of Warsaw. In drafting the advertisements and invitations, lessons learned from the response to materials for the Groningen event were taken on board.

4. Summary of the matchmaking events

Groningen matchmaking event

The most immediately noticeable element about the Groningen workshop, in a disappointing fashion, was that despite concerted efforts by the organisers, it proved impossible to persuade SME's from the region to attend the event. Several practical explanations were offered for this. These included the timing of the session at lunchtime, possibly putting too much of a strain on busy entrepreneurial agendas; and the fact that SME's contacted indicated that they had only become aware of the event fairly shortly before its scheduled date. However, the organisers felt it likely that more substantial and fundamental obstacles to participation were probably also involved. It was therefore decided to hold a plenary session during the workshop to discuss the issues regarding matchmaking events, to get a balanced view and be better able to tackle them in the future.

Two major issues arose were raised by participants in the discussion:

1. For industries it is not interesting to interact with LRAs because of procurement regulations. Industry is worried that they are required to invest a lot of time and money in tenders, while there is only a slim chance of winning the tender. Additionally, industry views the decision process of LRAs as long, non-transparent and conservative.
2. For LRAs it is not interesting to interact with industry because technologies on offer are often not mature enough for their purposes. The technology readiness level of most innovations is too low for LRAs to implement them directly and at the required scale. LRAs complain that companies can often show prototypes, but the technologies are not ready to be scaled-up.

Two examples of this second problem were given by LRA's in the audience. In Groningen (the Netherlands), the city worked together with IBM on smart pedestrian traffic lights. The representative of the city Groningen described how difficult the process was to move from the prototype phase to the scaling-up. Additionally, a member of the audience from Fredericia (Denmark) outlined the problems she had with innovations for digital patient records. Companies did not want to provide open-source software and did not understand the demands of the city.

Besides the problem analysis, the participants in the discussion sign-posted various positive developments and alternative routes to business scale-up

- Despite the issues, there really are new business opportunities for industry.
- Companies can promote their products not just to LRAs but also Business-to-Business, or directly to end-users / consumers.

- Pilot sites for innovation are always needed; both industry and LRAs could benefit from participating in such a pilot.
- New forms of procurement like Pre-Competitive Procurement and Procurement of Innovation are emerging, which provide interesting opportunities for industry.

Several members of the audience stated that they recognized the difficulties in organizing this type of event from their own experience.

Additionally, the discussion with participants generated seven bits of practical advice. Two of these (“combine the event with an already existing meeting of SME’s” and “let SME’s organize the event”) could – on reflection – not be accommodated within the parameters of the agreed AFE INNOVNET project approach. The other five were taken on board in preparing for the subsequent matchmaking event, specifically the Warsaw event, as the Frankfurt event had to be organized according to a different set-up. These were:

- Introduce a specific theme to the session
- Marketing is vital
- Send invitations well in advance
- Where you can, provide concrete information
- Do not take up too much valuable time from SME’s

For instance, the invitation for the Warsaw event was rewritten, invitations were sent out approximately one month in advance, the event was rescheduled to the end of the day, to make it easier for participants to combine it with their normal business activities, and a specific theme (namely “procurement and market readiness”) was introduced.

Frankfurt Event

The main focus of the matchmaking event was on the TNO presentation on barriers to collaborative innovation, and on the EC presentation on public procurement of innovation, as well as on the interactive discussion with the attendees. Overall attendance was satisfactory. No tally of attendance was made, but estimates put the number of attendees at 40-50. Given the substantial competition in terms of sessions on offer and the unfavourable climatic conditions (it was 40 degrees C outside), this was somewhat beyond expectation. No systematic review of attendee provenance could be done, as no prior registration for the session was required. However, an informal sounding of the room during the sessions and provenances stated by respondents from the audience revealed a mixed attendance of older citizens, advocacy organisations, LRA’s, social housing representatives, professionals in

health and social care, and industry; the latter predominantly working in the broad field of ICT.

In the presentation on barriers to collaborative innovation, TNO presented a “framework of mutual misconceptions”, partly based on case studies and partly on the findings from the Groningen event. The table below gives an overview of the framework presented.

