

# BREAKING ISOLATION



AGEN'S STRATEGY TO FIGHT SOCIAL ISOLATION

December 2025

# ABOUT THIS STRATEGY

This strategy (Integrated Action Plan) has been produced by the City of Agen through the close cooperation with 9 other european, small & medium sized cities, within an URBACT network called Breaking Isolation that worked on this project from june 2023 to december 2025.

For about 3 years, the City of Agen (France) exchanged, learnt, experimented with its fellow european cities about social isolation, until it was able to reach and develop, by the end of 2025, its own strategy to fight isolation.

The present document tells the short story of this european collaborative peer-to-peer learning journey and the concrete, tangible action plan of the City of Agen.

Starting with the presentation of the city of Agen, the URBACT program and the Breaking Isolation network, it then recalls what had already been achieved in Agen before the project. It moves on to the diagnosis and the journey that shaped our roadmap, highlighting the key problem and the related challenges. It then describes the local work carried out: developing a shared vision, engaging in an ideation process, and testing concrete actions. Finally, it presents the strategic plan and details the actions, costs, and risks that complete this Integrated Action Plan.

As any strategy, the plan might evolve and change in the future, depending on opportunities, funding, political support, citizen' will, etc. It is therefore a guiding document, not a binding one.

More info about the URBACT network of Breaking Isolation, on [URBACT Website](#).

Cover picture by Christophe Gouache, taken on the streets of Serres (Greece) – Unknown artist



## CONTENT

**The context .....** 3

**The problem .....** 17

**The solutions.....** 20

**The strategy .....** 32

## THE CONTEXT

# THE CITY OF AGEN

FRANCE

Agen is a medium sized city of 35 000 inhabitants, situated on the edge of the Garonne river, between Toulouse and Bordeaux Metropolis.

The city has a balanced demographic profile, with an average age slightly above the national average, reflecting its attractiveness to families, students and retirees.

The name of Agen is associated with the prune : "Pruneau d'Agen" produced in Lot et Garonne. Agen is famous for its rugby team SUA Rugby.

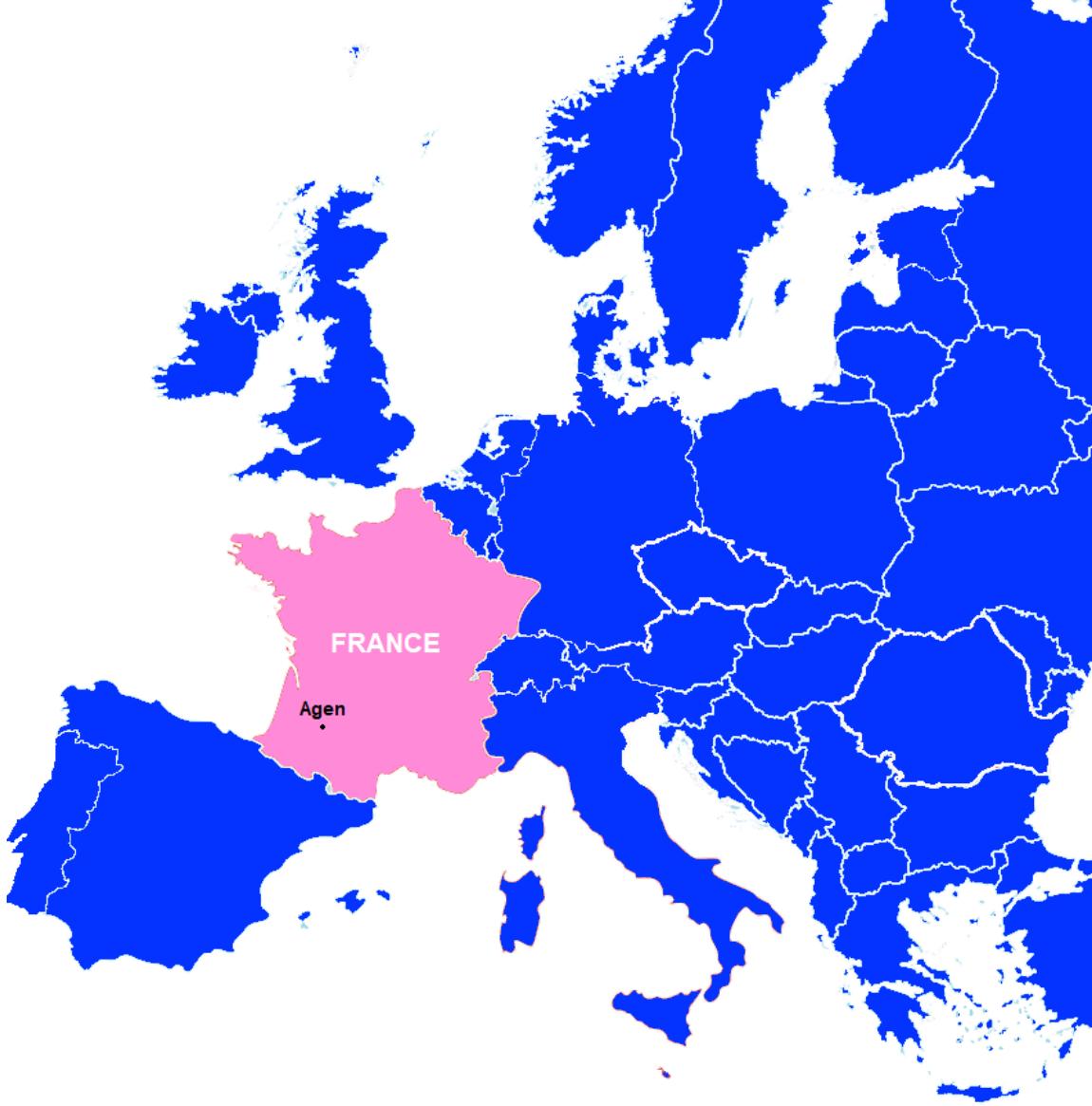
Agen is part of the Occitan culture and Occitan language. Agen has a rich surrounding terroir that gives the gastronomy, erected in true lifestyle, all its identity and inspires cooks and great chefs. Economically, Agen is structured around agriculture and agri-food industries as well as commerce, logistics, healthcare, public services and small and medium-sized enterprises.



The City of Agen has invested heavily in participatory democracy, in particular through the establishment of its neighborhood councils. Although it is not legally obliged to do so (municipalities with fewer than 50,000 inhabitants are not obliged to do so), the Municipality has made the ambitious choice to divide the city into 23 village-districts and to create 23 neighborhood councils, composed of Agen citizens elected by universal suffrage.

With this local experience and keen to constantly improve its practices, Agen participated between 2019 and 2022 in the European URBACT III program, as leader of the Active Citizens network, dedicated to the theme of citizen participation.

This successful experiment, carried out alongside eight European cities, has strengthened know-how in participatory governance and paved the way for new projects.



This is how the City of Agen has become involved, in continuity, within an URBACT IV network, this time on the theme of the fight against social isolation, confirming its leading role in the processes of cooperation and democratic innovation at the European level.

# AGEN AND SOCIAL ISOLATION

## WHAT IS ALREADY DONE IN OUR CITY

**'Social isolation is a condition in which a person suffers from a long term lack of social relations both in quantity and quality'.** And social isolation a rapidly growing social issue, worldwide. According to the World Health Organization, nearly one person out of 4 is experiencing social isolation.

Yes, we live in a society supposedly more and more connected, through the promise of social media, yet, studies show that people have never been more isolated than today.

And Agen is no different. Despite being a rather small-medium sized city in which we could believe that people know one an other, are closer from each other than in big cities, people in Agen are growingly isolated. And it does not only concerns the elderly, as one could think at first. Isolation has no age. It can concern anyone: anyone who's lost her/his lover,

who divorced/broke up, who's lost his/her job, moved far from family & friends, who's suffering long illness or chronic disease, who's got no time for social encounters such as solo parent, who's suffering from addictions (alcohol, gambling, drug, etc.), etc. Literaly anyone can suffer from isolation.

In Agen, many citizens suffer from isolation but most often, we don't see it, we don't see them, we don't know. And even when we do, we lack of tools, of solutions, of concrete ways to get them out of isolation. Also because isolation, in our society, is shameful. It's a complex issue. And this is why Agen considered that it could learn a great deal by learning, exchanging, experimenting with other european cities facing this same challenge.

This is how the City of Agen ended up leading a European network of cities called Breaking Isolation.

ville d'  
Agen

[www.agen.fr](http://www.agen.fr)

**AGEN  
S'ENGAGE  
DANS LA  
LUTTE CONTRE  
L'ISOLEMENT  
DE SES AÎNÉS**



VOUS PENSEZ CONNAÎTRE OU ÊTRE UNE PERSONNE ISOLÉE ?  
VOUS SOUHAITEZ VOUS ENGAGER EN TANT QUE BÉNÉVOLE ?

CONTACTEZ LE CCAS D'AGEN AU 05 53 66 12 56  
Informations sur [www.agen.fr](http://www.agen.fr)

# PREVENT ISOLATION FOR THE ELDERLY IN AGEN

A PRIORITY FOR OUR CITY

The City of Agen has made the prevention of elderly isolation a central focus of its social policy. Preserving human connections and supporting autonomy are essential to improving the quality of life of our seniors. This report presents the actions already undertaken, the first observations collected, and the perspectives for the future.

In order to anticipate the risks of isolation, the municipality intends to develop a genuine platform of activities for residents aged 60 to 80. The goal of this initiative is to encourage social and cultural participation, to stimulate intergenerational encounters, and to promote shared housing solutions in small residences, allowing seniors to maintain their independence while benefiting from daily companionship.

For people over 80 years old, the challenge is even greater, as isolation often leads to significant consequences for both physical and psychological health. This is why an innovative action has been launched: home visits have been organized for all residents over 80, with the support of four young civic service volunteers dedicated to this mission. This first phase focused on four pilot neighborhoods, which served as a testing ground for the approach.

The results of this initiative now allow us to draw an initial assessment. From a quantitative point of view, the number of visits carried out was lower than the initial total estimated on the basis of electoral rolls. Several factors explain this difference. Some of the people listed now live in senior residences or in EHPADs (care homes), while still being registered to vote. Others had moved or had unfortunately passed away. Finally, some residents chose not to respond to the solicitations.

From a qualitative point of view, the visits carried out revealed six recurring needs: support for mobility, meal delivery, access to leisure activities, courtesy visits, assistance with digital tools, and help with household tasks. It is worth noting, however, that some people expressed no immediate needs. This was generally explained by the presence of strong family support, a planned move to an autonomous residence, or an upcoming admission to an EHPAD.

The City of Agen now wishes to strengthen and extend this initiative. The next stage will consist of expanding home visits to new neighborhoods, including those facing greater social difficulties. At the same time, the municipality plans to mobilize citizens by creating local solidarity teams capable of supporting this dynamic. Courtesy visits will continue in the four initial neighborhoods, and monitoring units will be set up to accompany the most complex situations, in partnership with local stakeholders.

In conclusion, the fight against the isolation of elderly people represents a strong commitment by the municipality. The first actions carried out have shown the importance of human contact and highlighted the diversity of needs expressed by residents. The challenge for the coming years will be to strengthen and expand this initiative, by involving even more citizens, associations, and institutional partners, in order to build a city that is caring, inclusive, and attentive to the well-being of its seniors.



# EUROPEAN EXPERT'S POINT OF VIEW

## ELEMENTS ABOUT AGEN TAKEN FROM THE BASELINE STUDY

The City of Agen (Fr), Lead Partner of the network and responsible for proposing the topic of social isolation, has several public services and interventions which – directly and indirectly – tackle social isolation but also a great number of very active local NGOs/associations who deliver precious social activities. It is important to mention that France is amongst the highest country in terms of social spending and welfare. Here is a highlight of a few cases.

