

TWENTY YEARS OF CONVENTIONS

Voices of Senior Citizens: Proposals and Actions (2003-2023)

REPORT
November 2023



Department of Social Participation
Area for Social Rights, Health,
Cooperation and Community

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Ajuntament
de Barcelona

Table of Contents

Introduction-----	2
The history of senior citizens' contributions to policy-----	5
Participation by senior citizens-----	6
Proposals and responses in relation to participation (2003-2023) -----	8
Social and emotional well-being and care of senior citizens-----	22
Proposals and responses in relation to social and emotional well-being and care (2003-2023)-----	24
Equality and rights policies-----	37
Proposals and responses in relation to equality and senior citizens' rights (2003-2023) --	39
Urban policies on the right to the city-----	48
Proposals and responses in relation to urban policies on the right to the city (2003-2023)--	50
Conclusions-----	59

Introduction

The Advisory Council for the Elderly (CAGG) was created on 18 March 1991 and is Barcelona City Council's advisory and participatory body for matters relating to the city's senior citizens and, more specifically, for the responsibilities and functions that improve their well-being and quality of life. It is also a citizen participation and consultation body, and its responsibilities therefore include assessing and providing advice in relation to all municipal policies from a life cycle perspective, understanding ageing as a lifelong process.

One of the CAGG's most significant initiatives is the **Voices of Senior Citizens**

Convention, which has been held every four years since 2003. This event, which provides Barcelona's senior citizens with their main forum for participation, discussion and reflection, is held through the City Council's Area for Social Rights. Over the years, the main aim of the conventions has been to make proposals for the future and review previous years' work. These conventions have always been open to anyone in the city aged 60 and over, as well as professionals, researchers and experts in the field of ageing.

To gain an understanding of the CAGG's evolution and experience over more than 30 years and the 20 years of conventions, we must start by taking a brief look at how it all began.

An initial advocacy group was created in the 1980s and became the main representative body for senior citizens in their dealings with the City Council. It was this initial advocacy group that held the **1st Congress on Elderly People in Barcelona** in 1989. One of the main conclusions of the event was that, in order to obtain official recognition, the Barcelona Advisory Council for the Elderly needed an administrative structure. The rules regulating the CAGG were thus approved in 1990, and the body was officially founded on 18 March 1991. Two years later, in 1993, within the framework of the European Year of the Elderly and of Solidarity between Generations, the **2nd Congress on Elderly People in Barcelona** was held by the Advisory Council for the Elderly with the City Council's support. The **3rd Congress on Elderly People in Barcelona** was held in 1999, the United Nations' International Year of Older Persons. Once the 3rd Congress was over, the process of getting more elderly people involved in citizen participation bodies began. This was done through a CAGG working group that decided to amend the CAGG's regulations to expand it and include the voices of all senior citizens in the city. In 2002, coinciding with the UN's Second World Assembly on Ageing and the NGO World Forum on Ageing, Barcelona City Council and the CAGG launched the programme "**Senior Citizens and Participation, Barcelona 2002**". For that, the CAGG took on the challenge of increasing the social and institutional impact of the

new participation methods. The “Senior Citizens and Participation, Barcelona 2002” programme was mainly based on the conclusions of the 3rd Congress on Elderly People in Barcelona (1999), the proposals and recommendations of the Working Group on Senior Citizens of the Municipal Council for Social Well-Being and the work carried out by the Advisory Council for the Elderly, the district committees and associations. This was followed a year later, in 2003, by the **1st Voices of Senior Citizens in Barcelona Convention**, where all the work carried out up to that point within the framework of the “Senior Citizens and Participation, Barcelona 2002” programme was presented to the public and the CAGG's proposals were agreed on. The 1st Convention thus provided a meeting point for both sharing all the new initiatives put into practice to foster and increase participation by the city’s senior citizens and jointly ratifying future lines of work.

Over these more than 30 years, the Advisory Council for the Elderly has thus become firmly established as the main representative body for senior citizens in the city and has fostered their participation. Similarly, the Voices of Senior Citizens conventions held over the past 20 years have helped this event become the main forum for participation, discussion and reflection on ageing by Barcelona’s senior citizens.

This year, to celebrate **20 years of Voices of Senior Citizens Conventions**, and having recently also celebrated **the CAGG's 30th anniversary**, we have drawn up this report to review how senior citizens' contributions to ageing policies and other matters in Barcelona have evolved during this time. This report identifies the main thematic blocks discussed at each convention and examines the proposals for action made over these past 20 years, addressing the changes in the main areas on senior citizens included in the municipal political agenda. The many responses to these proposals for action given by both the local government and the Advisory Council for the Elderly itself over the last 20 years have also been taken into account.

The various reports reviewing each of the previous five editions of the Voices of Senior Citizens Conventions have therefore been taken into account in the preparation of this document. These reports are:

- *Voices of Senior Citizens. Senior Citizens and Participation, Barcelona 2002-2003* (2003), in relation to the 1st Convention (2003).
- *Voices of Senior Citizens. Senior Citizens and Participation, Barcelona 2004-2007* (2008), in relation to the 2nd Convention (2007).

- *Voices of Senior Citizens in Barcelona. Review of Outcomes* (2014), in relation to the 3rd Convention (2011).
- *Review of Outcomes of Proposals from the 4th Convention* (2019), in relation to the 4th Convention (2015).
- *Review of Outcomes of Proposals from the 5th Convention* (2023), in relation to the 5th Convention (2019).



Responses and actions by the Advisory Council for the Elderly



Responses and actions by the municipal government

The history of senior citizens' contributions to policy

PARTICIPATION BY SENIOR CITIZENS

One of the CAGG's guiding principles has been the aim of encouraging senior citizens to participate and get involved in associations, as well as to promote and highlight the work of organisations for the elderly in Barcelona. Participation has thus been one of the main fields of action over the CAGG's more than 30 years of life and 20 of conventions and has become one of the core thematic blocks for making proposals for new actions and challenges for improvement.

The foundations for a new way of participating in citizen life, to make it broader and more interactive and far-reaching, were established following the **1st Voices of Senior Citizens in Barcelona Convention (2003)**. Before the 1st Convention, the "Senior Citizens and Participation, Barcelona 2002" programme, which was based on the conclusions of the 3rd Congress on Elderly People in Barcelona (1999), had already highlighted the need to encourage senior citizens to participate in social and cultural matters, as well as the importance of having a strong and stable body to enable them to do so. The 1st Convention thus focused mainly on the idea of promoting and increasing participation by senior citizens, empowering them in the city's network of associations, strengthening the CAGG's representative bodies and carrying out various participatory processes.

One of the main lines of action of the **2nd Voices of Senior Citizens in Barcelona Convention (2007)** related to the various forms of participation in the city and its districts. The 2nd Convention was the culmination and embodiment of the work carried out by the Advisory Council for the Elderly and the city's district councils and committees within the framework of the "Senior Citizens and Participation 2004-2007" programme resulting from the lines of work agreed on in the 1st Convention. Work to further encourage senior citizens to get involved thus continued, with particular emphasis on participation bodies and the importance of elderly people as facilitators of social life in the neighbourhoods.

The **3rd Convention (2011)** was a turning point in the approach to participation, both in relation to the subjects addressed and in terms of senior citizens' own wish to get involved in policy-making. The aim of encouraging frail senior citizens to get involved was included in the political agenda for the first time, as was the need to foster a form of volunteering that could help them participate in city life. In addition, more work was carried out to strengthen senior citizens' participation bodies in the local area and increase their social and civic participation in organisations, old people's centres and other community action platforms. This change of approach to the form of participation stemmed from the CAGG's 2009 proposal for Barcelona

City Council to take on the challenge of adapting the city to its gradually ageing population in accordance with the initiative launched under the World Health Organization's (WHO) "Age-Friendly Cities" programme to improve senior citizens' health and well-being.

The **4th Voices of Senior Citizens Convention (2015)** firmly established the change of model for senior citizens' participation, under which they continued to be encouraged to speak and share their point of view in the various spheres of society. In addition, a step forward to call for a more active role for senior citizens when making decisions on the city's public policies was taken. The 4th Convention thus highlighted the need to work on the participation of senior citizens but with a more active role in decision-making and designing services, as well as ensuring that people in this group who were in need of care or assistance on an ongoing basis were able to participate by removing any obstacles that were hindering their ability to exercise their rights. Work on the challenge of incorporating senior citizens' perspective in the construction of a city for all ages in accordance with the "Age-Friendly City" programme also continued.

The main aim of the **5th Convention (2019)** was to continue working on increasing senior citizens' involvement in associations, volunteering and the various bodies and participation platforms in existence, in a continued and varied way that was linked to their everyday life, in order to empower them. The proposals made included, in particular, initiatives to strengthen districts' senior citizen councils and encourage a more plural and diverse participation in partnership with other sector-specific councils. Senior citizens were also encouraged to take on a more active role in public policy design, monitoring and assessment. Another key aim was to broaden participation to increase its diversity by promoting community and intergenerational projects for greater social cohesion. In addition, the participation of dependent or frailer senior citizens continued to be encouraged. Finally, the CAGG continued to promote the city's Commitment to Senior-Citizen Friendliness and to roll out a model for spaces and facilities for senior citizens with their involvement.

Encouraging intergenerational interaction has been a constant theme over these 20 years of conventions. Proposals such as carrying out intergenerational participatory processes or working on projects in partnership with various youth organisations have made it possible to share problems and consider demands jointly to increase social cohesion in the city and its neighbourhoods.

Another area of focus between the 3rd Convention (2011) and the present day has been communication. On the one hand, there is some concern about the negative views and

stereotypes about senior citizens conveyed by the media, with their possible negative consequences; and, on the other, information channels, both between and within senior citizens' organisations, require improvement. Organisations fail to collaborate and share experiences because they are unaware of each other's experience. In relation to this, it was mentioned in the 5th Convention (2019) that the Advisory Council for the Elderly needed to get better at communicating and publicising its own contributions to policies.


The main proposals for action on senior citizens' participation carried out over these past 20 years based on the conclusions of each Convention are set out below, followed by the resulting responses and actions from both the CAGG and the municipal government.


Proposals and responses in relation to participation (2003-2023)

PROPOSALS FROM THE 1ST CONVENTION (2003)

- Open representative positions at the CAGG to new rotating members, allowing associations that are not specifically for senior citizens to join.
- Promote intergenerational participation processes.
- Ensure plural and effective participation by senior citizens in the Municipal Council Assembly and in neighbourhood, district or city-wide participatory processes (on matters such as urban planning, mobility, education or the environment).
- Incorporation of participatory processes on specific topics and at specific times by the Advisory Council for the Elderly itself or by district bodies, and creating working groups with a diverse membership to cover specific topics of relevance to the city as a whole or to specific districts or neighbourhoods.
- Publicise among the public those forums and topics that are open to participation by senior citizens.
- Promote FiraGran as a regular platform for sharing the participation experiences of Barcelona's senior citizens.
- Roll out the XarxaGran programme, a network for senior citizens to interact and share their experiences of participation in the city, its neighbourhoods and its districts, supported by a new website.


RESPONSES IN 2003-2007

 Providing the CAGG's and district committees' projects with methodologies to encourage the city's senior citizens' organisations to participate and get involved. This was done mainly through working groups in which representatives of the city's and the various districts' senior citizens' organisations were invited to take part. The CAGG made sure that participation was open to the organisations in the city whose activities placed them in a position to enrich the debate and the resulting work. According to the CAGG, all the organisations involved were very satisfied with this experience, as it went beyond these working groups and encouraged both individuals and organisations to share their experiences with each other.

 Starting to expand the CAGG by putting new regulations in place and starting to accept new membership applications from both organisations and individuals. A total of 20 applications from organisations and five from individuals were received.


 **Helping to draft the Municipal Action Programme** and draw up the *2006-2010 Municipal Programme for the Elderly*.


 Monitoring the drafting of the ***Improvement Plan for old people's centres and municipal spaces for senior citizens and undertaking to monitor its implementation***.

 Taking part and being represented at the Municipal Council Assembly, the Municipal Council for Social Well-Being, the Council for Social Housing and the Assisted-Living Housing Allocation and Monitoring Board.