Framework of mutual misconceptions	
Misconceptions about LRA's by innovative businesses	Misconceptions about innovative businesses by LRA's
LRA's: • Are bureaucratic • Take forever to decide what they want, then a new council comes in and reconsiders all plans • Are completely opaque; it is impossible to be sure who makes decisions to buy anything • Are very reluctant to take any kind of risk • Need to comply with complex regulations and procurement legislation • Use procurement rules that actively hinder innovative businesses	Innovative businesses: • Offer products and services that do not respond to public sector needs • Refuse to make any real effort to understand what those needs might be • Can offer little or no insight into the probable return on investment of the products and services they offer • Offer technologies that have not been proven in an operational environment and are not ready for large-scale deployment.

The presentation then went on to point out that examples of successful collaborative innovation **do** exist, and gave an overview of the framework conditions for success encountered in a recent case study example from the city of Rotterdam in the Netherlands. This case study demonstrated that, typically, for an innovative business activity in active and healthy ageing to be successful, it:

- Actively engages a large network of local stakeholders.
- Is developed as a joint initiative of the local stakeholders and the SME's involved; typically, in successful cases, the local authority is involved but not in the driving seat.
- Develop services that are needs-driven; these needs will have been articulated early on in the project, and citizens are on board in the development team.
- In developing services, it makes sure that these are up and running and proving their viability in a (small scale) operational environment before scale-up is attempted.

The session continued with a presentation by the European Commission which focused on the problems and barriers to scaling up and market take-up of age-friendly innovations by traditional procurement processes; highlighted the Commission's efforts to address these problems through the introduction of programmes and instruments for innovative approaches to public procurement of these innovations; and provided practical information on the possibilities for both the public sector and businesses to get involved in and profit from these programmes and instruments.

The topics for discussion with and feedback from the audience were taken from these presentations and had the overall purpose to:

- Elicit information on the business innovation landscape in Germany
- Establish the relevance or otherwise of the materials presented to German stakeholders for collaborative action in their own communities

A very animated discussion ensued. Partly, this confirmed that the mechanisms and barriers identified were to be found in the German innovation arena as well. It also, however, highlighted that both in terms of citizen engagement and in terms of business involvement in public sector innovations, Germany has valuable practical lessons to teach to the rest of Europe. A particularly interesting example raised was that of the combined programme of federal grants and bank loans carried out (for and in collaboration with the federal government) by the KfW Bank. This programme offers a combination of partial grants and favourable condition loans to home owners who decide to invest in improving the accessibility of their homes in anticipation of their future independent living requirements.

Warsaw event

For the matchmaking event in Warsaw, an introductory presentation was planned in as part of the plenary programme of the AFE INNOVNET workshop. The presentation was held by a representative of the WP5 leader TNO and had the dual purposes of presenting the findings and lessons learned from the Groningen and Frankfurt events and to introduce the purpose and set-up of the current event. It also gave a brief overview of the findings documented in the Silver Economy report compiled for the European Commission by Merrill Lynch, highlighting the business potential inherent in demographic change worldwide. The theme of the event "procurement and market readiness" was explained and the participants were instructed that they were expected to find out from interviewing the presenters of the use cases:

- What would be necessary for them, in terms of preparatory work and relationship building to gain a favourable position in a future procurement procedure?
- What specific product expectations applied in the use case and which relevant limitations and/or framework conditions were in place that could affect the

market implementation of solutions presented? These could focus on budget, technology readiness, existing guidelines and protocols and so on. Examples were provided.

Approximately thirty attendees took part in the matchmaking event. Unfortunately the participation of SME's was hindered by late cancellations. Where on the basis of preregistration 5 or 6 SME's were expected, only 2 could eventually make it. The following programme steps were planned for the two-hour session.

- Pitches (presentation of use cases) by public authority representatives
- Interview round, in which participants were expected to extract as much relevant information from public authority representatives as they could
- Development by participants of proposed approaches to key elements discerned through the interview round
- Discussion of approaches suggested by the participants on the basis of responses provided by a panel composed of AFE INNOVNET LRA members.
- Conclusions on lessons learned.

The matchmaking event was moderated by the WP5 leader TNO. Pitches to be presented were planned to be:

- A possible investment in assistive and monitoring ICT technology by an assisted living facility in the city of Groningen, by a representative of the University Medical Centre Groningen
- A possible investment in a social engagement network platform and app in the city of Rotterdam, presented by the TNO representative for practical reason.

During the event itself it quickly became apparent that the Groningen use case generated such interest, discussion and incisive questions by the attendees, that it provided enough source material for the entire session. The presentation and interview round on the Rotterdam use case were accordingly shelved.