### SOCIAL CENTRES (CENTRES SOCIAUX)

The City of Agen manages 3 public social centres: Maison pour tous St Exupery, Maison Montesquieu, and Maison pour tous de La Masse. Social centres can be found in many cities all over France, but what are they for? On paper, social centres are meant to be community centres, open to everyone, which offers social, educational and cultural activities proposed by volunteer citizens.

The objective is to respond to the needs of the inhabitants and to stimulate social cohesion and community harmony. In theory, they are supposed to be supported by cities but co-managed by inhabitants so as to make them actors of the social centres. In practice, social centres offer plenty of activities, from small crafting workshops (knitting, painting, photography, etc.), but also games, sport activities and cultural outings. Thanks to this agenda, dozens of people come every week or even every day to the social centres.

In Agen, the 3 social centres are in 3 different neighbourhood so as to cover a larger geographical area but also offer activities to 3 rather popular neighbourhoods. Social centres prevent social isolation for many people, including retired and/or unemployed people. However, due to their 'social' dimension, in France, they are often perceived by most of the population (at least the ones who know of the place – many don't) as reserved to vulnerable people or, in general, 'people with problems'.



Despite their image, social centres are a precious resource to fight and/or prevent social isolation and in particular when they propose activities outside the walls of the centres, directly in public space, such as the Ludotheque (toy library) which takes place every wednesday morning in July and August on a public square in the city. Kids and parents can participate for a few minutes or for hours and play together in public space with the support of a 'game squad' (game moderators) from the social centre.

Social centres are good tools to prevent social isolation and could definitely be taken to the next level (esp. in reaching out to more people and empowering them).

### YOUTH EMPLOYMENT ACCESS CENTRE (MISSION LOCALE)

Missions Locales, as they are called in France (meaning 'Local Mission'), are centres dedicated to the NEETs youth from age 16 to 25. NEETs? It's an acronym to designate people who are «Not in Education, Employment, or Training». Youth Employment Access Centres (or Missions Locales) are therefore meant to provide to young people either opportunities of training or of accessing jobs. But besides accessing training or employment, the Missions Locales play a key role in ensuring that the young people don't enter in social isolation.

By listening to them, spending time advising them, making them meet with other young people, etc. we reduce their risk of isolation. We often see young people as a very social group, with plenty of friends, activities, etc. but, in reality, 'many young people have no friends nor buddies' explains Eric Bacqua, the President of the Mission Locale of Agen. Amongst the youth who go to the Mission Locale, some dropped out of schools, many have no diploma, no work experience, a couple got out of jail, some just don't know what to do... And when you take in consideration that some of them have no relation with their families, you can see that they cumulate several factors of risk of isolation (see page 35). Regarding numbers, the Mission Locale of Agen, receives about 1000 young people per year.

Even though Youth Employment Access Centres are mostly meant to break social isolation through employment and training, they also organize group activities meant to stimulate social links. Further work with them could be considered within the Breaking Isolation network.

## FAMILY HELP AND SUPPORT ASSOCIATION - AFDAS (ASSOCIATION FAMILIALE DÉPARTEMENTALE D'AIDE ET DE SOUTIEN)

The AFDAS is an association, created 37 years ago which offers multiples services: a 'ressourcerie' (recovery center and second hand shop), a solidarity grocery store (and food bank), social activities and events, and a children daycare center. The association has 52 employees and 6 300 beneficiaries. The food bank benefits 1800 people (including 300 families who receive emergency food support). Besides from benefiting from 'cheap' objects from the second hand shop and food bank, people also come to the association's centre to socialize. Every morning, people can come for a Welcome Coffe (they organize about 190 Welcome Coffee per year). The concept of the morning coffee is to reduce the stigma of coming to a second hand shop and food bank.

'About a fourth of our beneficiaries of the food bank are socially isolated: we have freshly retired people age 65-70 with quite low pension, we have more and more young people including students, undocumented, young migrants, new people arriving to Agen age 30-55, some people living isolated with no neighbours around, single-parents, etc.' explains Sylvie Lagouarde, deputy director of AFDAS.

## 'BUILDING CARERS' OF AGEN SOCIAL HOUSING (AGEN HABITAT)

While social housing (apartments and houses with reduced rents for people with low income) is rather a common practice which can be found pretty much everywhere throughout Europe, in Agen, a particularly interesting practice stroke Nicolas Castet (Lead Partner) and I (Lead Expert): the 'Building carer' ('Agent d'immeuble' in french). Translating the concept is quite tricky as it is not a classic job... But what we could call a 'building carer' is a person who combines different roles: the roles of custodian, janitor and 'concierge' but also of a social caretaker who is looking after its residents. To simplify, 'building carers' take care of both the building and its residents. In Agen, there are 10 'building carers' who each care for 150 apartments. They check if everything is alright regarding facilities/commodities and check if residents have special needs/requests.

'It's a plus if the building carer is a handyman but what matters the most to me is that they have great social skills and know their residents' explains the Director of Agen Habitat, Jean Bizet.

Part of their job is to check if everyone is fine: one month after the arrival of a new resident in an apartment, they (including the director) do a courtesy visit to verify that the resident is well settled and has no special need or issue.

'We ask them if they have family and/or friends, etc.' comments the director, and 'our building carers are checking on people: they give phone calls to the residents they have not seen for a while or directly knock at their doors, they check if the mails are regularly taken from the mailboxes, they take news from those who go to the hospital, etc.' Why caring so much? 'Because I believe at least 10 or even 20% of our residents suffer from social isolation...' explains the director.

The 'Building carers' of Agen Habitat are a very interesting practice regarding social isolation... especially as a tool for the early identification of potential isolation.

## BLUE FOX COFFEE

The Blue Fox Coffee, created in 2016, is a community café run by volunteers whose aim is to create an inclusive space for socialization. 'Every day, the café fosters diversity and inter-generational relations, and helps lonely people break the isolation they feel. Everyone is welcome, whatever their financial means, age, profession, culture or beliefs' explains a volunteer. The life of the café, its activities and events are run by the volunteers themselves. Everyone can come and propose workshop or activities ideas. 'We have mosaics, knitting, music, theatre, yoga workshops and classes for example' comments a volunteer, 'but we also organize one-off events which can be debates, conferences, exhibitions, concerts, etc.'

To make it a place of exchange and solidarity, multiple mechanisms have been put in place such as the giveaway shelf from which people can take items/objects for free, a second hand clothes corner at cheap price, and a free-to-borrow library. 'We also practice 'suspended coffee' (caffé sospeso) where clients can purchase in advance for of a cup of coffee to be given to someone else. All products sold at the café are as sustainable and/or local as possible and sold at the most reasonable price. When visiting the place, we asked to the volunteers why they came to the Blue Fox Coffee, one responded 'I retired 6 months ago and I really needed to stay socially active', an other volunteer added 'personally, I did a burn out some months ago and quit my job, I come here because it helps me reconstructing myself'. Everyone one comes here with differences but all come to socialize, making it a rich, eclectic and inclusive space, in other words, an inspiring – and stigma-free – place to break social isolation!

# ACTION PLANNING NETWORK

FROM 1 JUNE 2023 To 31 DECEMBER 2025

URBACT program contributes to strengthening the capacity of European cities to design sustainable and integrated responses to contemporary urban challenges. It provides a methodological framework that facilitates mutual learning among municipalities and supports the improvement of local governance processes.

URBACT networks operate as platforms for transnational cooperation, enabling the sharing, comparison, and adaptation of proven practices. By mobilising local stakeholders, they foster innovation and the development of solutions tailored to specific urban contexts. In this sense, URBACT can be regarded as a European laboratory for sustainable urban development, grounded in the implementation of the URBACT Method.

During the first round of Action Planning Networks under URBACT IV, 30 networks of European cities worked on common policy challenges and developed Integrated Action Plans to drive change in their cities. Each Network composed with 8 to 10 cities, focused on a specific thematic challenge for 2,5 year. Agen is the leading city for Breaking Isolation Action Planning Network.



## Network duration

01/06/2023 – 31/12/2025

## Network Partners

- Bijelo Polje - Montenegro
- Fót - Hungary
- Isernia - Italy
- Jumilla - Spain
- Pombal - Portugal
- Roman - Romania
- Serres - Greece
- Škofja Loka - Slovenia
- Tønder - Denmark

## Total network budget

849 800€

## EU funding

573 200€

## Breaking Isolation

The City of Agen is Lead Partner of the Breaking Isolation Network in the URBACT Programme. Composed with 10 medium and small european cities, the Breaking Isolation Network aims to work the question of the social bond between people. That is to say involve people to promote social links among young and old, and involve them to recreate ties and facilitate them.



ACTION PLANNING NETWORK

# THE NETWORK

## BREAKING ISOLATION



Composed of 10 small and medium-sized cities from 10 European countries, the Breaking Isolation network brings together municipalities from north to south and east to west of Europe, united by common expectations and a shared commitment to fight against social isolation.



## WHY A EUROPEAN NETWORK?

Social isolation is a growing issue everywhere, not just in one country but worldwide. This means that everyone is impacted but it also means that potential solutions are eventually to be found everywhere. Solutions might lie not just in your own country but maybe in a far away city somewhere across Europe. Started in June 2023 (until Dec. 2025), the Breaking Isolation network gathered 10 small & medium sized cities from 10 european countries facing issues of social isolation and willing to fight it. For 2,5 years, they learnt about one another, exchanged their practices, visited

each other, experimented new methods altogether, conducted local testing actions, to build, in the end, their own adhoc strategies to fight isolation. Accompanied by Lead Expert Christophe GOUCHE, the City of Agen (FRANCE) was Lead partner of the Breaking Isolation Network. The objective of the network was to address the rising issue of social isolation by strengthening social bonds across generations and promoting diversity by focusing on citizen participation



## THE 4 STAGES OF THE PROCESS:

- **Diagnosis (June – December 2023):** Site visits conducted by the Lead Partner (LP) and Lead Expert (LE), leading to the production of baseline studies, city profiles, and a shared baseline report.
- **Co-design (January – December 2024):** Collective planning of strategies and actions, supported by the URBACT methodology and expert guidance.
- **Testing Actions (January – October 2025):** Implementation of experimentations, piloting and assessing innovative responses to isolation.
- **Consolidation (November – December 2025):** Finalisation of Integrated Action Plans, setting out locally adapted and operational strategies.

This process combines two dimensions: **transnational exchange** and comparative learning on the one hand, and **local experimentation and co-production** on the other, actively involving stakeholders and citizens.

The Breaking Isolation Network organised 12 transnational meetings, hosted partner cities, tested innovative approaches, and developed shared local visions of the future. These activities led to the co-production of 10 ambitious yet realistic Integrated Action Plans, aimed at strengthening social cohesion and reducing isolation.