 Holding two exhibitions on senior citizens' participation in the city:

- The exhibition "La participació de la gent gran de Barcelona pam a pam" [Senior citizens' participation in Barcelona, inch by inch], consisting of 19 panels split into six subject areas to raise awareness of the diversity of senior citizens living in Barcelona, of which a DVD was created.
- "Aparador de la participació" [Participation showcase], an exhibition of magazines, posters and other products of the projects carried out by the city's senior citizen councils, committees and organisations. This one was held in connection with the 2nd Convention.

 Starting, together with the senior citizen councils and committees of the area, the process of defining and approving the programme **Gent Gran i Participació 2004-2007: "Una gent gran implicada en la vida de la ciutat"** [Senior Citizens and Participation 2004-2007: senior citizens involved in city life]. This programme, which was approved following a participatory process to define its content, set the CAGG's roadmap for the next few years.

 Pushing for a **map of senior citizen participation councils** to be drawn up, with a description of the district councils and committees, including their structure, organisational chart, members, programme and main projects.

 Promoting the **XarxaGran** programme through various initiatives, such as:

- Starting to draw up, in February 2005, the first official register of senior citizens' groups and organisations in the city to build a foundation beyond the CAGG's organisations.
- Drawing up, in January 2007, a map of projects carried out with the involvement of senior citizens, as well as a dossier of around 125 significant activities and projects carried out by senior citizens in Barcelona.
- Starting to work on a new website to raise awareness of the variety of projects being carried out by the CAGG and the city's senior citizen councils, committees and organisations.


 Rolling out the XarxaGran programme.

PROPOSALS FROM THE 2ND CONVENTION (2007)

- Create platforms for the exchange of information and for the city's senior citizen councils and committees to share projects and experiences.
 - Create platforms for coordination and exchange between old people's centres and other public and private places for senior citizens in each district and for the city as a whole.
 - Hold dedicated conferences to publicise the projects and experiences of senior citizens being carried out all over the city.
 - Open up participation platforms not just to senior citizen organisations as such but also to other organisations that work with and for the elderly.

- Promote coordination from a triple perspective: among associations in general, between specific associations for senior citizens and those for people of other ages, and among the districts' senior citizen councils.
 - Encourage the creation of collaboration platforms between senior citizens' organisations and intergenerational organisations.
 - Push forward intergenerational projects to be carried out by organisations of the same area.
 - Launch by the CAGG of a project to establish the basic lines of work of the senior citizen programmes that should be carried out in a coordinated manner in the city's districts and encourage them to work together.
 - Ensure that organisations made up of groups of other organisations provide management and organisational support to smaller organisations.
- Promote training initiatives to help senior citizens get involved at each level of participation in the city.
 - Foster mechanisms to encourage senior citizens and their organisations to get effectively involved in the participation projects carried out in the neighbourhoods.
 - Provide ongoing volunteering and associations training to people involved in organisations and old people's centres and give special support to people sitting on boards and committees.
 - Amend organisations' byelaws to include maximum terms for management positions.
 - Publicise the city's and its districts' participation mechanisms, such as public district council hearings and district citizen councils.
 - Encourage frail members to attend meetings of participation bodies.

RESPONSES IN 2007-2011

 **Promoting the "Barcelona amigable amb les persones grans" [Barcelona, Age-Friendly City] project**, in accordance with the health and well-being initiative promoted by the World Health Organization (WHO) within the framework of the **Age-Friendly Programme**, which has been supported by the CAGG since 2009. This project addresses two core features of current societies: the gradually ageing population and the world's urbanisation. The main actions carried out were:

- Encouraging senior citizens and the organisations that represent them, as well as the general public, to help design project.
- Drawing up the document *2010-2012 Participatory Diagnosis*. This was achieved by means of a participatory process, systematising the available information on the city and municipal actions and working together with the various municipal areas and districts.

As a result of this project, in March 2011 Barcelona city was accepted as a member of the **WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities**.



Drawing up and rolling out the *Improvement Plan for old people's centres and municipal spaces for senior citizens (2007-2008)*, which was published in 2007 and entailed a new model for old people's centres and municipal spaces for the elderly.




Defining the document on the *Operating Rules for old people's centres and municipal spaces for the elderly in Barcelona*, which was approved in 2011.


PROPOSALS FROM THE 3RD CONVENTION (2011)


- Promote social and civic participation by senior citizens with the "Benefit from participation" campaign to help them see all the reasons to get involved.
- Face the challenge of encouraging people who are retiring or taking early retirement to get involved in associations, including senior centres, as well as helping frail senior citizens to get involved.
- Foster volunteering to increase participation under the slogan "Implica't i implica'ls!" [Get involved and get them involved!], and ensure that the necessary advice, training and monitoring is provided in connection with the volunteering.
- Take advantage of the European Year of Volunteering to learn how to manage volunteering to ensure that senior citizens eager to get involved are not overloaded with work or lose motivation.
- Promote the recognition and visibility of the work carried out by senior citizens involved in all kinds of organisations and help them get involved by improving the accessibility of public transport.
- Pool efforts for a better dissemination of information, specifically if it is useful for senior citizens in their daily lives.


- Learn to inspire others and to strengthen participative dynamics within organisations to ensure that information travels from old people's centres and senior citizens' organisations and enables them to get involved in participative work dynamics and develop their leadership and teamwork skills.
- Strive to ensure that the Advisory Council for the Elderly and other senior citizens' organisations become conduits for conveying information through both traditional channels and new technologies by creating active websites and blogs and keeping them up to date and through social media.
- Use the "Barcelona, Age-Friendly City" project, both individually and from organisations, to spread information, give a better welcome to people arriving at senior centres for the first time and encourage participation, with the slogan "Jo també faig Barcelona ciutat amiga" [I too make Barcelona a friendly city].


RESPONSES IN 2011-2015


 Ensuring the **participation** of the councils and the senior citizens in their associations, old people's homes and other spaces for the elderly in the process of drawing up the **2013-2016 *Municipal Plan for the Elderly*** and in the community actions carried out in each of the city's districts.


 Contributions by the CAGG and its organisations to the ***Shared Strategy for an Inclusive Barcelona***, focusing on improving people's quality of life.


 Creating participation councils in care homes and approve the proposal to include representative of these establishments in the CAGG.


 Facilitating joint work between the CAGG and the district councils by means of new organisational proposals and the territorial committee.


 Helping to draw up the **2013-2016 "Ciutat Amiga"** [Barcelona, Friendly City] Action Plan, which set out the work to be carried out in areas relating to senior citizens' daily lives and affecting the city's residents as a whole. The Plan was submitted to the WHO, which had admitted Barcelona as a member of the Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities at the CAGG's request.


 Encouraging adherence to the **"Shared Commitment to continue making progress beyond 2012"** declaration within the framework of the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations. In 2014, 213 organisations in Barcelona had joined the declaration, committing to work on active ageing.

 Creating, together with the district councils, an extensive programme of activities within the framework of the European Year of Active Ageing. These included, among others, the Intergenerational Film Series, the "Compartim Experiència" [Sharing Our Experiences] series and two working sessions.

 Approving at the Full Council, in March 2013, a **"Declaration against the Consequences of the Crisis on the Living Conditions of Senior Citizens"**, which was presented to the then mayor and sent to the Council of the Elderly of Catalonia and the Consejo Estatal de Mayores [Spanish State Council for the Elderly].


 Holding two conferences on participation and volunteering: one for reflection on senior citizen social participation models and one on volunteering with and for the elderly in the Sarrià-Sant Gervasi district. In addition, active retirement training courses were held in collaboration with the Federation of Associations of Senior Citizens of Catalonia (FATEC) under the name "La vida continua" [Life goes on].


 Carrying out the **campaign "Ets una persona gran i vols ser voluntària?"** [Are you an elderly person looking for volunteering opportunities?] within the framework of participation in old people's centres and helping run a stand on volunteering opportunities for senior citizens in Barcelona at **FiraGran**.


 Creating a **communication working group within the Advisory Council for the Elderly**, which drew up a communication plan to publicise and raise awareness of the work carried out by the CAGG and senior citizens' organisations. Its actions included, among others:

- Creating a regular online newsletter, which was sent to all city and council organisations and district committees and leading professionals in matters relating to the elderly.
- Publishing and disseminating recommendations in various areas of interest to elderly people, such as healthy habits, safety and mobility.
- Improving other communication channels, such as the website and documentaries.

- Taking action to publicise the "Open Document on the Rights and Freedoms of Senior Citizens".

 Rolling out the *2013-2016 Municipal Plan for the Elderly*, which addressed the participation of senior citizens as key active players in the city's processes and in their own families and communities.

 Holding the citizens' conference on "Elderly People and the Digitalisation of Society" to make proposals to **fight the digital gap** affecting senior citizens.

 Putting IT rooms in old people's centres and other spaces for the elderly and providing Wi-Fi in them.

PROPOSALS FROM THE 4TH CONVENTION (2015)

- Encourage senior citizens' participation bodies to get more involved in the definition, roll-out and assessment of the resources and services aimed at the elderly.
- Promote actions that encourage volunteering and participation by senior citizens in organisations, old people's centres and other spaces for the elderly, ensuring that they receive advice and training.
- Highlight and recognise the social contributions of senior citizens involved in all kinds of community initiatives, projects and organisations in the city.
- Increase the role of senior citizen councils and committees to address the future challenges to be faced by these participation bodies in an ever-changing social context.
- Create spaces and initiatives to enable senior citizens in need of constant care or assistance to participate, as an opportunity to make progress in adapting the city and its local area to their needs.
- Redesign the senior citizen participation framework to adapt it to the interests, living conditions and needs of new players with new ways of ageing.
- Lifelong learning. Meet the need for training over the course of people's lives, guaranteeing equal opportunities in that learning process.

RESPONSES IN 2015-2019



Holding the first edition of the **Voices of Senior Citizens forums** in 2016 to make a concrete commitment to being an age-friendly city. This line of work continued over the course of 2018, and a second edition of the Senior Citizen Forums was held.



Encouraging elderly people to participate through the “**Decidim la ciutat que volem**” [We Decide the City We Want] platform, a participation platform for members of the public to share their opinion and make suggestions about possible actions to be taken in the city in an open and collaborative manner. Specifically, the CAGG fostered this participation in connection with drawing up the Municipal Action Programme (PAM) and the district action programmes (PAD).



Continuing to promote the district senior citizen councils to encourage the elderly to participate in social matters and build a society for all ages amid significant demographic changes. The people involved in the district senior citizen councils were also encouraged to increase their presence in neighbourhood councils.



Producing **declarations and position statements** on important issues on the political agenda and other matters of interest in relation to the elderly:

- "Declaration on Refugees" (approved on 28 June 2016).
- "Declaration to Mark International Day of Older Persons 2016" (approved on 1 October 2016 within the framework of the CAGG's 25th anniversary).
- "Declaration on the Pension System" (approved by the CAGG on 12 January 2017; its content was approved by the Full Municipal Council on 24 February 2017).
- "Position Statement on the Negative Situations Experienced by Senior Citizens Living in Care Homes" (approved on 13 June 2017).
- Appearance before the Work, Social Affairs and Families Committee of the Catalan Parliament to report on the situation of Barcelona's care homes (14 November 2018).
- "Position Statement on the City's Age-Friendliness" (approved on 30 January 2018).
- "Declaration to Mark International Day of Older Persons 2017" (finally approved on 27 February 2018).
- "Declaration on Updating the Income Sufficiency Indicator for Catalonia (IRSC)" (approved on 27 February 2018).

- Proposal on the *Strategy for Demographic Change and Ageing: a city for all stages of life (2018-2030)* (approved on 22 January 2019).



Promoting the initiative to form a **group of frail and/or dependent senior citizens**, within the CAGG framework and with the participation and support of some of its members, in order to put into practice specific promotion mechanisms to motivate and empower people in such situations facing barriers to participating in society.



Promoting various **strategic documents with guidance on ageing policies** in Barcelona with a 2030 target. The Advisory Council for the Elderly, organisations, old people's centres and other spaces for the elderly helped draw up these documents by reporting the proposals coming out of the 4th Convention.