To work out possible approaches to the possible investment opportunity presented, the attendees were divided into two groups. To make the most of the presence of SME representatives, these were requested to lead each group.

Results were presented by each group and subjected to a constructively critical discussion. The strengths of each group's approach differed. One group showed a keen grasp of the determining nature of available budgets and expected monetary benefits, and had managed to develop in a short time a plethora of possible solutions to fit different budgets, with a first indication (in qualitative terms) of the expected benefits associated with each intervention. The second group had gone in a different direction and had worked out a credible approach to involve end-users' needs and expectations as well as the end-users themselves in a structured, iterative way in the service development process.

In conclusion, participants to the event stated that the session had helped bring home to them the importance of early interaction between the public and the private sector, and hence the added value of procurement models that create more space for these approaches. Participants also highlighted the value they had taken from employing a structured multi-factorial approach to developing possible solutions. Finally, participants from the public sector expressed surprise at the speed with which promising ideas could be generated in an environment conducive to constructive interaction between the public and private sector.

An opportunity taken: Open Days session October 14th 2015

The AFE INNOVNET consortium capitalized on an opportunity to broadcast the findings and lessons from the matchmaking event to a wide relevant audience, through the organisation of a working session at the annual Open Days. The Open Days are the main annual event for LRA's seeking to engage with their peers from across Europe and get updated on policy, research, innovation and funding developments in a wide range of relevant domains. The session organised by AFE INNOVNET went under the title *The Silver Economy: what approach should the regions adopt?*, and brought to the fore the perspectives and experience of LRA's, research organisations, older citizens and businesses involved in age-friendly innovation. The session was well-attended, with approximately 140 people.

5. Lessons learned and ideas for continuation beyond the project

The organization of the matchmaking events has yielded the following main positive outcomes.

- The events have confirmed and deepened our understanding of the barriers to and difficulties with collaborative innovation in the field of active and healthy ageing.
- The matchmaking events have provided an appropriate platform to highlight these to interested participants, as well as to provide experiential information on which favourable framework conditions should be in place or put in place.
- The events have provided opportunities for structured discussion and exploration of issues around collaborative innovation.
- The Warsaw event especially brought home to participants the value to be gained by the public sector from early engagement and cooperation with innovative businesses.
- The Frankfurt event has been especially helpful in broadcasting the value of collaborative innovation to a variegated German audience, as well as informing that audience of European funding opportunities to stimulate innovative procurement approaches.

At the same time, the organization of the events brought to light obstacles that, despite the effort and expertise brought to bear on the matchmaking events, meant that the eventual ambition expressed at the start of the project proved unattainable within the project limitations. In particular, persuading SME's to join in the events proved substantially harder than had been hoped. It transpired over the course of the project that the combination of LRA's and innovative small-scale businesses was particularly challenging. The Groningen matchmaking event analysis highlighted that LRA's are inherently unattractive clients for innovative SME's. It further became apparent that geographical and or cultural distance exacerbated this problem.

Many of the participants in the matchmaking events pronounced themselves at a loss when it comes to starting up, managing and monitoring collaborative innovation with the private sector. This reinforces the need for LRA's and other public stakeholders to have access to the supporting and instructional material developed over the course of the AFE INNOVNET project, notably:

- The repository of notable practices
- The SEE-IT tool for socio-economic and environmental impact analysis
- The Practical guide to impact analysis
- The Participative methodology for engagement of older citizens in co-production of age-friendly solutions
- The in-depth analysis of notable practices, with its focus on scaling-up and market-uptake issues in notable practices involving SME participation.

Taking on board the recommendations from the Groningen event, and recognizing that a one-leap approach to generating collaborative innovation across geographical and cultural boundaries is overambitious in this market, the Covenant Towards and Age-friendly Europe, could continue and expand support to uptake of collaborative innovation in a number of ways:

- Make sure the instruments and support documents developed are made known and promoted to both existing and new members of the Covenant.
- Engage with Covenant members to stimulate the emergence of local ecosystems for collaborative innovation. Make available lessons learned during the project to increase the likelihood of success of matchmaking attempts in these local ecosystems.
- Attend members of the Covenant to the existence of support and stimulus programmes and instruments and promote their use in local ecosystems. This should include information on EU funding instruments designed to encourage LRA's to invest in stimulating innovative SME activity.
- Encourage the use of Covenant facilities to monitor progress of local ecosystems, and share that progress among interested parties.
- Act as a facilitator for local ecosystems that wish to start engaging with ecosystems elsewhere.