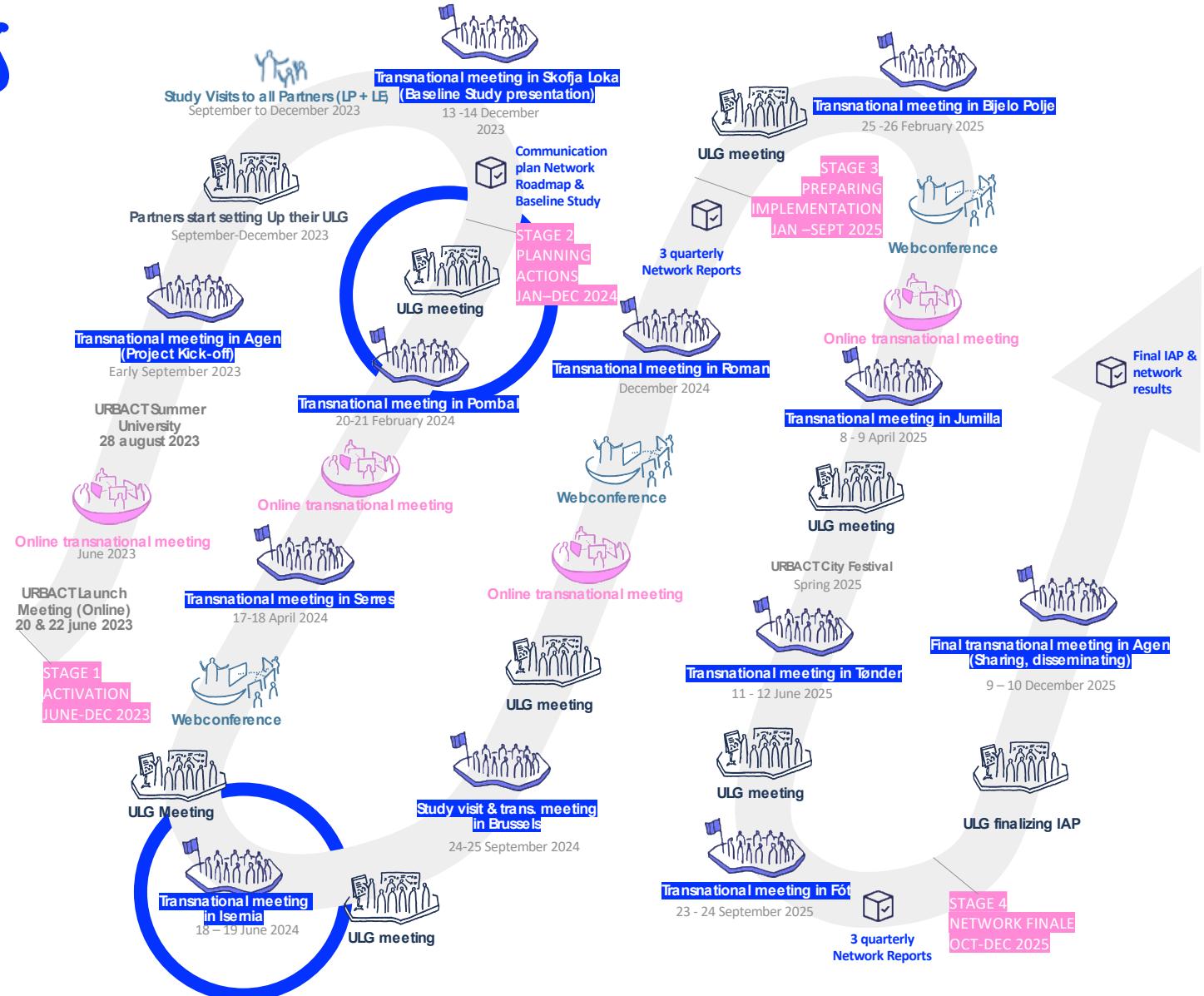
This Integrated Action Plan is the one of the city of Agen, bringing solutions according to its territory. Partner's cities Action Plans can also be found on the [URBACT Website](#).



# A LEARNING PROCESS

## TRANSNATIONAL & LOCAL LEVELS

The Breaking Isolation journey was structured around a series of collective rendez-vous called Transnational Meetings (TNM). These TNMs gathered, systematically, the 10 cities of the Breaking Isolation network and were the most precious exchange & learn space for the network. Indeed, during those TNMs, each city presented the results of their work at local level with their URBACT Local Group (ULG) composed of a mix of local stakeholders, NGOs, citizens, civil servants, etc..., then the hosting city showcased inspiring practices (through on site visits), Lead Partner checked up administrative and communication matters while the Lead Expert explained the next steps of the journey as well as presented the ad-hoc tools that cities had to use with their ULGs.



In between each TNM, cities organized their URBACT Local Group (ULG) meetings, in order to share their results to the next TNM. Alongside ULG meetings and TNMs, the network also punctually organized online meetings on specific issues/topics.

This long journey was not only a learning experience but also a beautiful human and european cooperation based on genuine sharing and exchanging.

# A EUROPEAN JOURNEY

WITH EUROPEAN VALUES



This project has been running for 2.5 years, with the city of Agen represented by Municipal Councillor Claire RIVES, Project Coordinator Nicolas CASTET, and Financial Officer Morgane DAURIAC.

At the launch of the project, 32 European cities expressed their interest in the topic, clearly demonstrating that this issue is a major concern across Europe.

As Lead Partner, however, we had to make strategic choices. The first decision was to ensure a balance in the selection of partner cities, taking into account city size as well as geographical spread across North, South, East, and West Europe.

Another key step was to choose the expert who would accompany us throughout the journey. We immediately thought of working again with Christophe GOUACHE, with whom we had already shared highly productive sessions in a previous network. Our collaboration as Lead Expert and Lead Partner had proven effective, and we were confident we could recreate this strong dynamic in the new network. This choice allowed the network to become operational immediately.



NICOLAS CASTET  
PROJECT COORDINATOR

CLAIRE RIVES  
ELECTED OFFICIAL

This time, the network was composed of 10 cities (compared to 8 in the previous one), with many newcomers: only 2 partners had previously taken part in an URBACT network. This brought both fresh perspectives and the challenge of guiding new members through the URBACT methodology.

In addition to the TNMs organized in each partner city, from the very beginning of the project it was decided to hold a dedicated TNM in Brussels.

This meeting, included in the overall journey, aimed to bring a European dimension to the Network, to showcase good practices implemented by the city of Brussels in the fight against isolation, and to provide partners with insights into the functioning of European administration.

Promoting a genuine European spirit, often little known or met with mistrust, was also a key objective throughout the Network's work and exchanges. During the Transnational Meetings, partners had the opportunity to meet elected officials, administrative departments, local stakeholders and citizens. These encounters served as a form of European pedagogy, fostering a deeper understanding of European cooperation and values.

Although Brussels is not itself a member of the Network, its status as the capital of Europe made it an essential stop. It offered participants inspiring examples in terms of citizen participation and innovative approaches to tackling isolation.

During this TNM, the network's expert also identified and highlighted useful knowledge and practices addressing the urban challenge of isolation, which were shared with all partners.



TNM AT THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT IN BRUSSELS

# BEING LEAD PARTNER

## OF BREAKING ISOLATION NETWORK

Before becoming Lead Partner of a URBACT IV network, the City of Agen had already gained experience in international cooperation through its participation in a previous URBACT III network, Active Citizens, which involved eight European cities.

As Lead Partner, Agen committed to supporting and guiding all partners, not only on administrative matters but also on methodological and technical aspects, with the assistance of Synergie CTE and other experts.

From the launch of the project, it was essential for Agen and its Lead Expert, Christophe Gouache, to establish the spirit they wished to give the network. Equal importance was placed on professional collaboration and on building interpersonal connections.

Moments of exchange, friendship, and informal sharing were considered just as valuable as working sessions, as they strengthened the cohesion of the group, a crucial element for the success of a project lasting two and a half years.

Following the initial six-month diagnostic phase, carried out with the European Expert Christophe Gouache, the network moved into a more methodological stage, involving reflection, conceptual discussions, and exploratory actions. During this period, several partners faced challenges within their URBACT Local Groups (ULGs), such as staff turnover, changes in political leadership following local elections, or the departure of coordinators. Despite these shifts, the Breaking Isolation network maintained its momentum.



Thanks to the organization of Transnational Meetings (TNMs) and the systematic use of online sessions for those unable to travel, the network was able to follow the roadmap defined by the Lead Partner and Lead Expert and to ensure continuity of work.

Importantly, no partner left the network, even though some cities experienced internal changes.

To maintain unity, the Expert and the Coordinator carefully designed study visits in collaboration with the host city of each TNM, while encouraging hosts to propose cultural moments (e.g. music, dance, city visits). This balance of professional and cultural activities reinforced group cohesion. Additionally, the Lead Expert and Lead Partner paid particular attention to ensuring inclusivity: no partner was left behind, and one-to-one online meetings were organized for those experiencing difficulties.

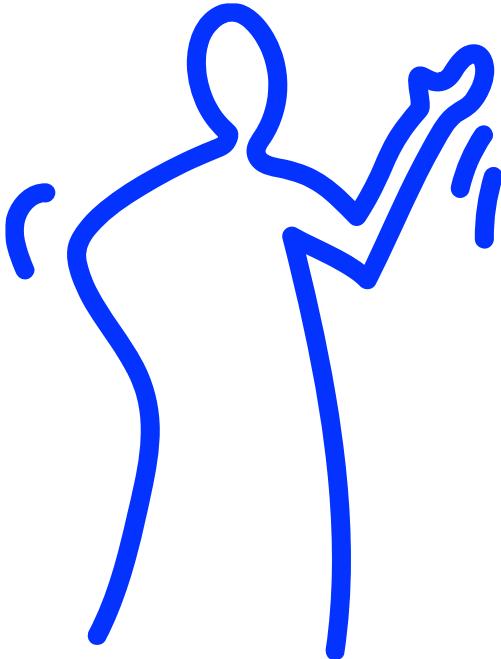
The initial momentum created in Agen, combined with continuous support from the LP and LE, ensured the network remained strong throughout the process.

In total, 12 transnational meetings were organized, and each partner city held between 8 and 12 ULG meetings at the local level.



LEAD PARTNER'S PODCAST

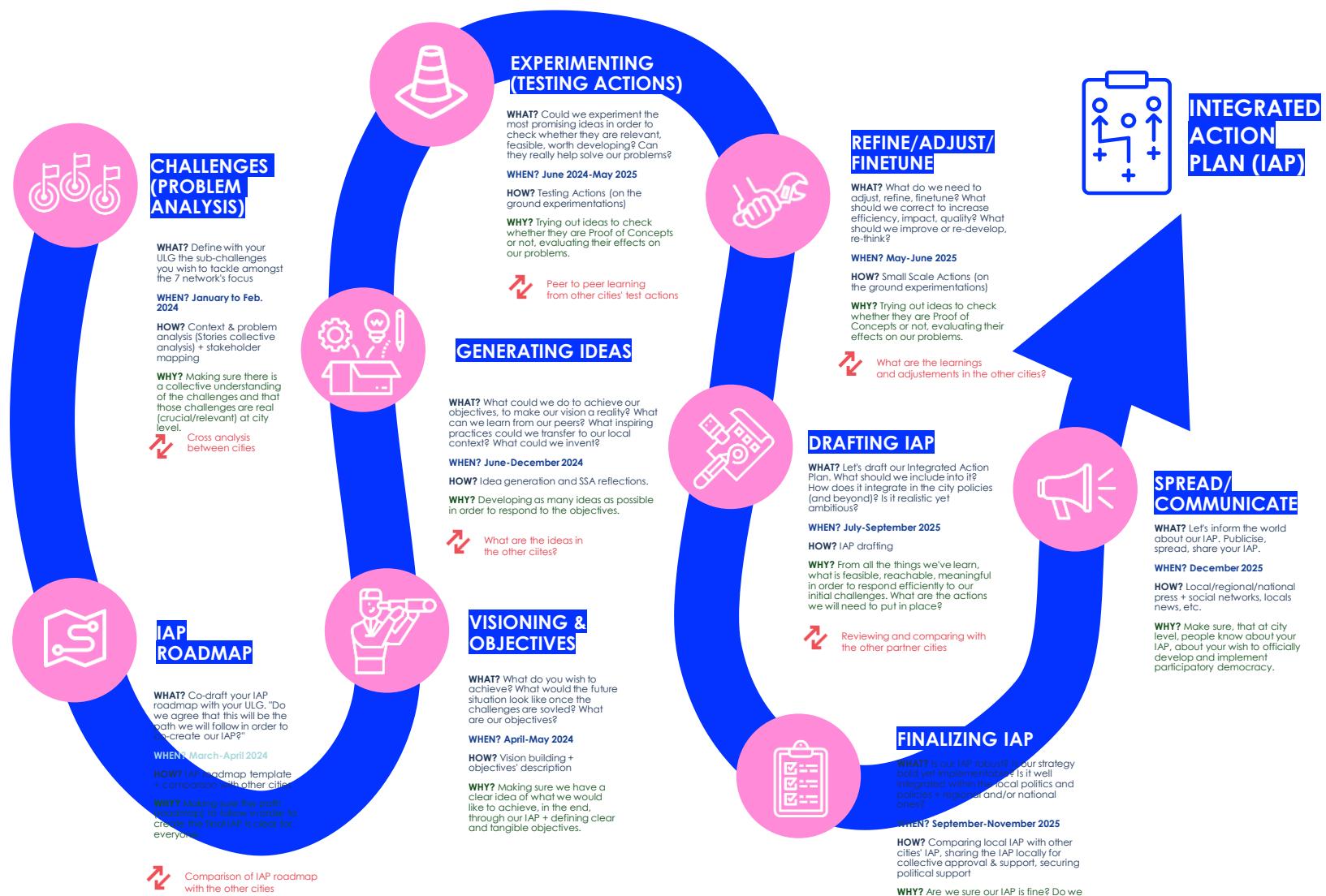




# ACTION PLAN ROADMAP

## A COLLECTIVE EXPERIENCE

Breaking Isolation network is an action-planning network of cities aiming at developing, each one of them, a local strategy to fight social isolation, called an Integrated Action Plan (IAP). In order to build this IAP, each city of the network is taken through a collective process (together with local stakeholders composing URBACT Local Groups) to first, **diagnose the challenges** and