- *Strategy for Demographic Change and Ageing: a city for all stages of life. 2018-2030.*
- *Government Measure for Promoting Senior Citizens in Barcelona. 2017-2021.*
- Municipal Action Programme and district action programmes for 2016-2019: “73 neighbourhoods, one Barcelona. Towards a city of rights and opportunities”.



The Torre Jussana Centre of Services for Associations produced a **handbook as part of its “Útils pràctics” [Practical Tools]** collection to provide associations with guidance on how to incorporate the ageing perspective in their organisational and operating models. It addressed topics such as empowering senior citizens, incorporating the intergenerational perspective and recognising the diversity of elderly people.



Increasing the variety of **training opportunities for senior citizens**, such as university extension courses, ICT training, day-to-day health management courses and language courses. These actions were carried out under the "The right to age" core strategy of the 2017-2021 Government Measure and led to various initiatives fostering the right to knowledge.


PROPOSALS FROM THE 5TH CONVENTION (2019)


- Reinforce the CAGG's position as a proactive actor in the definition, design, monitoring and assessment of public policies.
- Develop strategies to encourage greater participation in organisations, get senior citizens interested in volunteering and encourage them to join associations and get involved in more political forms of participation.

- Reinforce the role of district senior citizen councils and ensure they are run in a way (in terms of subjects covered and working methods) that is suitable for new needs and promotes opportunities for empowerment.
- Move towards the application of an intergenerational solidarity perspective and seek ways to form connections. Propose and renew collaboration commitments with the Youth Council and other sectoral and regional participation councils.
- Promote more plural and diverse participation in which groups such as elderly women, immigrants, members of the LGBTI community and individuals with functional diversity are heard.
- Promote a model of facilities and spaces for senior citizens where they play a more prominent role in management and decision-making, prioritising networking and involvement in social and community life. In any case, senior citizens who use the service, as well as the Advisory Council for the Elderly itself, must play a role in the deployment of any new model.
- Improve the effectiveness of communication with citizens and participation councils and publicise the initiatives carried out.
- Call for a more active role for senior citizens as agents of social transformation and for a more proactive attitude in the defence of their rights.
- Research and learn more about senior citizens' living conditions and contribution to society in order to challenge the official narratives.

RESPONSES IN 2019-2023

This period was shaped by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, which affected the fulfilment, implementation and achievement of the proposals and challenges arising from the **5th Voices of Senior Citizens Convention (2019)**, which should have been carried out in the CAGG's subsequent **Work Plan (2019-2023)**. The CAGG and the municipal government took the following steps to adapt to the new reality resulting from the pandemic:

 Drawing up a "**List of Action Lines and Proposals of senior citizens in relation to the Covid-19 crises**" (2020, and updated in 2021), which took into account, among others, various aspects relating to senior citizens' participation and opportunities for interaction.

 Creating a new communication channel to mark the CAGG's 30th anniversary, **the CAGG's newsletter The Voices of Senior Citizens**, to publicise the work of the CAGG, the councils and

the district committees and report on relevant initiatives carried out by the City Council or other organisations or actors. Meanwhile, a **new CAGG website** was created to improve the way proposals and demands put forward by the CAGG are shared and publicised.



Continuing to hold meetings of both its formal bodies and working groups despite the pandemic. The outcome of these working sessions was embodied in the document "**The Voices of the Elderly in the face of Covid-19. CAGG working groups (April-June 2020)**". A number of online discussions on various relevant matters were also held.



Holding various sessions on **lifelong learning** with the "Participating in Later Life" working group, through which the CAGG made contributions on training and learning proposals for elderly people to the Municipal Advisory Council for Universities (CAMU).



Taking part in the 23rd edition of FiraGran, as part of Barcelona City Council's stand on "Barcelona, an age-friendly city", and with its own session in the fair's Àgora section to explain the process of the 6th Voices of Senior Citizens Convention. It also took part in the professional conference titled "The participation rights of elderly people: strategies to promote, encourage and guarantee them", with a talk about **30 years of the CAGG, 20 years of conventions**.



Promoting, between September 2022 and March 2023, the participatory process of the **6th Voices of Senior Citizens Convention**, with the slogan "Participem per garantir drets. Vine i fes-te sentir" [Let's participate to guarantee rights. Come and be heard].



Drawing up the following **declarations and position statements** on various matters affecting senior citizens' rights and lives and on issues that have shaped the political agenda of recent years:

- "Statement on the Situation Caused by the Coronavirus" (March 2020).
- Update on this statement through the "Position Statement on the Current State of the Pandemic" (April 2020).
- "CAGG Declaration to Mark the 30th International Day of Older Persons 2020" (1 October 2020).
- "The Voice of the CAGG: Digital Gap": a letter addressed to the Banking Association and the Association of Users of Banks and Savings Banks concerning the issue of the digital gap among elderly people in connection with the service provided by banking

institutions (2020), and the subsequent statement of position “Digital Gap in Banking Institution Services: in favour of age-friendly services” (2021).

- Statement from the CAGG to guarantee the right to vote of elderly people who live in residential care homes (approved on 3 February 2021).
- Document about the centenary of the League of Nations conference held in Barcelona (approved on 24 November 2021).
- "CAGG Declaration on Updating the Income Sufficiency Indicator of Catalonia (IRSC)" (approved on 28 March 2022), which updated the 2018 statement of position in relation to this issue.
- "CAGG Declaration to Mark the 32nd International Day of Older Persons, in 2022. Recognition and visibility of elderly women" (1 October 2022).



Carrying out two processes to meet the needs resulting or exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, which were embodied in two documents:

- **“Pact for Barcelona. A new impetus for the city”** (2020) and the subsequent follow-up reports, the latest of which was published in March 2022. It was agreed with all the political groups in Barcelona City Council and with multiple associations, social agents and other players, including the CAGG, in order to promote the city's economic, social and health recovery during the pandemic and with a view to the future.
- **Report on the results of the “Process for identifying initiatives to address the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on senior citizens’ daily lives”** (July 2022). This process took place within the framework of the *Strategy on Demographic Change and Ageing 2018-2030*, which was carried out by the Directorate of Ageing and Care of the Area for Social Rights, Global Justice, Feminism and LGBTI of Barcelona City Council with the participation of various agents and organisations and the CAGG. The needs and challenges caused or exacerbated by the pandemic were identified over several working sessions, and various proposals to address them were made based on six thematic blocks.

➔ The Advisory Council for the Elderly played a key role in these two processes and, therefore, also on the responses to the situation resulting from the pandemic, which were set out in the documents mentioned above. Its involvement made it possible to include many of the

contributions that made up the conclusions of the 5th Convention (2019), as well as the proposals already included by the CAGG in both its Working Plan (2019-2023) and the "List of Action Lines and Proposals of senior citizens in relation to the Covid-19 crises" (2020 and 2021).

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING AND CARE OF SENIOR CITIZENS

Another main area of study and work for the CAGG over these more than 30 years of history and 20 of conventions has been the promotion of initiatives to help improve the quality of life of Barcelona's senior citizens. Policies on social and emotional well-being and care for the elderly have therefore been in the past – and still are – one of the CAGG's most significant main lines of action when it comes to defining its proposals and initiatives. The main aim of the contributions to ageing policies in this specific area made over time has been to focus on people, in accordance with their needs and the changes in their environment, and to help ensure that senior citizens are able to live at home and in the community for as long as possible.

In the years leading to the **1st Voices of Senior Citizens in Barcelona Convention (2003)**, the issue of participation in services and their quality started to be considered, particularly for services aimed at the frailest senior citizens. Participation and quality of services had already been included as a line of action in the "Senior Citizens and Participation, Barcelona 2002" programme, which contained two specific projects in this field. The aim was to get elderly people to review the design of home care policies and to increase their involvement in the definition of other services, such as day centres, telecare and care homes.

As mentioned in the previous section, the **2nd Voices of Senior Citizens in Barcelona Convention (2007)** was the culmination of the CAGG's "Senior Citizens and Participation 2004-2007" programme. In the field of social and emotional well-being and care, a specific line of action on fostering personal autonomy and care for dependent people was added, taking into account new subjects for analysis, such as promoting actions and services, health and prevention, active senior citizens helping others, and senior citizens as carers. In relation to this last line of action, the debate around the Act on the Promotion of Personal Autonomy and Care for Dependent People approved by the Spanish Government on 14 December 2006, which laid down the foundations for the care of dependent people throughout Spain, was key. The support of elderly carers, senior citizens' health and healthy habits and social volunteering were also relevant.

The **3rd Convention (2011)**, which entailed a change of model in the approach to participation by senior citizens, placed particular emphasis on health and social services as key to people's well-being at every stage of life, particularly in old age, as well as to the community's well-being and social cohesion. Further work on implementing the Act on the Promotion of Personal Autonomy and Care for Dependent People and the Social Services Act of Catalonia approved on

11 October 2007, as well as on the public healthcare and social services network for the elderly, was carried out.

Furthermore, a mutual help and support category, with relevant conclusions and proposals from the previous Convention, was added to the agenda. Aspects relating to the support and care of people and community action were considered for this purpose. The argument was that the daily care and support of senior citizens could not be based solely on the work of family members, volunteers or friends. Instead, the resources and public and community services available to support vulnerable elderly people needed to be strengthened. This could be done, for example, by highlighting places where senior citizens can interact with others, such as old people's centres, organisations or support groups, which can become a mutual help and support network. Public authorities were also urged to see these spaces for interaction as an investment in the quality of life of both senior citizens and the community as a whole, as opportunities to prevent both health and social risks.

The **4th Voices of Senior Citizens Convention (2015)** added a specific area on the health and well-being of elderly people in Barcelona and continued to work on improving the quality of health and social services. The roll-out of person-centred care, which entails respecting individual rights and providing continuous comprehensive care based on respect for dignity, remained a priority. This Convention gave significant weight to initiatives to prevent and address cases of social isolation and loneliness, stressing the wish to highlight the value of care work by recognising the care provided by both professionals and family members. The concept of a care culture was thus included in the agenda for ageing policies. This was done with a gender perspective, highlighting that care is not the sole remit of women and that we must work to change social roles so that men become directly involved in care work. The social and economic background of the time is also worth noting, as the Convention took into account how the economic crisis was affecting senior citizens' living conditions and the need to recover the social rights they had lost.

The **5th Voices of Senior Citizens Convention (2019)** focused mainly on the need to enable senior citizens to live, age and die with dignity. The care culture, which is becoming crucial amid the increase in life expectancy, continued to be treated as very important. The main aim of the 5th Convention in the field of social and emotional well-being and care was thus to keep moving towards the democratisation of care to place it right at the centre of everyday life, raise awareness of it and highlight its importance. However, knowing that most of the care for elderly

people is undertaken by women, emphasis was also placed on professional care to address the job insecurity of professional carers of elderly people.


Below are the main proposals for action in the field of social and emotional well-being and care carried out over these past 20 years of conventions, in order to examine how they have evolved over this time.


Proposals and responses in relation to social and emotional well-being and care (2003-2023)


PROPOSALS FROM THE 1ST CONVENTION (2003)


- Review the design of home care services and foster the empowerment and participation of senior citizens.
- Increase senior citizens' involvement in the definition of other services (telecare, day centres, care homes, etc.), ascertaining users' degree of satisfaction with the services provided.
- Hold a conference on "Senior citizens' contributions to the quality of services".
- Award a prize for services in which senior citizens are involved in order to ensure their quality.

RESPONSES IN 2003-2007

 Pushing forward, in 2005, the conference on the *White Paper on Dependency*, held by Barcelona City Council's Department of Social Welfare to introduce senior citizens to the content of the book and facilitate the debate around it.

 Expanding the **Emergency Care Service for the Elderly (SAUV)**, which looks after senior citizens in need of immediate assistance due to a social emergency.

 Rolling out the **Respir** [Breathe] programme, which provides temporary accommodation for dependent senior citizens living at home who need to stay in a residential service on a temporary basis while their main carer(s) is/are away.

 Carrying out a study on the projects that encourage users of municipal care homes to interact with their community.



Rolling out the **Viure i Conviure** [Live and Live Together] programme, a benchmark in different generations living together, namely senior citizens living alone and young students looking for somewhere to live while they are studying.