issues of their city regarding the topic of isolation, then come up with the **vision** and objectives they want to achieve, or in other words, express their ambition, then, co-create **ideas**, copy and transfer promising practices from the other partner cities, then **experiment**, meaning try out ideas locally to collect proofs of concepts, then evaluate, refine, adjust and pack together the **strategy**.

# A LOCAL & COLLABORATIVE ADVENTURE

## THE URBACT LOCAL GROUP

URBACT networks are a European and transnational cooperation journey but also a local collaborative one. Indeed, each network has to bring together key stakeholders in order to build and work collectively on the local challenge and strategy. This document, and everything inside, was made possible by the deep engagement of all the following people. They are the ones behind the scene of this strategy:

**Claire Rives** (Elected official in charge of Urbact Project), **Baya Kherkhach** (Deputy Mayor in charge of Solidarity), **Claude Florentiny** (Municipal councillor), **Mickael Geslot** (Municipal councillor) **Laurent Bruneau** (Elected official from political opposition), **Sandrine Pequignot** (Communal Social Center), **Myriam Amadei** (Neighborhood Council), **Manon Chastagnol** (Health Department), **Yannick Pariel** (Citizenship Direction), **Marie-Alice Gardere** (Nurse), **Perrine Nandjou** (Geriatrician), **Alexia Labonne** (Medical Association) **Sarah Saint-Béat** (Social Center: Montesquieu), **Gregori Baquet** (Theater Association: NTJ), **Muriel Carles** (Doctor and Geriatrician), **Emilie Belliveau** (Agen Habitat), **Sylvie Lagouarde** (Family Help and Support Association: AFDAS), **Amandine Ferezin** (Solidrive : Solidarity Grocery Association), **Mohamed Khaouda** (Blue Fox Coffee: Solidarity Cafe Association), **Eric Bacca** (Youth employment Access Center: Mission Locale), **Louis Tandonnet** (Hospital Center for mentally disabled), **Sandrine Panzer** (Red

Cross Association), **Daniel Such** (Youth Association Monte le Son), **André Constantin** (Volunteer), **Jean Cagnati** (Volunteer), **Catherine Chazottes** (Nursing Staff Training Institute: IFPS), **Marion Rivera** (NTJ), **Isabelle Berdinelle** (Mental Health Local Contract), **Richard Bohan** (Journalist), **Céline Herpsont** (Salève residence), **Méloïdie Lenormand** (Tapotemélo company) **Volunteers citizens** from Monte le Son, NTJ and youth department, **volunteer students** from IFPS.

So as to compose this ULG of Agen, we decided to gather people from several fields according to the topic of Isolation. 4 elected officials from majority and 1 from opposition, because we needed political support and because Urbact had nothing to do with politics. In this view we decided to settle in our way of working within the group that it would be an apolitical group, as it was co-constructed, every voices is important and was taken into account. Some civil servants were added (but not too many), from several departments of the City and Agglomeration of Agen. A majority of people from associations linked to the topic, people from medical field, aAnd of course citizen interested by our topic.

In order to ensure the survival of the group and the continuity of the project, the ULG remained open throughout the project period. Thus we were able to see people leaving the group and others joining it during these 2 and a half years.



# WHICH BENEFITS ?

FOR THE CITY OF AGEN

The URBACT project officially concluded on December 31st, 2025, when all Network Partners had submitted their Integrated Action Plans to the URBACT Secretariat. The final Transnational Meeting, held in Agen, brought together all members of the Breaking Isolation network to close the project collectively.

After more than two years of participation in URBACT IV, the City of Agen can highlight several key benefits from this experience:

**Peer networking:** URBACT enabled Agen to build strong connections with other small and medium-sized cities across Europe facing similar challenges.

**Relevant thematic focus:** The common theme of fighting isolation was confirmed as a crucial societal issue, formally recognized by the World Health Organization (WHO), which established a dedicated commission on isolation during the lifetime of the project. This recognition added significance and visibility to the work of the Breaking Isolation network and to Agen's role as Lead Partner.

**Access to expertise:** The involvement of external expertise through Christophe Gouache provided valuable methodological and strategic input, which has since been sought by other European projects.

**Improved capacity:** Building on this second URBACT experience, Agen has further strengthened its capacity to coordinate and manage international networks effectively.

**European visibility:** The project opened new opportunities for cooperation with other European networks that Agen had not previously engaged with.

**Institutional learning:** Partners benefited from a study visit to Brussels, gaining a deeper understanding of European institutions and policy frameworks.

**Future opportunities:** As a result of its leadership and active involvement, Agen is now increasingly solicited to take part in new European projects.



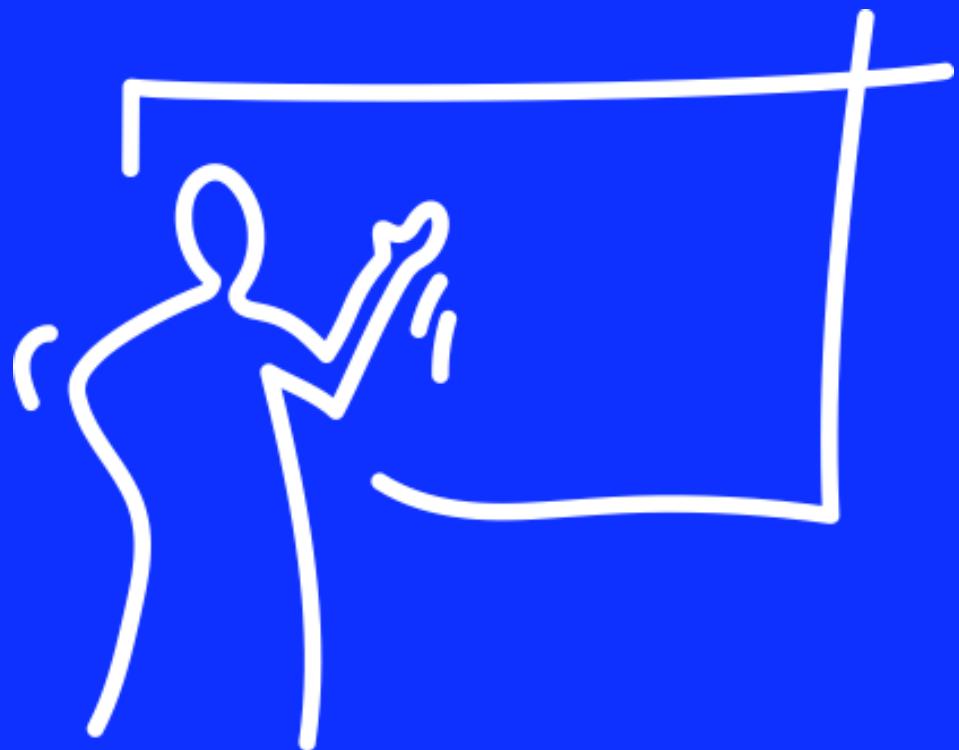
FRENCH VERSION OF THE BASELINE STUDY



TNM IN IERNIA - ITALY

# WHAT DO WE MEAN BY SOCIAL ISOLATION?

A DEFINITION AT NETWORK LEVEL



BREAKING ISOLATION PODCAST



**Social isolation  
is a condition in  
which a person  
suffers from a  
long term lack of  
social relations  
both in quantity  
and quality.**

Definition agreed with our network partners

# SOCIAL ISOLATION IS MULTIFACTORIAL

## THE CAUSES OF SOCIAL ISOLATION

Causes of social isolation are often multi-factorial. A well and sound socially inserted person can end up very rapidly isolated. Why? For plenty of reasons (see the risk cards below): the death of a loved one, a divorce, a break up, depression, dementia, long illness, the loss of a job, or even retirement, addictions, the fact of living far from relatives, domestic violence. They are plenty of factors which may lead to isolation. It does not mean that you will automatically face isolation if you experience one these situation, but it might increase the risk, especially when you start combining them (as factors add up).

 DEATH OF A LOVED ONE (OR BREAKUP)	 MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES	 PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENTS/ LONG ILLNESS	 UNEMPLOYMENT/ RETIREMENT	 POVERTY
 INTIMATE PARTNER AND INTRA-FAMILY VIOLENCE	 REMOTE LOCATION	 ADDICTIVE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA	 ADDICTIONS TO DRUGS, ALCOHOL, GAMBLING	 LACK OF SOCIAL SKILLS/ PRESSURE FROM SOCIETY

Addressing individual risk factors in isolation will not be enough to tackle loneliness, and more holistic solutions will be needed.'

Joint Research Center, EU Commission 2022.

# SOCIAL ISOLATION IS HARMFUL

SOME FIGURES FROM RESEARCH

Findings indicate that the influence of social relationships on the

RISK OF DEATH ARE COMPARABLE WITH WELL-ESTABLISHED RISK FACTORS FOR MORTALITY SUCH AS SMOKING AND ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

and exceed the influence of other risk factors such as physical inactivity and obesity.

(Holt-Lunstad J., 2010)

A study conducted on a 10 year period with over 12 000 people demonstrated that loneliness is associated with a

40 %

INCREASED RISK OF DEMENTIA.

(Sutin AR., 2020)



Findings suggest that deficiencies in social relationships are associated with an

INCREASED RISK OF DEVELOPING CORONARY HEART DISEASE AND STROKE

(Valtorta NK et al., 2016)



## THE SOLUTIONS

# 7 CHALLENGES FOR BREAKING ISOLATION

AT NETWORK LEVEL

The Lead Expert of the Breaking Isolation network, Christophe Gouache, identified 7 needs regarding social isolation:

1. We need to better identify socially isolated people
2. We need to better diagnose those at risk of isolation (early signs)
3. We need to develop direct answers to help out those already isolated
4. We need to reinforce and multiply solutions to prevent isolation of those at risk
5. We need to raise awareness on social isolation, how to recognize it and its effects
6. We need to develop city-wide answers by partnering within municipality departments and with local stakeholders, and in particular, local NGOs
7. We need to reinforce a culture of mutual community care



LEAD EXPERT'S PODCAST



BREAKING  
ISOLATION  
AGEN



We believe it is essential to **raise awareness** about social isolation, how to recognize it, understand its consequences, and learn how to act. This is still a relatively new issue, not widely understood. That is why we must be proactive: communicating about it, involving as many local stakeholders as possible, and ensuring that awareness spreads throughout the community. Addressing social isolation cannot be the sole responsibility of the Municipality or a single department; it must be shared by all actors of the city. This is why we have involved our partners from across the territory in the reflection process, and we are committed to integrating them into the action plan.