Developing the **Cangur amic** [Friendly Sitter] project to alleviate elderly people's loneliness through volunteering, by offering company or help with tasks or procedures.

PROPOSALS FROM THE 2ND CONVENTION (2007)









The proposals stemming from the 2nd Convention revolved around implementing the Act on the Promotion of Personal Autonomy and Care for Dependent People and approving the Social Services Act of Catalonia, which were to lead to the launch of services and facilities to improve the quality of life of senior citizens and their families.

- Accurately, quickly and effectively develop the Act on the Promotion of Personal Autonomy and Care for Dependent People.
- Pass the Social Services Act of Catalonia quickly in order to effectively apply the Act on the Promotion of Personal Autonomy and Care for Dependent People, as well as other benefits and services to improve elderly people's quality of life.
- Hold talks on the Act on the Promotion of Personal Autonomy and Care for Dependent People.
- Increase coordination between social services professionals providing social care and volunteering organisations to meet people's needs more adequately and by supplementing other services.
- Promote networking between social volunteering organisations in order to respond to all necessary demands.
- Continue to push forward activities for the promotion of healthy habits by organisations.
- Raise awareness and inform the public about advance directives.
- Foster collaboration between senior citizens' organisations and old people's centres and local healthcare services, and jointly launch community nursing programmes.
- Foster interaction between the districts' senior citizen councils and the health councils.
- Ensure free or affordable access to dental, eyesight, hearing and podiatry services, as well as alternative therapies, for senior citizens.

The other aspect that permeated the proposals coming out of this Convention was boosting mutual support activities for carers through group therapy and emotional support.

- Promote the provision of training for carers by the public administration, with the support of organisations, to help them do their work better and improve their own well-being.
- Encourage the expansion of services for carers and activities to give them a break.
- Improve institutional coordination (local, provincial and regional) to inform all the care programmes for carers already under development.

RESPONSES IN 2007-2011

-  Promoting and participating in the **conference on the Catalonia Social Services Act**.
-  Carrying out the conference on the Catalonia Social Services Act, which was held by Barcelona City Council's Social Participation Area.
-  Expanding and improving social services in the field of home care: including family workers, cleaning, meals, laundry, etc.
-  Implementing the **Project to Improve the Quality of Municipal Care Homes** based on the patient-centred model. Vocational training courses were held, and assessments and proposals for improvement were made. The creation of participation councils in care homes was also pushed forward.
-  Drawing up a **Master Plan on Specialist Social Services in Barcelona** for people at risk in the city, more specifically dependent people and senior citizens, which established 300 concrete measures.
-  Creating a **new Model for the Provision of Basic Social Services** for the city in response to new social circumstances. This document served as a guide for reflection and collective debate and to steer the subsequent processes of developing and working in greater detail on each of the areas under analysis.
-  Carrying out, in 2010, a telephone survey among Home Care Service (SAD) users, carers and professionals working for the service: coordinators, specialists and social workers of the Barcelona Social Services Consortium (CSSB).
-  Continuing to roll out the **Radars** project.

PROPOSALS FROM THE 3RD CONVENTION (2011)

Proposals in relation to health and social services

- Guarantee the full roll-out of the Act on the Promotion of Personal Autonomy and Care for Dependent People in the established timeframes.
- Promote age-friendly health and social services, identifying the situations and conditions that make healthcare and social service centres more comfortable and easier to use for senior citizens.
- Provide information on the criteria for the allocation of social services and resources to consider equality and diversity as part of social care.
- Continue to demand the presence of geriatric doctors in primary healthcare centres and ensure that GPs receive specific training on the care of elderly people.
- Promote a wide range of actions to prevent dependency on other people, as well as for the prevention, detection and early care of mental health problems in senior citizens, with an emphasis on depression.
- Promote a line of action, under the slogan “Un intercanvi saludable” [A healthy exchange], under which elderly people and organisations share and exchange experiences for active and healthy ageing.

Mutual help and support proposals

- Create a varied and appealing range of projects and activities that takes into account the diversity of senior citizens and seeks to foster interaction between people, as well as mutual help and support.
- Encourage the general public to get to know the senior citizens living alone near them in order to understand them, support them and ensure they do not become socially isolated by carrying out community actions involving professionals, local residents and the people closest to them.
- Share the experiences carried out to foster intergenerational interaction by creating meeting spaces for children, young people, adults and senior citizens.
- Ensure that carers' work is recognised and give them the social and emotional support they need.
- Work to ensure that community plans and initiatives provide an opportunity for senior citizens to become actively involved in mutual assistance exchange networks.

RESPONSES IN 2011-2015



Publishing a "**Guide to Services and Assistance**" setting out all the municipal services addressing senior citizens' needs stemming from the economic crisis.



Getting involved in the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations by pushing forward intergenerational activities to foster interaction between people of all ages.



Recognising the effort involved in increasing the social services budget while warning about new poverty situations, such as energy poverty, arising from the financial crisis.



In relation to the implementation of the **Promotion of Personal Autonomy and Care for Dependent People Act**, praising Barcelona City Council's efforts to reduce waiting times.



In March 2013, the Full Council approved a "Public Declaration against the Consequences of the Crisis on the Living Conditions of Senior Citizens" **which, among other things, denounced the negative effects of the economic crisis** on the development of the Promotion of Autonomy and Care for Dependent People Act.



In relation to **preventing situations of dependency**, rating as satisfactory the increase in specific social services for the identification and prevention of isolation and loneliness, which are the main issues affecting senior citizens' mental health. The importance of telecare services with support services, the Home Care Service (SAD) and the Àpats en Companyia [Meals in Company] programme, which had attended to more elderly people than ever before and added innovative quality and technology elements, was also noted. In 2014, 36% of all the people who had been attended by basic social services were aged 65 to 74.



Approving the **Envelliment Actiu** [Active Ageing] programme to promote age-friendly health and social services, which led to **ten district programmes** to address active ageing and the involvement of senior citizens in the local area of their neighbourhoods. Over 800 activities were recorded and included in an agenda of activities for the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations.



Covering 100% of demands made under both the **Respir** programme to support caregiving families and the **Emergency Care Service for the Elderly (SAUV)**.



Extending the **Radars** programme to the entire city, as well as creating the **VinclesBCN** project, which seeks to address senior citizens' social isolation by creating and expanding their networks of trusted people through an online platform for greater safety and emotional well-being.



Rolling out **support groups for caregiving families** from social service centres, as well as the **Network of Caregiving Families**, which is made up of 12 organisations for people affected by illnesses and their relatives, as well as city institutions such as the Public Health Agency, the Barcelona Official Association of Nurses, the Barcelona Health Consortium and the City Council.

PROPOSALS FROM THE 4TH CONVENTION (2015)

- Extend the integrated home-based assistance pilot scheme to all social and healthcare centres in the city and continue to work on the same person-centred line of action.
- Launch pilot schemes for the implementation of the comprehensive person-centred care model in care homes and the Home Help Service to improve elderly people's well-being and autonomy.
- Ensure the implementation of the Act on the Promotion of Personal Autonomy and Care for Dependent People and push forward the necessary steps to ensure that all individual assistance programmes (PIA) for all people deemed to be eligible are carried out.
- Improve the information given to senior citizens on all the services and resources included in the Catalogue of Social Services through both traditional and electronic channels.
- Have up-to-date data and information on senior citizens' habits and living conditions as a tool to adapt initiatives to new needs.
- Continue to promote healthy lifestyles and habits among elderly people in old people's centres and other places for senior citizens and increase the number of places for physical exercise in the city with activities targeted at them.
- Push forward, in connection with the VinclesBCN project, a comprehensive and coordinated framework for action to address the various situations of isolation and loneliness that can arise by carrying out the following actions:
 - Further promoting and extending the Radars project for elderly people as a community action to help senior citizens living alone to continue living at home.
 - Extend to every district the "Projecte d'Acompanyament i Prevenció de la Solitud" [Companionship and Loneliness Prevention] project already launched in the district of Ciutat Vella as an innovative and effective way to prevent the potential social isolation of some elderly people.

- Continue to extend to other neighbourhoods in the city the "Baixem al carrer" [Come Outside] scheme to address cases of isolation caused by a lack of accessibility in buildings.
- Continue to expand the Meals in Company programme to help provide adequate nutrition and social opportunities within the community.
- Promote a culture of care among both families and professionals, and work to raise awareness among the general public of senior citizens' right to be cared for, and not only by women.
- Further increase the number of available places in the Respir programme to improve carers' quality of life and promote and support the Network of Caregiving Families.
- Address in a comprehensive manner the energy poverty of many underprivileged senior citizens by concluding agreements with utility companies and increasing the grants and subsidies available.

RESPONSES IN 2015-2019



In accordance with the 2013 declaration denouncing the consequences of the crisis on the development of the Dependency Act, on 1 October 2016 and 2017, to mark International Day of Older Persons, the CAGG issued a set of declarations demanding that senior citizens' needs be addressed and highlighting their role as active citizens committed to society.



Launching the **Superilles socials** [Social Superblocks] project, specifying places in the city to facilitate the coordination of resources and services, as well as social interaction between local residents, to ensure that local services take account of the daily realities of each area. This enabled the social and healthcare services (the Home Help Service, primary healthcare centres, day centres, etc.) and socio-cultural resources (old people's centres, schools for adults, volunteering organisations, etc.) to tailor their actions to local residents' specific needs and preferences, with room to evaluate and improve the service model on an ongoing basis.



Drawing up the Government Measure for the **2017-2021 Action Plan for the Impulsem! [Forward!] Project** (2017) to fully redesign the city's basic social care model and adapt it to the new socio-economic circumstances.



Drawing up the **Barcelona Strategy for Inclusion and Reducing Social Inequalities 2017-2027**, within the framework of the Citizen Agreement for an Inclusive Barcelona, which

identified five dimensions of social inequality: inequality in income, inequality in education and access to culture throughout a person's life, inequalities in access to association or community assets or networks between people, geographic inequalities, and inequality as a result of the stigmatisation and social segregation of people and groups affected by the above inequalities.



Drawing up the ***Strategy for Demographic Change and Ageing: a city for all stages of life (2018-2030)***, which specified the need to generate knowledge through studies and research on the living conditions of the city's senior citizens to tailor actions to the new social, economic and public-health needs of the time. The following are particularly noteworthy:

- The **Barcelona Social Observatory**
- The **Bank of Social Best Practices**
- The **reports on the living conditions of senior citizens**



Carrying out the **Joint-Action Government Measure for the Reduction of Social Inequalities in Health** approved by the City Council's Social Rights, Culture and Sports Committee (2015), which included various programmes:

- The Public Health Agency's Neighbourhood Health Plan. This has encouraged physical exercise through community health actions coordinated by the primary healthcare centres and various neighbourhood health boards since 2008.
- The roll-out of the Radars programme to identify cases of loneliness continued, and other initiatives, such as the specific support programme for Ciutat Vella, were carried out.
- The Meals in Company programme, which helps elderly people make connections and encourages senior citizens living alone to eat healthily.
- The **2017-2020 Government Measure for the Democratisation of Care**, which sought to push forward a social organisation of care, recognizing care as a core aspect of the city's socio-economic life, striving to make everyone in society take shared responsibility and reducing social and gender inequalities in both the providers and recipients of care. More places were added to the Respir programme; and other programmes, such as the **Colla Cuidadora del districte de l'Eixample** [the Eixample district Colla Cuidadora carers network], were promoted.

PROPOSALS FROM THE 5TH CONVENTION (2019)

- Promote senior citizens' rights and responsibilities among elderly people themselves, professionals (particularly those working in health and social services and communication professionals) and the general public.
- Promote a care culture based on social justice. Caregivers need to feel cared for and, in order for this to happen, care work needs to be recognised, made less precarious and placed at the centre of public life.
- Increase the Home Care Service's hours of operation and expand the new Home Care Service model in social superblocks.
- Urge the relevant authorities to address the shortage of care home places in the city to bring them into line with at least the ratio for the rest of Catalonia, which is currently around three times higher.
- Implement the person-centred care model in all services for elderly people, increasing the training given to the various professional groups and the definition of regulatory measures to facilitate the application of this approach.
- Ensure that elderly people living in care homes or assisted-living housing or in receipt of home care services have access to convenient participation platforms to assess and make proposals on living conditions in the city and the services they receive.
- Build, through a community and intergenerational approach, a comprehensive action framework to prevent, identify and attend to cases of isolation and loneliness that respects individuals' freedom and takes account of factors associated with loneliness, such as the person's stage of life, poverty and/or immigration processes.
- Work on reversing the 2012 cuts to Act 39/2006, the Promotion of Personal Autonomy and Care for Dependent People Act, and ensure that every public authority fulfils its duties.
- Put an end to the long waiting lists in the field of healthcare, and return to pre-crisis investment levels.
- Share and promote advance directives and advocate for the right to die with dignity.