We also aim to strengthen our ability to **identify** and support those at risk of social isolation. This means learning to detect early warning signs among the people around us, so that we can intervene before situations become critical. We are convinced that this requires dedicated training and targeted actions. The need for better detection is crucial. Our city experienced several tragic cases of extreme isolation, right in the heart of Agen, only 200 meters from the Town Hall. Yet no one was able to notice or act in time. This painful events were one of the main reasons why Agen decided to take the lead in a European network working on the theme of "Breaking Isolation." Building stronger connections between people is at the core of our response.

Finally, **bring solutions** to prevent isolation before it becomes irreversible is a key challenge for us. While we already have some direct solutions available through social services, medical professionals, and associations, these resources must be better coordinated and more effectively implemented. By anticipating risks and reinforcing support for vulnerable people, we will be better equipped to provide timely solutions and, ultimately, to reduce isolation in our community.

The Breaking Isolation network initially identified 7 challenges on social isolation. In Agen, we chose to simplify them into 3 main axes, to make our priorities clearer, easier to share, and more effective in action.

# IN AGEN, CONCRETELY, WE DECIDED TO FOCUS ON...

## RAISING AWARENESS AND PREVENTING SOCIAL ISOLATION

The first axis focuses on communication and awareness-raising. Social isolation too often remains invisible, misunderstood or minimized. To better combat it, it is essential that everyone knows what it covers, understands its causes and consequences, and learns to recognize its signs. This means deploying clear and accessible information campaigns, and increasing opportunities for dialogue in neighborhoods, associations, schools and health care facilities. By giving the general public the keys to understanding, we are developing a real shared culture of vigilance and mutual aid. Thus, preventing isolation becomes a collective responsibility, in which each citizen can play an active role.

## IDENTIFYING ISOLATED PEOPLE AND DIAGNOSING THOSE AT RISK

The second axis consists of finding those who are not seen. Isolation is often discreet: a door that no longer opens, a presence that becomes rare, a gradual withdrawal from social life. To act effectively, we must learn to better identify these situations and detect the early signs of a shift into isolation. This requires the support of more detailed identification tools, special training for a better attention from municipal services, but also the involvement of neighbors, shopkeepers, health professionals or associations. Because everyone, in their daily lives, can be the first witness of these fragilities. The sooner we spot, the sooner we can accompany.

## PROVIDING DIRECT RESPONSES THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS AND A COMMON CULTURE

Finally, the third axis aims to provide concrete answers to people who are already isolated. Identifying is not enough: we must also act, by proposing appropriate and coordinated solutions. This requires mobilization on the scale of the entire territory. Municipal services, associations, professionals and citizens must join forces to build a collective response. Together, we can offer meeting places, accessible activities, support or personalized accompaniment. But beyond the measures, it is a real common culture of solidarity that we want to establish: to ensure that no one is left behind, and that each actor in the territory feels concerned by the fight against isolation.

# FIRST WORKSHOP WITH OUR ULG

TRUE ISOLATION STORIES

At local level, each partner were asked to invite their local group members to share a true story.

As a starting point, the Lead Expert and Lead Partner asked every city to collect ten stories from its ULG, offering a snapshot of the situation at the beginning of the project.

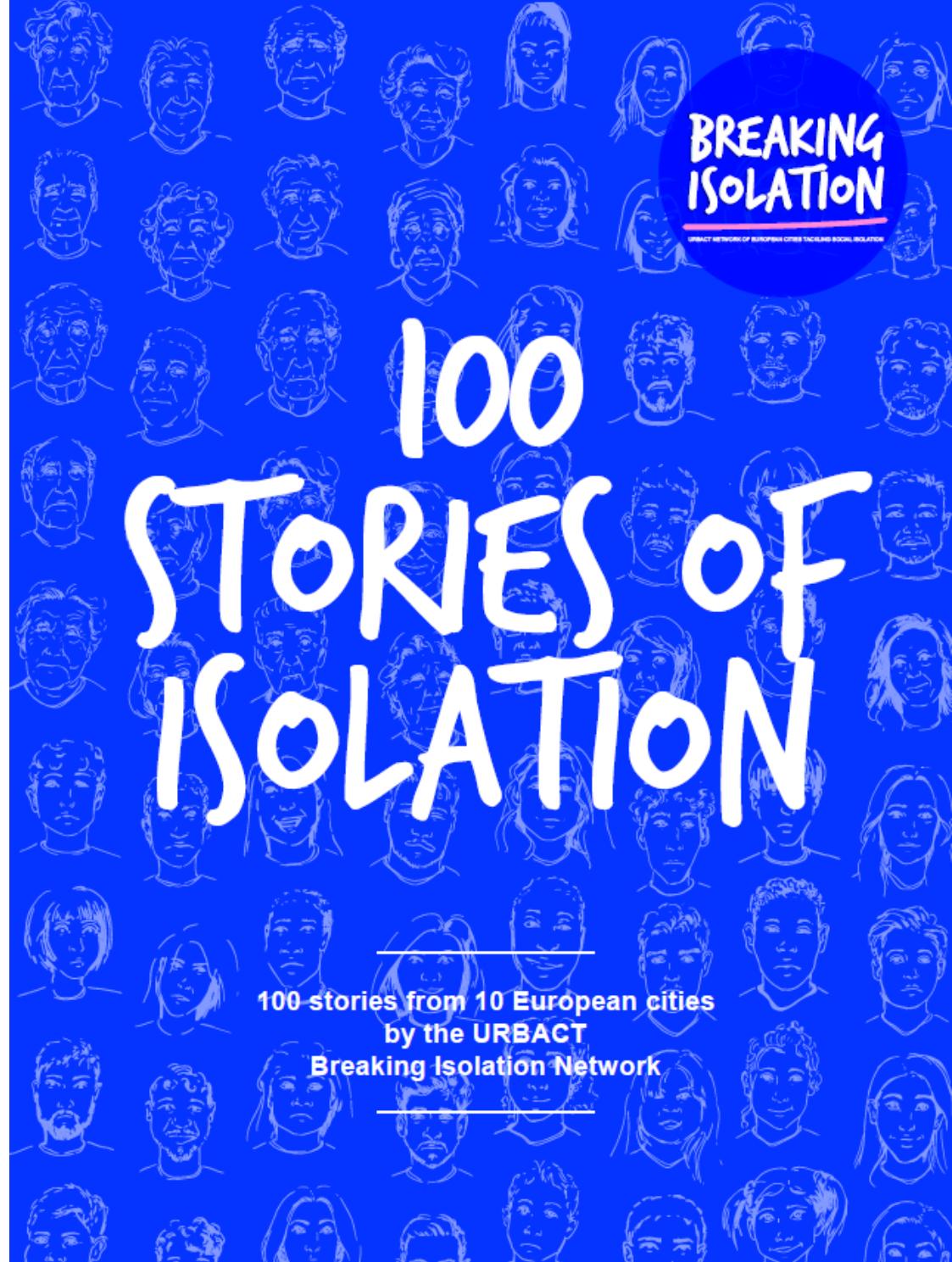
With ten cities involved, this exercise resulted in a unique collection of one hundred stories.

The network then decided to transform this material into a collective publication entitled 100 Stories of Social Isolation.

This publication aims to create a European repository of real-life experiences of isolation, gathered from ten cities in ten different countries. It highlights that isolation is a universal issue: it knows no borders, no age, no color, no religion, and no gender.

Above all, it reminds us that policies on isolation must remain human-centered, constantly keeping in mind the people they are designed to support. It also serves as a powerful tool for raising awareness.

The final publication is available [here](#).



# VISION PROCESS OF MENTAL TIME TRAVEL

IMAGINE AN IDEAL FUTURE WITHOUT SOCIAL ISOLATION

---

The Imaginary Time Travelling tool was designed by our Lead Expert to help participants project themselves into the future and define the city's ambitions.

Within our Urbact Local Group (ULG), it was used as part of a visioning sequence that included a reflection process inspired by mental time travel.

This creative tool invited participants, through a scripted narration, to imagine what the future could look like. It stimulated imagination, offered an unusual and slower-paced workshop experience, and encouraged people to confront different representations of the future.

The process was to ask everyone to close their eyes, then the coordinator read the script proposed by the expert, with a background music to put all participant in a specific ambience of relaxation and creativity.

At the end of the session, a collective debrief followed, where participants shared what they saw, the differences they noticed between imagined cities, the atmosphere, the colors, the activities of people, and the emotions they experienced.

Afterwards, ULG members practiced a vision-building exercises, such as drafting fictional local newspaper articles in small groups, where isolation was not an issue anymore, starting with : *"In the future in Agen, we would be happy and proud if..."*

**‘Vision without action is a daydream. Action without vision is a nightmare’.**

Japanese proverb

IN THE FUTURE,  
IN AGEN, WE  
WOULD BE HAPPY  
AND PROUD IF ...



TNM IN SERRES - GREECE

#### NEWSPAPER ARTICLE 1

### NO STOP IN AGEN'S STATION FOR THE SOCIAL ISOLATION TRAIN!

As far back as the city could remember, the question of social isolation has always been part of its preoccupations.

In 2040, we can be proud to say that the scourge has been tackled. Following a diagnosis made in 2024, in collaboration with all the local contributors, an action plan was built and executed with the help of all the different work sectors (culture, sport, economy, mobility, security, digital, urban planning...) and all age groups.

That is how were created a travelling bus, an intergenerational centre (elderly people, children in need), various actions created towards isolated people, social pricing to promote access to sport and culture, a helpline that can be activated either by the person herself or by a relative and a qualifying training for isolation first aiders.

The city chose to put the residents at the very heart of the solution.

74% of the people questioned find those solutions satisfying.

Agen, a place where we feel good, all together.

## NEWSPAPER ARTICLE 3

### TRAIN INTERGENERATIONAL LIFESTYLE IS KEY...

A clear fact: the patchwork of support systems for isolated people does nothing but favours social isolation. They take away the guilt and responsibility away from the familial structure and the relative for their commitments.

Responding to this issue with a public political policy does not appear to be the right solution; priority should be given to intergenerational work.

Shared houses, mobility and activities must be the driving forces behind this policy. Raising collective awareness is vital.

Before being able to give life to those ideas, it is necessary to create a social environment and put in place the conditions that would allow dialogue and a strong connexion between all generations to take place on small regional territories.

---



TNM IN JUMILLA - SPAIN

## NEWSPAPER ARTICLE 2

### IN AGEN, SOCIAL ISOLATION IS DECREASING THANKS TO THE AGENAI'S EFFORTS AND MOBILIZATION!

While many cities suffer from a crushing social isolation, Agen appears to be an exception. It has been 16 years since Agen started working on putting an end to this scourge.

Under the drive of the Mayor and following a gruesome discovery in the city, the municipality has embarked on a European program; URBACT, to raise awareness, mobilise and act with all citizens.

Françoise, 78 years old, retired, tells us that she dedicates one day per week to animate le « Not Alone », a place where you exchange, share, meet other people, do many activities which bring together all the local actors. A friendly link between generations.

Yael, 15 years old, confides that he regularly comes to the « disconnected half-day ». Those few hours

are precious to him because they allow him to « cut » with his mobile phone and reach out to strangers.

The Agglomeration is developing a new political public policy that consist in participating in the funding

of « intergenerational apartment-sharing », but also of an exchange of services called « Don't do it alone ».

In the following months, dozens of benches will be settled all over the city. They will be multi-coloured and will invite people to sit and talk together.

# IDEATION SESSIONS

NEW IDEAS TO FIGHT ISOLATION



After the Vision session, we tried to define which ideas could bring to this ideal future. To help us, our expert proposed 3 different ideation methods :

## Creative alternative endings

(Finding a positive ending to the true isolation stories told by ULG members)

## What if...

(Cards to discuss and find ideas)

## Concept merge

(Board game mixing concepts to carry out a dedicated mission)



We experimented with the three methods alongside our ULG members, but the board game proved to be the most engaging and enjoyable tool, and therefore the most popular among the different groups.

In order to generate a wide range of ideas, several sessions were organized in Agen, not only with the ULG but also with other groups such as the Mayor, partners, municipal councillors, students, and the youth department.

As a result, 84 ideas were initially proposed. These were then narrowed down to 32, from which 8 were selected by the ULG to become testing actions. Finally, 4 actions were experimented in practice.



VLG MEETING AT THE IFPS



MAYOR OF AGEN



VLG MEETING AT THE AFDAS



NURSING STAFF TRAINING INSTITUTE STUDENTS



MUNICIPAL COUNCILORS OF AGEN



YOUTH CENTRE & SENIOR TEAM

# TESTING ACTIONS

NEW SOLUTIONS TO EXPERIMENT

Testing Action means trying out an idea, conducting an experimentation.

It is an idea or a concept, perhaps already tried in another city, which can be tested to check the relevance, feasibility and added value of its implementation in different local contexts.

Testing Actions are limited in time, scale and space and by their nature have the right to fail.

Cities will be able to learn from these tests, measure the results and either adapt, upscale or reject actions to be included in the Integrated Action Plan based on this experience.



VLG MEMBERS TESTING THE GUIDELINE IN THE PEDESTRIAN STREET OF AGEN

"For every complex problem there is an answer that is clear, simple, and wrong."

Henry Louis Mencken, American journalist and essayist



# TESTING ACTIONS IN AGEN

## LOCAL EXPERIMENTS

The Urbact Local Group of Agen conducted four experiments between April and November 2025 :

- **Socialization guide & self-test** : to learn how to socialize
- **Friendship Benches** : to sit when ready to discuss
- **Intergenerational workshops** : to share between generations
- **Active Retirement** : to get involved in associations before retiring

ULG Members worked on Experiment'Action Sheets templates to set up their testing actions.



BENCH-MAKING WORKSHOP WITH YOUNG PEOPLE



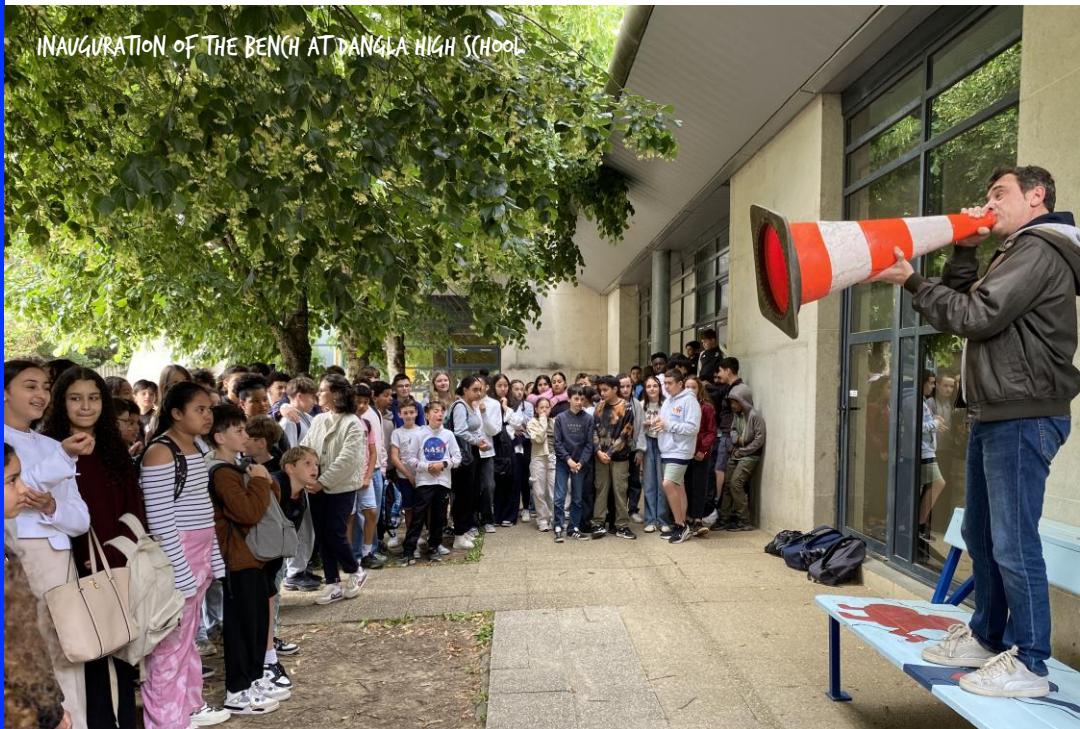
SOCIALIZATION GUIDE SAMPLE

# PROOF OF CONCEPT

A Proof of Concept is an evidence, typically deriving from an experiment which demonstrates that an idea/concept is relevant, feasible and meaningful.

The principle is to 'try out' an idea in order to see if 'it makes sense and eventually works' : **you have the right to fail !**

All the experiments showed that their concept was relevant, ULG members decided to keep them in the Integrated Action Plan.



Two other experiments were abandoned because they were too difficult to set up or something similar had already been experimented : Culture and sharing & The stakeholder community.

# (CHOICE OF ACTIONS

## TO KEEP IN OUR INTEGRATED ACTION PLAN

In order to develop an Integrated Action Plan, our first step was to carefully reflect on the actions that should be included.

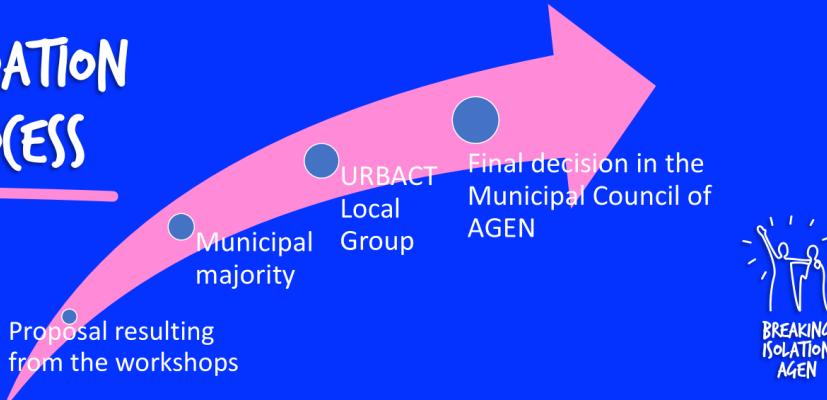
The selection of these actions was carried out in co-decision with the members of the Urbact Local Group through the implementation of an “ideas market.” This process allowed us to take into account the initial proposals made by the Local Group, the actions that had already been tested and proven effective, as well as initiatives planned by the network’s partners that we considered relevant for implementation in Agen.

Altogether, 14 promising proposals were shortlisted, on which the members of the local group expressed their views.

As part of the decision-making process, it was also essential to involve the Mayor and the Municipal Council to ensure that our proposal aligned with the City of Agen’s political priorities. The Action Plan was therefore presented to the Municipal Majority, and the elected officials were invited to vote on the proposed actions.

Ultimately, 10 ideas were kept and integrated into our final Action Plan.

## VALIDATION PROCESS



Once the actions had been defined, our group turned its attention to identifying an operator responsible for their implementation.

Indeed, without a clearly designated operator, there was a risk that the Integrated Action Plan might never be carried out.

Since the project is supported by the City of Agen, it appeared essential that the operator belong to the local community, in order to guarantee that the project would be implemented as originally designed.

Among the initial ideas, the creation of a municipal structure dedicated to this mission had been suggested.

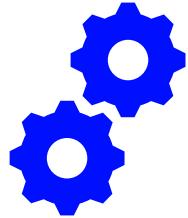
On this basis, we proposed the creation of a “Maison des Agenais”: a central resource and reception Centre, dedicated to the prevention and support of social isolation.

To facilitate the creation of such an organization in a period of financial restrictions, it seems logical to us to rely on the Solidarity Department. This is in order to supervise this new municipal structure actively engaged in the fight against social isolation.

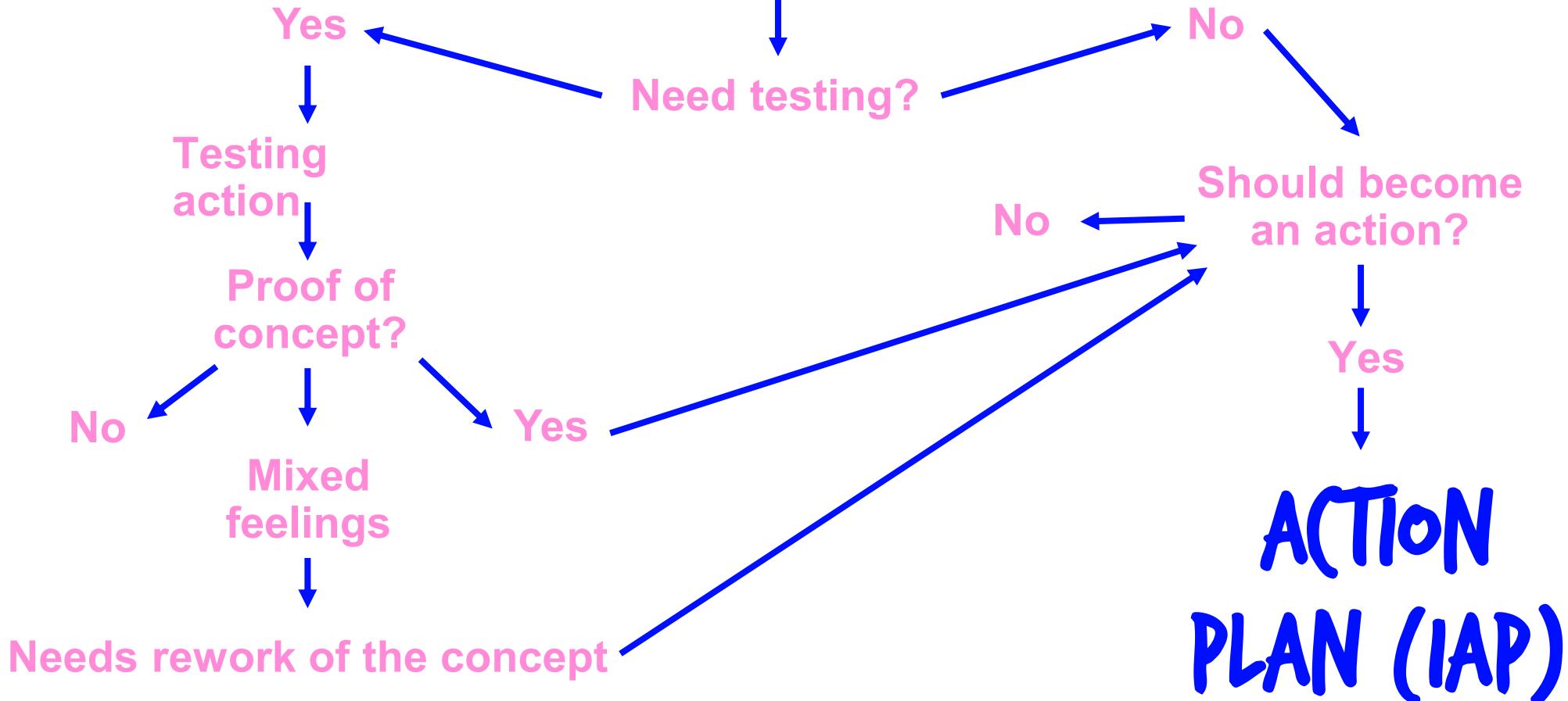


IDEAS MARKET SESSION WITH BREAKING ISOLATION NETWORK

## DECISION-MAKING SCHEME



# PROMISING IDEAS



# A THREE-LEVEL STRATEGY

To COMBAT SOCIAL ISOLATION



In order to better address our challenges, the IAP actions are structured around three complementary levels:

## 1. COMMUNICATION & AWARENESS

Actions designed to inform, sensitize, and encourage solidarity

**Raising awareness:** Social isolation is often invisible. Through an awareness campaign with shocking and visual messages in public spaces, local media, schools, and social networks, we want to make the issue visible and tangible. The campaign will also include a *socialization guide* (booklet & digital self-test) to help people better understand and recognize isolation.