RESPONSES IN 2019-2023

As mentioned in the previous thematic block, the Covid-19 pandemic threw into disarray the agenda drawn up under the CAGG's **Working Plan (2019-2023)**. In view of this, the CAGG strived to update the concrete and necessary measures on social and emotional well-being and care. To do this, it took into account above all else the **situation in care homes**, as well as the **job**

insecurity of social and healthcare workers, the new caregiving model, the right to health and to die with dignity and the need to **alleviate the effects of the pandemic** on elderly people's emotional discomfort.



Setting out the above matters in the “List of Action Lines and Proposals of senior citizens in relation to the Covid-19 crises” (2020, updated in 2021).



Raising awareness of the issue of gender-based violence against elderly women. A discussion was held following the presentation of the study *“Les violències masclistes vers les dones grans: una aproximació feminista i interseccional”* [Gender-based violence against older women: a feminist and intersectional approach], prepared by the Aroa Foundation at the Catalan Women's Institute's request. As a result of this session, the CAGG was able to start building a partnership with the Catalan Women’s Institute to raise awareness of this issue.



Contributing to the **2021-2025 Plan for Gender Justice** drawn up by Barcelona City Council's Area for Social Rights, Global Justice, Feminism and LGBTI in relation to elderly women in different fields of action, such as the digital gap, mental and emotional health, loneliness and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.



Addressing the **right to die with dignity**. The changes brought about by the Euthanasia Act (approved in 2021) and the effectiveness of **advance directives (AD)** were discussed.



Guaranteeing the right to food based on initiatives such as the **Alimenta** [Feed] project, which sought to cover everyone's basic food needs by involving as many players as possible throughout the food chain. It is worth noting that, between 16 March and 30 November 2020, due to the Covid-19 lockdown, various extraordinary mechanisms to distribute cooked meals were deployed: the **Meals in Company** programme became a home delivery service from March 2020, and the **Àpats a Domicili** [Meals at Home] service grew exponentially compared to the start of the pandemic, serving 120% people more than before.



Continuing to implement the Government Measure for the **Democratisation of Care Work (2017-2020)**, which has helped continue to promote initiatives to change the way the care model is organised in society from a transformative and feminist perspective.

- The **Superilles de les cures** [Caregiving Superblocks] project. In October 2020, the caregiving superblocks had been rolled out in eight parts of the city, with around 550

people using the SAD service and around 100 professionals, and with plans to roll out 60 SAD superblocks in the next few years. This project has received support from the Advisory Council for the Elderly.

- The **VilaVeïna** project. October 2021 saw the start of the local roll-out of the VilaVeïna project in four of the city's neighbourhoods (Vilapicina i la Torre Llobeta, Marina de Port, Provençals del Poblenou and Congrés i els Indians). Over the course of 2022, it was rolled out in a further 12 areas (Badal, El Gòtic, Camp de l'Arpa del Clot, El Carmel, el Maresme, Horta, Dreta de l'Eixample, Maternitat i Sant Ramon, la Prosperitat, Trinitat Vella, Vila de Gràcia and Sant Gervasi de Cassoles). The City Council had set out to carry out the VilaVeïna project throughout the city, rolling out 115 schemes.
- **Barcelona Cuida**. This information, guidance and advice space for professionals in the care sector, families and carers was created in 2019 and has already assisted 3,000 people and helped conclude 137 contracts for home workers with fair and decent conditions.



Creating the **A cau d'orella** [Within Earshot] programme, a phone reading service for users of the Loan and Home Reading Service provided by Biblioteques de Barcelona, which had to be suspended due to the Covid-19 lockdown. The phone reading programme was rolled out in 16 of the city's libraries. The **Loan and Home Reading Service** resumed in May 2021.



Conducting a **review of the care home model** as argued by the CAGG in the "List of Action Lines and Proposals of senior citizens in relation to the Covid-19 crises", which led to the following actions:

- Working in partnership with the Government of Catalonia to monitor the situation of Barcelona's care homes at the peak of the pandemic and working with the Government of Catalonia's Department of Health to draw up a new care home model.
- Launching a communication campaign to provide over-75s living in their own homes with information about telecare services and to ensure they can request them if needed.
- Redesigning the common parts of residential buildings to foster community life.
- Working together with the Office for Care Homes, Hotel Salut Social and the quarantine support programme, among others, to ensure that the most socially and financially disadvantaged people were able to isolate properly during the pandemic when they had Covid-19.

- Launching a project with the Government of Catalonia in 2021 to improve thermal comfort in care homes.
- Starting, in February 2022, to **remodel the Parc del Guinardó care home**, as well as the Josep Miracle centre, in the Sants neighbourhood, in October 2023. These works were carried out in response to the need to increase the number of care home places in the city, adapt facilities' infrastructure to residents' needs and move towards a less hospitalised model.



Deployment of the "**Emergency Mental Health Plan**". In 2020, the Plan had a special budget allocation, which was extended in 2021. The initiatives carried out under this emergency plan included setting up psychological and emotional helplines for the general public, for the professional groups affected and for particularly vulnerable groups. The current initiatives include in particular:

- The "**Vostè com està?**" [**How Are You?**] **programme**, under which phone calls offering emotional support were made to people over 70 who were not using any municipal services. A total of 53,382 people aged 70 to 84 were contacted, and 190 cases were referred to specific psychological support services to address the specific needs identified.
- The **Konsulta'm 22 service**, with the main aim of identifying and addressing people's emotional discomfort and mental health problems. This started with Konsulta'm, a service for young people and teenagers, and was subsequently extended to include adults too (Konsulta'm+22). There is now also a **Konsulta'm+65** service specifically for elderly people. It operates in Ciutat Vella, Sants-Montjuïc, Horta-Guinardó, Nou Barris, Sant Andreu and Sant Martí.



Pushing for the creation of **mental health boards in every district** between 2020 and the first half of 2021. Each district now has its own mental health board in operation, with the involvement of professionals and services based in that district.



Creation of the **Grief Support Groups**, which were launched in partnership with the city's Library Network. A total of 21 support group sessions were held between October 2020 and December 2021.



Preventing, identifying and dealing with situations of **loneliness and social isolation** using a variety of tools and actions:

- **Government Measure to Draw Up the Municipal Strategy against Loneliness (2020)**, which set out the planning and drafting tasks to be carried out and the method and working plan to successfully put in place the Strategy against Loneliness.
- **2020-2030 Municipal Strategy against Loneliness (2021)**, to prevent, identify and address cases of loneliness and foster quality, sound and long-lasting relationships among the city's residents. It includes an action plan for up to 2024, whose roll-out will continue until 2030 through a second action plan (2025-2030). 🌟 The CAGG's participation in the sessions held to draw up the strategy is particularly worth noting. At these sessions, it put forward various proposals emerging from the Working Plan itself (2019-2023) and from the specific sessions held through the "Ageing with Dignity" working group.
- **A dedicated website** with information on all municipal services and programmes against loneliness (<https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/dretssocials/ca/barcelona-contra-la-soledat>).
- **The Barcelona Loneliness Observatory.** Establishing this body, which analyses loneliness in the city and the rest of Europe and collects recommendations for best practices against loneliness.
- The **Scientific Advisory Council against Loneliness**, which was established in 2020, is made up of leading scientists in their fields and works on reflection and the exchange of knowledge, as well as proposing measures and actions to be taken.
- **Community reference spaces (ECOR).** These are places for people to fight loneliness and isolation and create mutual support connections. They have been launched in the Clot and Guinardó neighbourhoods.

EQUALITY AND RIGHTS POLICIES

Senior citizens' rights and prevention of ageism

The issue of senior citizens' rights and the fight against discrimination has been one of the CAGG's main lines of action since the very beginning. The CAGG is also concerned about socially vulnerable senior citizens, such as those in situations of poverty, illness, dependency and loneliness, which can in turn lead to social exclusion. In view of this, the Advisory Council for the Elderly has always worked with a clear commitment to address these situations of vulnerability and advocate for the rights of senior citizens suffering from discrimination and abuse. It has done this, for example, through the "Declaration on Senior Citizens' Financial Situation and Risk of Social Exclusion", the "Open Document on the Rights and Freedoms of Dependent Senior Citizens" and the "Recommendations on the Treatment and Participation of Senior Citizens in the Media".

The main matter addressed in relation to rights in both the **1st (2003) and 2nd (2007) Conventions** revolved around the CAGG's "Open Document on the Rights and Freedoms of Dependent Senior Citizens". The main aim of this document is to encourage a culture that promotes participation and the right to decide, fostering the autonomy of elderly people (with particular emphasis on those who are dependent on others) and the public as a whole. The first "Open Document on the Rights and Freedoms of Dependent Senior Citizens" was drawn up as a result of a participatory process with the districts' senior citizen councils and was presented for the first time at the "Participation and Quality of Services" conference held on 26 June 2002. It was initially approved a few months later, at the 1st Voices of Senior Citizens in Barcelona Convention (2003), where the details of several public information actions were also established.

The **2nd Convention (2007)** focused on spreading the culture of dependent people's rights in order to prevent abuse, as well as on educating the public about this document. In this regard, the Spanish Act on the Promotion of Personal Autonomy and Care for Dependent people approved in 2006 expressly mentions most of the rights envisaged in the Open Document. The rights and freedoms made clear in the document thus became legally recognised rights. Despite this, the 2nd Convention (2007) continued to stress the fact that every citizen, particularly elderly people and those around them, must be aware that these rights and freedoms must be respected and any infringements reported. The "Open Document on the Rights and Freedoms of Dependent Senior Citizens" has been updated several times over the past few years to include

new matters. More specifically, it has been updated five times: in 2007, 2011, 2013, 2019 and 2021, the date of the latest version. There are plans to review it again and produce a new version. The document seeks to raise awareness among older people, those around them and professionals, institutions and the general public of the need to respect the rights recognised in this document to ensure that certain ways of treating the elderly, particularly those in a situation of dependency, are not tolerated.

As mentioned above, the **3rd Voices of Senior Citizens in Barcelona Convention (2011)** was a turning point in relation to both how senior citizens got involved in the design of ageing policies and the matters addressed on the one hand, and on the organisation of the convention on the other. In relation to senior citizens' rights, the subjects of analysis and work covered in this 3rd edition of the Convention were thus extended to new matters not considered in previous editions. The issue of the way elderly people are seen by the rest of society was addressed. This is often negative and leads to ageism in various areas and contexts of society. Various actions were therefore proposed to prevent elder abuse and reverse people's prejudices about ageing.

The **4th Voices of Senior Citizens Convention (2015)** confirmed the consolidation of the change of participation model that had started with the 3rd Convention (2011) and moved towards a new social construct of old age and a culture of good treatment of senior citizens. Ageism and elder abuse thus continued to be analysed in broader terms. This issue was approached from the perspective of the culture of good treatment, fostering the recognition and visibility of senior citizens in their full diversity. The culture of good treatment seeks to increase people's empathy in dealings with senior citizens and in the recognition of their rights, respecting them and guaranteeing their dignity.

The discussions held in the 4th Convention (2015) continued to focus on combating stereotypes and prejudice, something that is key to achieving equal treatment. The concept of the double discrimination suffered by senior citizens was taken into account for the first time. This problem can be explained, on the one hand, by factors relating to ageism and, on the other, by prejudices relating to social aspects such as gender, sexual orientation or dependency. It was noted in this regard that we must continue to work hard on identifying and addressing such situations.