**Changing perceptions:** By creating opportunities for spontaneous encounters, such as *friendship benches* in schools and public places, we aim to normalize talking about isolation and encourage community dialogue.

**Building community culture:** A *contact number and mobile application* will allow citizens to report situations of isolation and redirect them to the municipal center, reinforcing a culture where solidarity and care are shared responsibilities.

## 2. DETECTION & TRACKING

Actions aimed at identifying early signs and at-risk populations

**Identifying situations early:** Leveraging *artificial intelligence* and social data (demographics, health, use of services), we can identify groups most at risk of isolation before the situation becomes critical.

**Better diagnostics:** A network of *vigilant neighbors in solidarity* and an *Experts unit* will extend existing security systems to include alerts on suspected isolation, making the community itself an actor of detection.

**Data & monitoring:** *Training programs* for municipal staff and partners will strengthen their ability to recognize early signs of social distress and equip them with mental health awareness tools, ensuring that professional vigilance complements technological monitoring.

## 3. SUPPORT & DIRECT RESPONSES

Actions focused on preventing isolation and providing direct assistance

**Preventive solutions:** The “*Active Retirement*” program will propose cultural, sports, and volunteering activities to keep seniors engaged and socially connected. At the same time, *intergenerational projects* (digital workshops, gardening, reading, heritage sharing) will create bridges between youth and older adults, preventing the risk of isolation across generations.

**Direct assistance:** Specific *follow-up for bereaved people* will provide tailored emotional and practical support after the loss of a loved one, one of the main triggers of social isolation.

**Collective engagement:** *Local citizen teams* (Ninaa system), composed of volunteers, municipal agents, and civic service members will ensure regular visits to isolated individuals, building a city-wide safety net of human contact and solidarity.

# OUR STRATEGY IN ONE PAGE



## [Challenge/problem]

Too many people, of all age range, are suffering from the growing phenomenon of social isolation

## [Strategic objective]

Agen is a city where no one is left aside suffering from isolation and where those at risk are taken care of by the community.

## [Specific objectives]

Raise awareness & Develop a common culture of the problem

Better identify socially isolated people

Provide direct answers to isolated people & Prevent isolation

## [Operational objectives]

Informing, sensitizing & proposing tools to realize their own situation

Changing perceptions & encouraging partnerships on the territory

Creating a reporting system

Diagnosing people at risk (early signs of isolation)

Involving citizens

Calling on professionals

Knowing what to do when confronted to isolated people

Developing preventive solutions and protocols for high-risk situation

Getting isolated people out of isolation

Acting on risk factors

## [Actions]

- Shocking Communication campain on social Isolation & Guideline with self-test

- Benches of friendship

- Contact number & app to alert on isolated person

- AI support to identify isolated people

- Neighbors' support

- Experts Unit

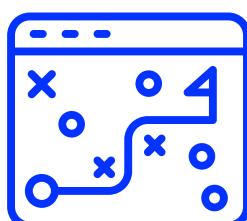
- Trainning sessions added to mental health session

- Bereavement Follow-up

- Intergenerational projects

- Local citizen teams

- Active retirement process



**The strategy of Agen**

# CROSS-CUTTING PRIORITIES

INCLUDED IN OUR INTEGRATED ACTION PLAN



Agen has made the fight against social isolation a key priority, aiming to strengthen inclusion, social cohesion, and equal opportunities for all residents. The strategy is guided by three cross-cutting dimensions:

- **Gender Equality** : guaranteeing fair and equal participation of women and men in civic life, ensuring inclusion of citizens from diverse backgrounds, and supporting those most at risk of exclusion.
- **Digital Transition** : using technology to reduce inequalities and foster social connections, while avoiding over-reliance on digital tools that may create new forms of exclusion.
- **Green Transition** : linking inclusion with environmental sustainability, ensuring that actions against isolation are environmentally responsible and contribute to long-term resilience.

These priorities provide the framework for designing inclusive policies and solutions that go beyond “business as usual.”

During the study visits, Lead partner and Lead Expert identified how the three priorities intersect with social isolation through concrete examples of good practices: Gender Equality (Serres, women's care center), Digital Transition (Bijelo Polje, telecare service tools), and Green Transition (Tønder, Nature Center). These visits confirmed that combating isolation requires a multidimensional approach combining social, technological, and environmental solutions.

Urbact Local Group members were invited to integrate the three cross-cutting priorities into their reflections when designing Agen's Integrated Action Plan.



TNM IN BIJELA POLJE - MONTENEGRO

**Gender equality** is central to the fight against isolation, as women are often disproportionately affected. Agen integrates this priority into several actions: *awareness campaigns* and *friendship benches* are designed to be inclusive. *The network of vigilant neighbors and Experts Unit* is structured to ensure diverse participation, while *training people* includes gender sensitivity and mental health awareness. Specific *follow-up for bereaved people* responds to the gendered impact of widowhood. The *Active Retirement* program and *intergenerational projects* are also designed to provide equal access for women and men.

Concerning **Digital transition**, digital tools can play a decisive role in reducing isolation, but they must be applied inclusively to avoid deepening inequalities. Agen integrates digital innovation across its plan: a *contact number* and *mobile application* allow residents to report isolation cases and connect quickly with municipal services. A *digital self-test for isolation* complements the *socialization guide*. *Artificial intelligence* and social data analysis are used to cross-reference demographics, health, and service use to identify at-risk groups. *Intergenerational workshops* bring young people and seniors together around digital learning, strengthening both inclusion and skills. *Local citizen teams* also rely on digital tools for coordination and monitoring.

About **Green Transition**, the environmental dimension is directly linked to inclusion, as sustainable spaces and nature-based activities foster social interaction. Agen ensures that ecological responsibility is integrated into its fight against isolation: *Friendship benches* installed in schools and public areas create environmentally friendly meeting points that promote spontaneous exchanges in shared public spaces. Activities and *training sessions* will be organized in central, walkable locations to reduce unnecessary travel, aligning social objectives with low-carbon practices. Programs such as *Active Retirement* can include outdoor activities that strengthen both community ties and healthy lifestyles. *Intergenerational workshops* also incorporate green activities which connect people while raising awareness about sustainability.

By structuring its Integrated Action Plan around gender equality, digital transition, and green transition, Agen ensures that its fight against isolation is not only socially inclusive but also technologically innovative and environmentally sustainable. Each action is designed to reinforce these priorities, creating a comprehensive and future-oriented strategy against isolation.

# IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

## GOVERNANCE & PARTNERS

The strategy developed by Agen to combat isolation would not have been possible without the valuable support of the URBACT Local Group of Agen, as well as the strong political commitment of Mayor Jean DIONIS, Deputy Mayor Baya KHERKHACH, and Municipal Councillor delegated to URBACT, Claire RIVES.

To ensure its effective implementation, the strategy will be submitted for approval by the Municipal Council of Agen by the end of the project.

The Solidarity Department of the city of Agen has been identified as the most relevant entity to define a municipal structure for the implementation of the Integrated Action Plan.

The operational team will be composed of a coordinator reporting to the Manager of Maison Montesquieu, an animator and a part-time receptionist, and will be reinforced by civic service members and volunteers.

In order to guarantee proper monitoring and follow-up, a coordination and steering system will be established. A steering committee will be created, bringing together elected representatives, the NINAA system, associations, healthcare providers, schools, the Maison Montesquieu Council, volunteer citizens, and the members of the URBACT Local Group.

This structure will allow ULG members to remain actively engaged while ensuring collective monitoring and support for the successful implementation of the Integrated Action Plan.



# FINANCIAL PLAN

## OVERALL COSTS



The project is built on the Maison Montesquieu, which already covers operating expenses (premises, utilities, furniture and staff).

### ESTIMATED COST OF THE STRUCTURE

#### Payroll: €175,000

1 coordinator: €55,000 gross/year

2 facilitators: €85,000 gross/year

1 part-time receptionist: €35,000 gross/year

#### Operating budget: €25,000

(rent, fluids, equipment...)



TNM IN TØNDER - DENMARK

### ESTIMATED COST OF ACTIONS

#### 1. Communication and awareness – Total: €26,000

- Shock awareness campaign and guide – €15,000
- Phone number and mobile app – Total: €10,000
- Friendship Benches – Total: 1000 €

#### 2. Detection and follow-up – Total amount: €27,000

- Artificial Intelligence and Social Data – €20,000
- Neighbors' support – €1,000
- Experts Unit – €1,000
- Training of municipal staff and partners – €5,000

#### 3. Support and direct actions – Total: €10,000

- Bereavement Follow-up – €300
- Local citizen teams – €5,000
- Intergenerational projects – €2,500
- "Active Retirement" Program – €2,200

#### 4. Coordination & Steering Committee Meetings – Total: €1,000

**Total Structure..... 200 000 €**

**Total Actions..... 64 000 €**

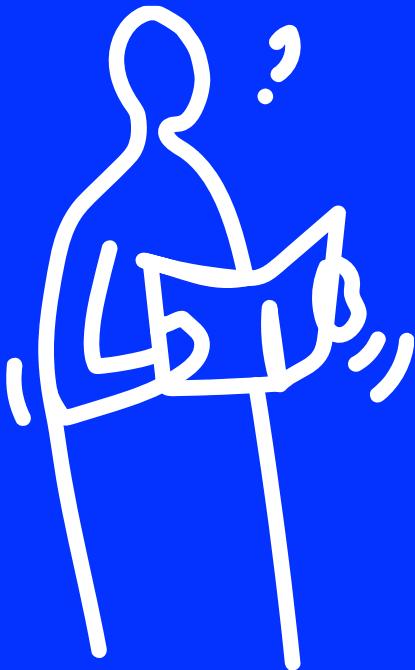
**Total Project..... €264,000**

Some actions and positions can be subsidised.

# FINANCIAL PLAN

## OVERALL FUNDING

To implement Agen's strategy to combat isolation, it is necessary to secure diversified funding sources and to mobilize several levels of support (local, national, European, and private).



The financial plan will include both overall funding for the Integrated Action Plan and specific funding streams linked to each action.

Each action of the strategy will be costed individually to ensure transparency and efficiency in the allocation of resources. At the same time, a global funding approach will be developed in order to guarantee coherence, sustainability, and long-term implementation of the Integrated Action Plan.

The financing of the strategy will rely on a mix of public and private sources, mobilized at different levels.

At the moment, the municipal structure has not been determined, it will be financed by the City of Agen but it will be able to benefit from additional structural subsidies.



These subsidies will be able to finance positions as well as actions. The CAF can be a financial support to be applied for, as it already subsidizes other municipal structures.

It also directly supports specific activities, including global projects and initiatives focused on vulnerable populations.

The City Policy can also be a dedicated project for priority neighbourhoods.

The possibilities for financing social projects in Agen range from local sources to national and interministerial sources. The local resources are the regional and departmental councils, private foundations and the Banque des Territoires.

At the national level, public funding is available through the State's calls for projects, France Relance, France 2030 and the Local Investment Support Endowment.

The Conference of Funders for the Prevention of Loss of Autonomy supports initiatives in favour of the elderly, while

interministerial mechanisms such as the CFPPA, the FIPD (social cohesion) and the DJEPVA (youth and intergenerational projects) can also be mobilised.