The main concerns in the field of rights that arose as a result of the **5th Voices of Senior Citizens Convention (2019)** were the rise in inequalities, the loss of social rights, and job insecurity due to working conditions, which shaped the discussion on the need to work on guaranteeing people's rights as they age and on ensuring greater social protection at all ages. One of the

matters addressed in this regard in the agenda was the need to establish generational partnerships and strive to advocate for everyone's social rights. As in previous editions, further work on developing strategies to fight the rumours and stereotypes that lead to ageism and other forms of discrimination against senior citizens was carried out in this 5th Convention (2019); and efforts to publicise the various updates to the "Open Document on the Rights and Freedoms of Senior Citizens" have been made in connection with every edition of the Convention.


Below are the proposals for action put forward in this area in each edition of the Convention, as well as the resulting responses and actions from both the Advisory Council for the Elderly itself and Barcelona City Council.

Proposals and responses in relation to equality and senior citizens' rights (2003-2023)

PROPOSALS FROM THE 1ST CONVENTION (2003)

- Publicise the "Open Document on the Rights and Freedoms of Dependent Senior Citizens" among the general public.
- Hand out this document in places where intergenerational cooperation can be promoted and at all those centres that provide training to professionals specialising in elderly care.
- Help senior citizens internalise and own the Open Document. Dependent people have the right and freedom to choose, and they must be enabled to exercise their right to participate.
- Create a place for making complaints about infringements of rights.
- Constantly update and review the document to ensure that any new developments are included.

RESPONSES IN 2003-2007

 Developing the **Poster project** for senior citizens themselves to educate the rest of society about their rights and freedoms, by reference to the "Open Document on the Rights and Freedoms of Dependent Senior Citizens". The districts' senior citizen councils and the city's senior citizens' organisations got involved in this project.

- The project started by drafting a leaflet that was easy to read and use for both senior citizens and the people around them.
- A team of senior citizens was created. These people, together with the project's technical support team, promoted the project and helped deliver information sessions.
- The project was supplemented with a cycle of legal talks for senior citizens held at old people's centres and municipal spaces for the elderly.

PROPOSALS FROM THE 2ND CONVENTION (2007)

- Create new mechanisms to publicise the “Open Document on the Rights and Freedoms of Dependent Senior Citizens” among senior citizens themselves. Events such as talks and film forums must continue to be held at senior citizens' organisations, old people's centres, civic centres and other venues.
- Upload the “Open Document on the Rights and Freedoms of Dependent Senior Citizens” online, and make it more widely known among the general public.
- Raise awareness of elder abuse among senior citizens themselves and their families through educational talks on the Open Document.
- Mark the World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (15 June).
- Publicise and hold working sessions on the Open Document with professionals in the field of elder care in both the healthcare and social care fields, as well as with legal and banking professionals.
- Share the content of the Open Document at training centres for elder care professionals and work to ensure that it is included both in future professionals' training and in continuing education.
- Recommend to senior citizens' organisations that they address the rights and freedoms of dependent senior citizens and elder abuse in their activities with schools.
- Make older people aware of their rights and ensure that infringements are reported.

RESPONSES IN 2007-2011



Drawing up, during 2007, the **first update to the "Open Document on the Rights and Freedoms of Dependent Senior Citizens"** and carrying out a dissemination campaign about it with activities such as the **Film Forums on the rights and freedoms of dependent senior citizens**.



Establishing as a key issue the recognition of individuals as subjects of rights in universal access to services on an equal footing and with dignity, with the right to receive personalised care and be actively involved in their own care plan.

PROPOSALS FROM THE 3RD CONVENTION (2011)

- Drive the creation of innovative platforms for intergenerational dialogue and interaction as part of the initiatives to mark the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations in 2012.
- Take action against the negative image of senior citizens and the prejudice and discrimination they experience, with particular emphasis on those at risk of exclusion.
- Advocate the need for senior citizens to denounce society's prejudices about ageing and show everyone what they are capable of.
- Raise awareness among senior citizens to prevent prejudices about homosexuality from continuing to give rise to social exclusion.
- Combat elder abuse, launching an appeal under the slogan “Evitar el maltractament ens toca a tots” [Preventing abuse is everyone's business], and carry out awareness actions from the relevant organisations, as well as putting in place specific measures, such as an information helpline.

RESPONSES IN 2011-2015




Producing, in 2011, the **second update to the "Open Document on the Rights and Freedoms of Dependent Senior Citizens"**, following a work process involving the Advisory Council for the Elderly and the Working Group on Senior Citizens of the Municipal Council for Social Well-Being, as well as a participation platform for the general public.




Publishing, in 2013, a new edition of the “Open Document on the Rights and Freedoms of Dependent Senior Citizens”, and **including good treatment** as a prerequisite for all other rights.





Barcelona joined the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (2012). A programme was developed with the CAGG's very active involvement. The programme, for which over 200 citizen organisations signed up, sought to help **project an image of elderly people that was more in line with reality and less prejudice-based**, as well as promoting the values of the European Year for Active Ageing beyond 2012. The CAGG stated that it was very satisfied with the results.


 Approval, in 2013, of the "**Government Measure to Promote the Good Treatment of Senior Citizens and Improve the Prevention and Handling of Abuse in the City**".

 Carrying out the campaign and **actions for awareness and against stereotypes and prejudices** set out in the Government Measure to Promote the Good Treatment of Senior Citizens, such as:

- The work carried out by the Working Group on the Elderly of the Municipal LGBTI Council to fight the discrimination and prejudice suffered by members of this group.
- The initiatives pushed forward by the Antirumour Strategy and the workshops held at old people's centres. → In collaboration with the CAGG

 Increasing support for projects and awareness actions to help foster the good treatment of senior citizens.

 **Talks at old people's centres** by specialist lawyers working with social services centres to provide information about the prevention of elder abuse and legal protection in such cases.

 Launching **training courses for social services and healthcare professionals** to enable them to identify, prevent and address cases of elder abuse.


PROPOSALS FROM THE 4TH CONVENTION (2015)


- Promote the drafting of a strategic plan to promote a culture of good treatment and zero tolerance in relation to elder abuse.
- Continue to roll out the *Action Protocol for Cases of Elder Abuse* as a tool to guide the actions of professionals and foster multidisciplinary work.
- Promote the empowerment of senior citizens, using the necessary tools and resources to ensure they know their rights and are able to deal with instances of discrimination if they arise.
- Strive to raise awareness of the situation of dependent senior citizens, improving their chances of ageing in better conditions in accordance with their wishes and respecting their autonomy.
- Launch initiatives to increase respect for LGBTI senior citizens and encourage them to get involved in dedicated services and facilities for elderly people, and ensure that they feel safe


and respected in accordance with their sexual orientation and gender identity in care services and residential facilities.


- Support a social image of senior citizens, particularly women, that helps end all the prejudices, negative stereotypes and discrimination suffered due to their age.
- Continue to publicise the "Open Document on the Rights and Freedoms of Dependent Senior Citizens" drawn up by the Advisory Council for the Elderly.
- Work from the senior citizen participative movement to rectify the wrongs suffered due to failure or delay in acting as a result of the loss of social rights due to the crisis.


RESPONSES IN 2015-2019

 **Reviewing and updating, in 2019, the "Open Document on the Rights and Freedoms of Senior Citizens"**, which on this occasion led to a new version that opened up the focus to all senior citizens while continuing to pay particular attention to dependent senior citizens.

 **Establishing partnerships with new organisations**, such as the Plataforma Unitària de la Gent Gran de Catalunya [Unitary Platform for Senior Citizens in Catalonia], which then joined as members.

 Issuing a "**Declaration on the Pension System**", which was approved by the CAGG on 12 January 2017 and by the Full Municipal Council on 24 February 2017.

 Carrying out the "**Soc gran, i què?**" [I'm old, so what?] project, an initiative led by the CAGG to question and break down the stereotypes and prejudices faced by senior citizens due to their age. This city-wide project, which included various participatory actions and a few actions in some of the city's neighbourhoods and districts, had very positive outcomes.

 Rolling out the "**Countering abuse with good treatment**" strategic line of action, which sought to continue to raise public awareness of the importance of improving prevention and addressing cases of elder abuse, as well as provide guidance for professionals. In the field of prevention, the culture of good treatment was worked on based on four headings: "Breaking down stereotypes", "Facing loneliness", "For a friendly city" and "Taking care of carers". In relation to detection and treatment, the following actions are worth noting:

- Developing an **Action Protocol for Cases of Elder Abuse**.

- Carrying out an applied research study to evaluate how well the protocol was working in order to make proposals for improvement.



Creating the **Barcelona LGBTI Centre**, the city's leading facility aimed at raising awareness and providing information, guidance and a direct service in coordination with the city's organisations and public authorities. Initiatives to foster respect for senior citizens with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities and encourage them to participate were carried out.


PROPOSALS FROM THE 5TH CONVENTION (2019)


- Launch new strategies to publicise the "Open Document on the Rights and Freedoms of Senior Citizens, with particular emphasis on dependent senior citizens".
- Recognise and raise awareness of elderly people's social and other contributions to society as a whole.
- Work to create and strengthen intergenerational partnerships in families, neighbourhoods and communities and the political arena by promoting social cohesion community projects.
- Combat discrimination and break down stereotypes, such as the idea that elderly people are a burden on society, that young people are lazy or that migrants receive more social benefits.
- Promote a strategic plan that favours a culture of good treatment and zero tolerance towards elder abuse, promoting collaboration networks among local residents, home care services, shops and primary healthcare centres and developing protocols against elder abuse.
- Call on the various public authorities to actively defend citizens' rights, combat social inequalities and put in place in an innovative way protection measures to address the social and economic problems experienced by people throughout their lives.
- Roll out measures to help elderly people access the available grants and subsidies and understand the related information, and design resources to help them apply for them.

RESPONSES IN 2019-2023


Following the 5th Voices of Senior Citizens Convention (2019), the Advisory Council for the Elderly drew up its **Working Plan (2019-2023)**, under which a whole host of goals relating to senior citizens' rights were proposed. However, due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, adjustments had to be made and new demands and future challenges had to be included. Issues relating to senior citizens' rights that had been a concern for years, such as **ageism**, the **great variety of needs of senior citizens**, the **system of pensions and decent incomes** and the **need**


for protocols for future health crises, were being exacerbated by the pandemic. The main actions carried out in this area by the municipal government and the Advisory Council for the Elderly over the past few years are:

 Drawing up the "List of Action Lines and Proposals of senior citizens in relation to the Covid-19 crises" (2020, updated in 2021).


 Reviewing and updating the "Open Document on the Rights and Freedoms of Senior Citizens, with particular emphasis on dependent senior citizens" (September 2021).


 **Continuing to carry out the CAGG's ordinary activities** despite the pandemic and the various lockdowns, and opening up new platforms for reflection and discussing on a variety of matters, as described in the document "The Voices of the Elderly in the Face of Covid-19. CAGG working groups" (April-June 2020). Sessions to analyse the present and future of care homes and address issues about ageism and the media, as well as on care in cases of dependency, were held.


 Making various proposals in connection with drawing up the "**Barcelona Interculturality Plan 2021-2030**", which included contributions on local municipal socio-cultural facilities, such as libraries, civic centres, old people's centres and neighbourhood centres. Support was given to the inclusion of the intercultural perspective in all the activities carried out in these places.


 Starting a collaboration with the **Office for Non-Discrimination** and the **Human Rights Resources Centre** to fight ageism. The following actions are particularly worth noting:


- Participation by the CAGG in the Board of Organisations of the Discrimination Observatory, which made it possible to **add a new section on ageism** to the *2021 Barcelona Discrimination Observatory Report (2022)*.
- Various working sessions on ageism and human rights were held in 2022.


 Joining the **Movement to Stop Elder Abuse**, formed by various organisations, public institutions and other relevant parties, and getting actively involved in its working groups, conferences and other initiatives.

 Drafting, in 2020, a **letter to the Banking Association and the Association of Users of Banks and Savings Banks** on the digital gap in the elderly, urging them to review their customer service protocols to return to a personalised service, particularly for elderly or vulnerable people.


 Forwarding to the City Council, in 2021, the "**Digital Gap in Banking Institution Services: in Favour of Age-Friendly Services**" declaration, attaching the letter sent to the Association of Users of Banks and Savings Banks and calling on the City Council to make it a requirement for banks to provide their services in line with the demands outlined in the letter.

 Participating in various working groups and sessions on the digital gap and banking in 2022 and early 2023.


 Playing a leading role in the production of the book *Les dones del mocador verd. La lluita per unes pensions de viduïtat dignes. Història de l'Associació Ciutadana pels Drets de les Dones* [The women with the green neck scarf. The fight for decent widow pensions, History of the Citizen Association for Women's Rights], together with this association, which is a member of the CAGG. The CAGG helped prepare its content by putting the document in context and providing the epilogue, reflecting on how to provide decent widows' pensions.

 Carrying out the "**Process for identifying initiatives to address the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on senior citizens' daily lives**" (whose results were published in a report dated July 2022), which led to various proposals, including:


- Pushing forward city strategies against ageism through communication campaigns.
- Fostering the good treatment and rights of senior citizens, holding training sessions and workshops to make senior citizens aware of their own rights, promoting good treatment protocols in care homes and assisted-living flats, and providing channels for reporting abuse.
- Launching intergenerational activities and initiatives to break down stereotypes about elderly people.

 The report on the results of the "Process for identifying initiatives to address the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on senior citizens' daily lives" (July 2022) also contains various proposals on preventing and reducing the digital gap in the elderly resulting from the process. These include, among others, simplifying the local government's online procedures and formalities, offering leading professionals and platforms to help and support senior citizens with procedures, and providing digital skills training to elderly people. As regards these proposals, and as stated in the most recent Pact for Barcelona monitoring report (2022), **the City Council increased the free technology training available as a citizen right.**

- The report *Analysis of the Digital Gap in Barcelona* was presented in January 2021.
- A new team of ICT officers to provide help and advice with online procedures to people who are not adept in the use of new technologies was put in place.
- The new Cibernàrium was inaugurated in Nou Barris, making it possible to provide more free technology training in one of the districts with the lowest socio-economic indicators in Barcelona.

 Pushing forward **access-to-culture programmes**, particularly for the most vulnerable people or those at risk of social exclusion, as stated in the Pact for Barcelona monitoring report (2022). These are some of the actions carried out for this purpose:

- Passing the Government Measure on Cultural Rights with the promotion of the "**Fem cultura!**" [Let's Make Culture] plan, aimed at ensuring access to culture, participation and the right to contribute to the city's cultural life. This plan ran until 2023.
- Promoting in municipal care homes the "**El Museu s'Apropa**" [Bringing Museums to You] project, which brought four museums in Barcelona to elderly people who had encountered barriers to enjoying the city's culture. This was made possible by the collaboration of both the museums involved and the "**Apropa Cultura**" [Bringing Culture to You] programme.

 Drawing up and publishing the "**Basic Consumer Guide for Elderly People**" promoted by the Municipal Consumer Information Office (OMIC). This is a consumer guide with information and recommendations to help elderly people, those around them and the general public to be aware of their rights as consumers. → The CAGG was involved in the preparation of this guide.

URBAN POLICIES ON THE RIGHT TO THE CITY

Housing, mobility and accessibility in public spaces from senior citizens' perspective

Another line of action for the Advisory Council for the Elderly relates to the policies on senior citizens' right to the city and can include issues such as housing, mobility and accessibility in public spaces. The CAGG has always been conscious of the need to prioritise these aspects, which are very important for the public as a whole and even more so for the elderly. It thus argues that Barcelona needs a set of urban policies under which the local area is seen not just as a physical space but also as an opportunity for social and group interaction.

In the **1st and 2nd Voices of Senior Citizens in Barcelona Conventions (2003 and 2007 respectively)**, the issues relating to housing, mobility and accessibility were not dealt with as a specific field of action. Instead, they were highlighted in interconnected ways with other lines of action in the agenda. The 1st Convention (2003) thus emphasised mobility policies by encouraging senior citizens to get effectively involved in participatory processes relating to this specific area as well as various other areas. As for the 2nd Convention (2007), the need to further adapt the city's public spaces, public transport, social facilities and more to the needs of senior citizens with reduced mobility was highlighted in the discussions on fostering senior citizens' autonomy, as such actions would improve everyone's quality of life, particularly that of senior citizens.

It was in the **3rd Voices of Senior Citizens in Barcelona Convention (2011)** that issues relating to housing, mobility and accessibility for senior citizens became more clearly relevant, as they were dealt with as specific areas for action. The area of mobility and transport was established first, as these aspects were seen as key to the city's proper functioning and the quality of life of the general public, particularly senior citizens, as they are necessary for retaining their autonomy and independence. One of the main goals was thus to promote the use of public transport and make it more accessible for senior citizens, particularly those with reduced mobility. Secondly, reference was made to the goal of turning public spaces into places for community life for everyone. In particular, the aim was to demonstrate that urban spaces' layout and components can determine how they are used by elderly people. The idea was to transform the city's public spaces to make them more accessible, friendly, sustainable and beautiful for everyone while preserving Barcelona's architectural heritage. Discussions also focused on housing which, for the first time in this 3rd Convention, was a specific area of action. The right

to housing linked to people's dignity was asserted, arguing that senior citizens have a right to decide where they want to live for as long as possible and to have quality local services in accordance with their needs. It is worth noting that the Advisory Council for the Elderly has always placed special emphasis on housing issues affecting the elderly and has actively monitored the city's housing policy since it was first established.

In the **4th Voices of Senior Citizens Convention (2015)**, work on creating a space for working and acting on senior citizens' daily lives, including urban policies, continued. Although the progress made with policies on mobility and accessibility in public spaces was acknowledged, the relevant parties were urged to keep working to improve the response to the needs and difficulties observed in public transport and certain places in the city. Working to build a city for all ages, a city that was friendly for everyone, remained a primary aim, and calls to respect the right to a decent home and senior citizens' right to choose where they want to live while they can were made, as their well-being and quality of life must be seen as core aspects of Barcelona.

In the **5th Voices of Senior Citizens Convention (2019)**, the field of action on urban policies was split into several work sessions. The policies on mobility and accessibility in public spaces, falling under the line of action on participation, the city, daily life and diversity, were addressed with the aim of further improving mobility and accessibility in public spaces by: adding areas for safe walking on pavements, fitting escalators to improve accessibility in neighbourhoods and ensuring that the city's public transport was able to meet senior citizens' needs as regards accessibility, safety and treatment. Further calls were thus made for a mobility and transport system and public spaces that take elderly people into account, including in the agenda relevant aspects relating to safety, accessibility and attending to the needs of senior citizens. In relation to housing policies, which fall under two lines of action – ageing with rights and ageing with dignity – calls continued to be made for the right to housing for every citizen by applying policy measures such as increasing the available social housing stock. The use of alternative housing models was also examined in further detail, and it was decided to put in place solutions such as assisted-living homes, especially for elderly people and, within this group, for vulnerable or dependent people.


Below are the main proposals made in the field of urban policies in each edition of the Convention, as well as the actions carried out in response to them, both by the Advisory Council for the Elderly and by the municipal government.


Proposals and responses in relation to urban policies on the right to the city (2003-2023)

PROPOSALS FROM THE 1ST AND 2ND CONVENTIONS (2003 AND 2007)

- Encourage senior citizens to get effectively involved in participatory processes relating to urban policies.
- Continue to adapt the city's public spaces, public transport, social facilities, etc. to the needs of senior citizens with reduced mobility to give them greater autonomy.

RESPONSES IN 2003-2011

 **Increasing the amount of assisted-living housing** for senior citizens, for self-sufficient people with habitability problems in their own homes or for people in need of some kind of support.

 Approve the "**Internal Regulations on Assisted-Living Homes for Senior Citizens**" to adapt the rules on community life in assisted-living homes.

PROPOSALS FROM THE 3RD CONVENTION (2011)

Mobility and transport

- Continue to improve mobility and the adaptation of public transport to senior citizens' needs, with particular emphasis on underground transport, and make services more frequent, especially at the weekends: "Mobility, respect and safety must go hand in hand".
- Review the financial eligibility criteria and include suburban transport in the "Targeta Rosa" [Pink Card] to help elderly people move around.
- Raise awareness of senior citizens' needs among drivers, pedestrians and the general public, as well as among senior citizens themselves so that they can actively stand up for their rights.

Accessibility and public spaces


- Ensure that public spaces are renovated taking account of both aesthetic and functional considerations to create a neighbourhood identity, with pretty and comfortable urban furniture and suitable services (such as toilets and benches).


- Continue to improve the accessibility of public spaces, removing stairs and uneven floors where possible and fitting lifts, moving walkways or escalators.
- Work hard to prevent accidents on the public highway by improving the state of pavements and ensuring that both cyclists and pedestrians can exercise their rights so that senior citizens can enjoy a safe and comfortable public space.
- Encourage people to use parks and other outdoor spaces through cultural and physical exercise initiatives: “Cultura i exercici a l’aire lliure fan l’envelliment més saludable” [Outdoor exercise and culture lead to healthier ageing].
- Strive to ensure that local shops are adapted to meet senior citizens’ needs, with the slogan “Botigues i establiments ens fan la vida més còmoda” [Shops and other establishments make our lives easier].


Housing


- Continue to roll out the policies launched, and increase the number of assisted-living homes and social housing for senior citizens. Increase the grants and subsidies available for home improvements and adaptations and for installing lifts, as well as to help with rent payments.
- Combat the property harassment inflicted on many senior citizens, and ensure that they have all the information and support they need.
- Ensure that the message “Adaptar la teva llar és fer-te la vida més segura i còmoda!” [Adapting your home makes your life safer and easier!] reaches senior citizens through practical and easy-to-understand educational initiatives with information about available grants and subsidies and what the Housing Offices can do for them.
- Encourage the creation of groups in senior citizens’ centres and organisations to provide information on housing-related matters. Encourage networking between organisations concerned with housing matters.


RESPONSES IN 2011-2015


 Participating and making contributions in relation to the **provision of assisted-living housing for senior citizens** and their design, the establishment of eligibility criteria and monitoring the allocation processes.


 Collaborating with TMB in the participatory processes relating to the launch of the New Bus Network and in the "**Ens mou la gent gran**" [TMB moving older people] project.

 Creating the *2013-2016 Municipal Plan for the Elderly*, whose aims included continuing to make public transport more accessible for senior citizens, adapting the Pink Card to their mobility needs and reviewing the eligibility criteria for this scheme. One of the main actions carried out in this regard was the **agreement concluded between Barcelona City Council and the Barcelona Metropolitan Area (AMB) Transport and Mobility department in 2015**, which extended the Pink Card financial eligibility criteria.


 Launching the "**12 consells de mobilitat per a la gent gran**" [12 mobility tips for the elderly] and the "**Gràcies per pensar en mi**" [Thank you for thinking of me] publicity campaigns to promote safety in public spaces and prevent accidents.


 Carrying out more outdoor and open-access circuits and activities for senior citizens to foster active ageing. Continuing to make public spaces more accessible by fitting escalators and moving ramps in various neighbourhoods, as well as improving the regulation of cycling in spaces used by both cyclists and pedestrians.

 Rolling out the "**Baixem al carrer**" [Come Outside] programme to help senior citizens with reduced mobility go out and participate in activities. This programme was initially launched in the Poble Sec neighbourhood and later expanded to other parts of Barcelona.

 Developing initiatives to make shops and establishments more age-friendly. One such initiative was the campaign to get establishments to join the **Radars** programme, which established a partnership between shops and public authorities to identify senior citizens' needs and prevent loneliness and isolation. One of the most prominent actions in this area was the agreement concluded between Barcelona City Council and the Pharmacists' Association as part of the Radars programme.

 Opening **four assisted-living housing developments for senior citizens**, and holding a new call for new developments in the process of construction and allocation.

 **Expanding both social rental housing and the grants and subsidies available to help tenants pay their rent.** The Area for Quality of Life increased the funds available to help families with housing debts and subsidise rent for people and families on very low incomes, as well as with home maintenance.


 Provision of information and advice by the Housing Offices on adapting homes and on the technical help available to do so in addition to the Home Help Service.


- The Housing Offices launched a landlord-tenant mediation service and increased the opening hours of their legal assistance and advice service.
- The Municipal Institute of Social Services continued to fund **functional adaptation programmes for senior citizens' homes**, and the Housing Consortium continued to fund grants and subsidies for the installation of lifts.


PROPOSALS FROM THE 4TH CONVENTION (2015)


- Continue to build more assisted-living homes as a more effective way to address senior citizens' housing-related problems, and review the eligibility criteria to adapt them in accordance with the additional services needed by elderly people to live independently.
- Promote initiatives to help improve the daily lives of senior citizens living in their own homes, fostering specific resources to install lifts and make home improvements.
- Promotion by the Housing Offices of a better understanding of, and information on, the condition of some senior citizens' homes, particularly in the case of people over 80.
- Carry out community pilot schemes that lead to new satisfactory housing solutions for senior citizens as they get older.
- Foster initiatives that help senior citizens use the city's public transport more frequently and comfortably by means of initiatives relating to accessibility, information and good treatment.
- Carry out measures in relation to public spaces to address and highlight the need to make Barcelona more age-friendly. This includes aspects such as:
 - Helping senior citizens move around the city by adding more benches and other places to rest in public spaces and encouraging the use of public toilets.
 - Promoting projects that recognise the shared nature of public spaces and encourage people to use them accordingly by means of various initiatives to encourage both the elderly and the public in general to socialise and interact and spend time with others.
 - Ensuring that the city's public spaces are safe for senior citizens and all visitors, particularly as regards obstacles in the form of scaffolding, kerbs, barriers or urban furniture.
 - Promoting initiatives such as the "friendly shops and establishments" initiative, with the involvement of various players.
 - Taking on a more active role in the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Network for Age-friendly Cities.


RESPONSES IN 2015-2019


 Drawing up a "**Statement of Position on the Negative Situations Experienced by Senior Citizens Living in Care Homes**" in June 2017. Appearing before the Work, Social Affairs and Families Committee of the Catalan Parliament on 14 November 2018 to report on Barcelona's care home situation.


 Demanding that the ratio of public care home places in Barcelona be brought up to the same level as that of Catalonia as a whole.


 Approving, in 2016, a "Foundation Document for a Friendly Shopping Project: Recommendations" to be used as the basis for a **Project for Age-Friendly Shops in Barcelona**.


 Drawing up the **2016-2025 Barcelona Right to Housing Plan** (PDHB), with the main aim of ensuring that housing serves a social function, and making progress on building a public housing service that meets the public's demands.


 Planning an **increase in the number of places in assisted-living homes**. A total of 178 new homes had been built, and 767 more were planned to be built by 2022.

 Adapting public senior citizen day centres and care homes to the person-centred care model. The CAGG stressed the importance of these improvements.


 Developing programmes to improve the habitability of homes, such as **grants and subsidies for refurbishments and remodelling**. These programmes solved some of the architectural defects in the city's housing stock, especially in senior citizens' homes, and were an important resource in terms of making them more accessible and energy-efficient.


 Launching community and intergenerational initiatives, such as the Roure Foundation-led **Live and Coexist** programme, to both prevent loneliness in elderly people and address young people's housing needs.


 Promoting decent and affordable alternative housing options, such as **co-housing**, to keep land in public ownership, prevent speculation with housing, ensure stability for users over time and foster the community management of properties.


 Drawing up the "**2019-2024 Barcelona Urban Mobility Plan (PMU)**" to move towards a more age-friendly city by improving mobility on the one hand and reducing the negative effects


of noise and atmospheric pollution on the other. The plan was designed using a participatory methodology, with sessions on specific topics. One of these, in which the CAGG was involved, focused on senior citizens.


 Carrying out TMB's "**Bon viatge i bon Karma!**" [Have a good trip and good karma!] awareness campaign, which sought to raise users' awareness of the importance of respect and good behaviour towards others in public transport. This campaign was carried out in response to calls from the city's senior citizens to emphasise that users should behave in a civilised manner and not take seats reserved for people with mobility or stability problems.


 Drafting the Government Measure for Drawing Up the **2018-2026 Barcelona Universal Accessibility Plan**. The planning method involved analysing the accessibility of municipal services from the public's point of view. The analysis included, among others, services in the social, cultural, healthcare, educational, transport, housing, commercial and sports spheres, as well as public spaces and tourist services. A participatory analysis of the state of each service was carried out with groups of people with functional diversity, and a number of recommendations for improvement were drawn up for implementation.


 Carrying out the **Casc Antic Sense Barreres [Old Quarter Without Barriers] (CASBA) and Sants Sense Barreres [Sants Without Barriers] (SASBA)** projects, which examined accessibility to public spaces and shops in the Old Quarter, la Marina and Sants neighbourhoods. The aim was to ensure that architecture students learned more about the subject and raise awareness among retailers, municipal specialists and the general public about the importance of guaranteeing accessibility for people with functional diversity by suggesting achievable improvements to retailers and the municipal government in order to find the easiest way to adapt facilities or the public highway. The guide "**Fem accessible el nostre comerç**" [Making our Shops Accessible] was created in connection with this.

 Drawing up the **2017-2021 Improvement Plan for the Barcelona, Age-Friendly City project**, which identified and provided details of the current or planned municipal actions to make the city more age-friendly. Five strategic lines, 14 thematic blocks and 299 ongoing actions were identified in the plan. The document was produced with the contributions of specialists and representatives of Barcelona City Council areas and bodies.

 The Advisory Council for the Elderly was also involved in its design and roll-out.

 The key issues to be worked on under each strategic line were identified based on the results and conclusions of the CAGG's participation platforms, mainly the **Voices of Senior Citizens Forum "Towards an Age-Friendly Barcelona"** held in 2016.

 The drafting of this plan led to a **statement of position by the CAGG**, which was drawn up at a Standing Committee meeting on 30 January 2018. In this document, the CAGG demonstrated that the plan had to include a number of proposals made over the previous years and provided the necessary general guidelines to roll out the Improvement Plan. The CAGG also drew up proposals for new actions under each strategic line and topic in the Improvement Plan.

 The idea was for the Plan to provide a starting point for analysis to **build the commitment to make Barcelona an age-friendly city**, on the basis that this can only be achieved if all social players are involved. The **Foundation Document "Barcelona's Commitment to Being an Age-Friendly City"** was thus drawn up. Its aim was to foster a change of culture so that everyone could help build a more attentive and receptive city open to the needs, interests and aspirations of people of all ages, especially as they aged.


PROPOSALS FROM THE 5TH CONVENTION (2019)


- Improve mobility and accessibility in public spaces by means of pavements, safe walking spaces and new escalators and moving ramps to improve accessibility for pedestrians in neighbourhoods.
- Demand a public transport and mobility system that is age-friendly, safe and accessible.
- Place the City Council, as the closest public authority, at the forefront of the defence of social rights, the right to housing and a guaranteed income, and work to redress the most serious situations of social inequality.
- Work on energy poverty by providing the public with more information about the relevant municipal offices and services and providing support to those who might need them.
- Increase the stock of available social housing by means of housing solutions for people of all ages, and put a stop to speculation and the eviction of residents.
- Continue to promote new assisted-living homes, and roll out alternative residential models.
 - Increase the number of assisted-living homes available, as well as the variety of services included in them, and ensure minimum services for all of them.
 - Encourage people to take up alternative residential options, such as shared flats and co-housing, especially those under cooperative models and assignments of use of


public land, which would result in the properties returning to the city's hands and serving many generations to come.


- Promote Barcelona's Commitment to Being an Age-Friendly City in collaboration with various public and private actors.


RESPONSES IN 2019-2023

 **Taking part in the debates** for drawing up the “**2024 Urban Mobility Plan**”, and making contributions at various **working group sessions held with Transports Metropolitans de Barcelona (TMB)** for a more equitable, accessible and friendly mobility for everyone, including senior citizens.

 Leading the debate on housing alternatives and **stressing caregiving in the new types of cooperative housing** with initiatives such as those carried out in the process of the 6th Voices of Senior Citizens convention.

 Taking part, in 2022, in a **workshop and interviews on the Barcelona Climate Shelter Network** held by Col·lectiu Punt 6 in connection with a study on this network. The everyday needs of elderly people in relation to the uses of, and information on, this network, which is made up of public spaces and facilities set up to provide suitable levels of thermal comfort and prevent serious health problems, were identified.

 Working on increasing links with the networks of friendly cities. To this end, it participated in the 3rd Conference of City Councils of the Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities held by IMSERSO as coordinator of the Spanish network, in agreement with the World Health Organization, which promotes and coordinates the network at a global level.

 Moving towards a **new, more local urban mobility model** by further boosting sustainable mobility and reducing emissions. Public transport was thus promoted and given credibility, ensuring its funding and improving its accessibility, frequency of services and connectivity. The following contributions are worth noting:

- **Public transport fares were frozen** in 2021-2022 to alleviate the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

- The “**2024 Barcelona Urban Mobility Plan**”, which includes a total of 60 lines of action and over 300 measures for a safer, healthier and more sustainable mobility, was approved.
- Initiatives to strengthen and improve public transport, such as the approval of the **Tram project** linking the tram from Glòries to Verdaguer, were carried out.



Setting the goal of designing a **pedestrian-centred public space**, ensuring accessibility for everyone based on an age-friendly implementation. Fifteen actions to improve accessibility in public spaces were carried out under the **Neighbourhood Plan**.



Turning housing into an economic, social and environmental response to the crisis. The current lines of action include, in particular:

- Building a **new facility in the Ciutat Vella district**, the first of its kind in Barcelona, which includes both an old people's centre and accommodation with community services in the same building.
- **Promoting new affordable housing formats** (assisted-living homes, shared flats, etc.) **for senior citizens and people with disabilities** that foster personal autonomy.
- Until 2023, the keys to **475 assisted-living housing units** from six different developments had been given to senior citizens, joining the more than 1,400 already handed over in earlier developments.
- An **agreement was signed with social entities for six co-housing or cooperative housing developments, with places reserved for elderly people and people with intellectual disabilities**.

Conclusions


To celebrate **20 years of Voices of Senior Citizens Conventions** (2003-2023), and having also recently celebrated **the CAGG's 30th anniversary**, this report has looked back on the history of the contributions made by the city's senior citizens to ageing and other policies through conventions and of the actions taken in response to their proposals by both Barcelona City Council and the Advisory Council for the Elderly itself. The proposals stemming from each of the previous five editions of the Convention, grouped into the various lines of action in which senior citizens have shown the most interest (participation, social and emotional well-being and care, equality and rights, and urban policies for the right to the city), as well as the extensive responses set out in this report, bear witness to the gargantuan task carried out by the Advisory Council for the Elderly over all these years, which has been made possible by the involvement and engagement of its members (both organisations and individuals) and of the many participants in the Convention's successive editions.

The Advisory Council for the Elderly, as Barcelona City Council's body for public consultation and participation in matters relating to senior citizens in the city, can generally be said to have successfully addressed in a cross-cutting manner and from an intersectional approach all the social aspects that affect senior citizens' lives, ranging from those relating to participation to fundamental rights and social and emotional well-being. This report shows how, based on the social, economic and healthcare situation, the contributions made in each area have resulted in the addition of new topics and issues to the CAGG's agenda, and how this organisation has managed to ensure that most challenges and proposals made their way into the municipal government's agenda.

As for the matters raised in the various fields of action, the challenges and proposals made have been examined in increasing detail and, in many cases, actions addressing the aspects considered have been successfully carried out. Over these past twenty years, the conventions have addressed issues such as improving the quality of home care services. In addition, municipal strategies and mechanisms, such as the Government Measure for the Democratisation of Care, which aims to change the way care is organised in society from a feminist and transformative perspective, have been rolled out.

Beyond the various specific contributions made, the evolution of the proposals made at the conventions also demonstrates the CAGG's tireless efforts to improve senior citizens' rights and

quality of life. **Both the Advisory Council for the Elderly and all the other senior citizens who have got involved by taking part in the conventions have thus expressed their commitment to make Barcelona a fairer, more inclusive and participatory city where people can live and grow old with rights and dignity.**



Twenty Years of Conventions
Voices of Senior Citizens:
Proposals and Actions (2003-2023)

Report
November 2023

Department of
Social Participation
Area for Social Rights,
Health, Cooperation
and Community

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