European funds, including the European Social Fund and LEADER, further complement these resources.

To obtain funding, the municipal structure will have to prepare solid files with clear objectives, strong partnerships, transparent budgets and measurable results, while maintaining active networking and close monitoring of calls for projects in order to apply at the right time and increase the chances of success.

In addition to the staff, the reception of volunteers or trainees from the civic service brings valuable energy and new ideas, provided that they benefit from appropriate supervision and support.

Volunteers remain a vital force, enhancing activities and fostering community engagement. However, it will be necessary to coordinate it.

# GLOBAL RISK ASSESSMENT

## FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE INTEGRATED ACTION PLAN



The implementation of the Integrated Action Plan by the Maison Montesquieu Social Centre involves particular attention to potential risks, in order to ensure the success of actions against social isolation.

**Risks related to the municipal elections:** the March 2026 elections could lead to a change in political priorities and impact funding. To secure the Integrated Action Plan, a validation by the City Council will be carried out in December 2025, while reaffirming the non-partisan and general interest nature of the project.

**Governance and Strategy risks:** The lack of clarity on the role of the project leader or difficulties in aligning with the municipal authorities and funders can lead to delays or blockage of the project. To address this, it is essential to clearly define responsibilities and decision-making processes, and to maintain a regular dialogue with authorities and partners from the outset.

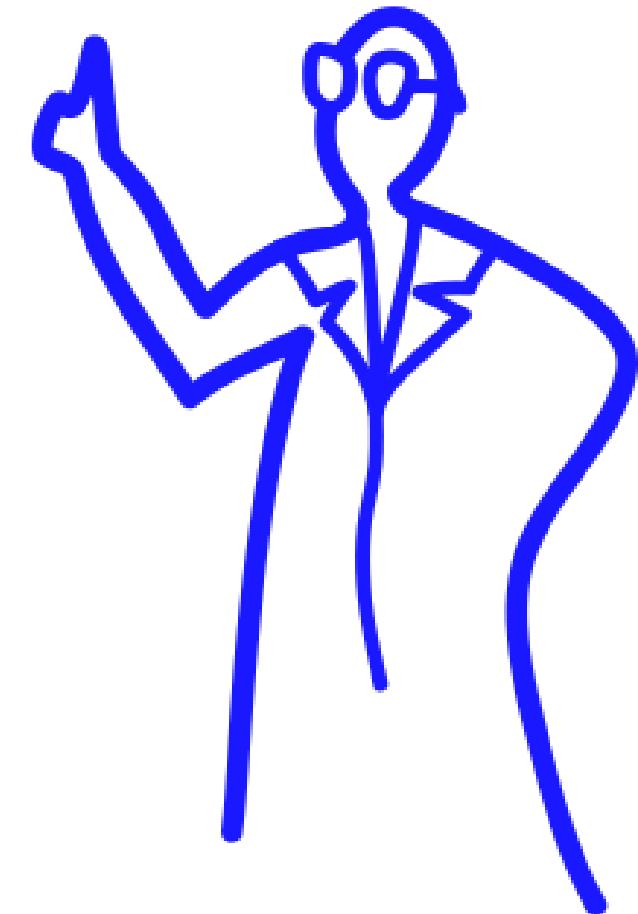
**Financial risks:** Insufficient funding or dependence on a single funder may limit the implementation of planned actions. Diversifying funding sources, developing a realistic budget, and planning for phasing activities will help mitigate these risks.

**Operational risks:** An overload of work for the team can slow down implementation and affect the quality of actions. The implementation of a progression of activities, the reinforcement of the team by volunteers or trainees, as well as a training plan and documentation of procedures are effective preventive measures.

**User and action risks:** Reaching the most isolated audiences can be difficult, and some activities may not meet their specific needs. To reduce these risks, it is recommended to diversify the channels of approach, to involve users in the design of actions and to regularly adjust activities according to their feedback.

**Protection of isolated people and supervision of volunteer's risks:** Respect for privacy and professional secrecy are essential. Volunteers and civic services only intervene in defined and supervised missions, without penetrating the intimacy of the beneficiaries. All benefit from continuous training and support, while follow-up actions remain the responsibility of professionals.

Overall, proactive management of these risks, including regular monitoring and appropriate mitigation measures, is essential to the success of the Integrated Action Plan.



# TIMELINE

## IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE



To ensure the successful implementation of the Integrated Action Plan, key steps must be considered.: appoint a project holder, align with the Project Contract timeline, Implement and oversee strategic actions.

The definition of a municipal structure led by the Department of Solidarity will be necessary.

Once approvals have been obtained, the structure will be responsible for the execution of the strategic actions of the Plan. To ensure effective monitoring, monitoring and evaluation, a project steering committee will be established.

The implementation of the planned actions will have to be gradual in order to achieve its primary objective, the fight against social isolation.

2025

- Meet the Mayor and Deputy Mayor in charge od Social Affairs to present the final version of the IAP and propose the idea of making a new Municipal Structure in charge of implementing the IAP.

- Meet the ULG members and partners to present the final version of the IAP and discuss opportunities to implement it.
- Vote the final version of the IAP at the Municipal Council

2026

- Integrate the IAP to the project of the Municipal program
- Associate newly elected Municipal Councillors to the IAP
- Define a municipal structure for the implementation of the IAP
- Design a team in charge of setting up the new Copil for the IAP and prepare a schedule for Meetings
- Association ULG members and partners to the lounch of the project
- Prepare financial requests
- Start Actions and evaluate them during the year (2 Copil)
- Evaluatate first year of the IAP in december (1 Copil)

2027

- Take into account necessary modifications
- If possible coordinate a change of place for the Social Center or organize specific outdoor signage and communication
- Prepare financial requests
- Renew Actions and evaluate them during the year (2 Copil)
- Evaluatate secound year of the IAP (1 Copil)

2028

- Take into account necessary modifications
- Prepare financial requests
- Renewe Actions and evaluate them during the year (2 Copil)
- Evaluatate third year of the IAP (1 Copil)

2029

- Take into account necessary modifications
- Prepare financial requests
- Renew Actions and evaluating them during the year (2 Copil)
- Evaluatate last year of the IAP (1 Copil)
- Organize a new diagnosis of isolation in Agen for 2030.

2030...

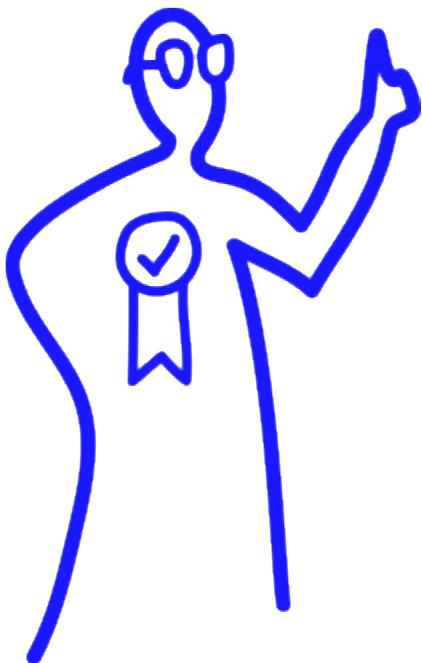


# MONITORING & EVALUATION

## OF THE INTEGRATED ACTION PLAN



To ensure the effective implementation of the Integrated Plan of Action, a robust monitoring and evaluation framework will be established. This framework will allow the structure and its partners to monitor progress, measure impact and adjust actions as needed.



In terms of coordination and governance, three coordination meetings (first year) and then semi-annual meetings will be held with all stakeholders (including municipal representatives, funders, social centers staff, volunteers and partners) to provide an update on the progress of the strategic plan. These meetings will serve to monitor implementation, identify emerging challenges, and adjust measures in response to changing needs and circumstances.

Key indicators will be regularly tracked to assess both implementation and impact:

- **Number of people identified and supported:** to measure outreach effectiveness.
- **Participation rate in group activities:** to evaluate engagement and social inclusion.
- **Evolution of the feeling of isolation:** assessed through annual surveys to capture qualitative and quantitative changes.
- **Number of calls and reports received via phone, app, or other communication channels:** to monitor accessibility and responsiveness.
- **Number of volunteers involved:** to assess human resource mobilization and sustainability of support.
- **Satisfaction of beneficiaries** (additional indicator): through feedback forms or focus groups to evaluate the perceived quality and relevance of services.
- **Quality of service delivery** (additional indicator): including adherence to professional standards,

respect for privacy, and proper supervision of volunteers.

An annual evaluation report will consolidate data from the monitoring indicators to provide a comprehensive overview of the project's effectiveness. This report will assess whether the strategic objectives are being met, identify strengths, gaps, and lessons learned, recommend adjustments to activities, resource allocation, and outreach strategies. Ensure alignment with the broader goals of combating social isolation and promoting inclusion.

All data collected will be centralized in a secure database, ensuring confidentiality and compliance with privacy standards. Clear responsibilities will be assigned for data collection, analysis, and reporting to guarantee consistency and reliability.

This framework is designed to be responsive. The results of monitoring and evaluation will inform decision-making, allowing the Structure to respond proactively to changes in population needs, emerging risks, or changes in available resources. This comprehensive approach ensures that the Integrated Action Plan is both accountable and effective, while continuously improving its impact on reducing social isolation and strengthening community engagement.

# APPENDIX

CONTENT

---



## EXPERIMENT'ACTION SHEETS

- DONE (x4)
- CANCELLED (x2)

## ACTION SHEETS

- FOR THE STRUCTURE (x1)
- FOR ACTIONS (x11)

## BREAKING ISOLATION SONGS

- A CALL TO BREAK ISOLATION
- IT'S HIGH TIME WE CARE AGAIN
- TOGETHER AND CARE

**SPECIAL THANKS  
To our Lead  
EXPERT  
(CHRISTOPHE  
GOVACHE**

# EXPERIMENT'ACTION SHEET

Name of the experiment (Catchy title)

NEVER ALONE AGAIN - Guide to Relationships with Others, Guide to Human Connection

Challenge(s) to which this action responds

Preventing isolation / Providing answers

**Summary of the experiment**

(What it consists of in a few lines)

Ask people in the street if it is relevant to create a Socialization Guide that is to say, a learning tools to socialize including an autotest to check if we are isolated or not.

**Individuals in charge of experimentation** (Who is going to do what, among the members of the local group, other actors involved? Which? Who contacts them?)

Rotation of ULG people on D-Day

Document graphics by Samuel (MJMLS)

Media presence (Petit Bleu/ Campus 47)

**Who the experiment is for ?**

(Which audience(s))

All ages and social backgrounds

**Location(s) of the experiment**(Scouting /

authorizations required)  
Place Wilson

**Temporality of the experiment**(1h, 1d, 1 month, set a calendar)

During April

Preparatory meetings for the organization of the JJ

Create a WhatsApp group

**What you will do concretely**(what will happen step by step)

Installation at 1 p.m. – be in the public space to ask passers-by about:

- the creation of a guide and its interest

- the content of this guide:

-self-test

-e.g. actions in other countries

-socialization actions

-Green number

-volunteering

Rely on a document created by the group with a cover page and a summary

Open title proposals and put to a vote

Provide a background music for a friendly atmosphere + children's stand

**Materials and expenses for experiments**(Equipment to be purchased: quote to be made to... or equipment to borrow: from..., electricity/water required...)

Barnum, Banners Breaking Isolation, Poster + Pens + Copy Holders, Choker + Badge (name, surname, city logo & Breaking Isolation

Drinks + cakes + sweets + markers + paper

Request for authorization from the Public Domain + logistics from 1 p.m. (pick up the tent + table and chairs at the Social Center with a vehicle)

Document with proposed table of contents and titles / colouring table (BI logo) / paperboard / stickers / SACEM / sound system / electricity

**Expected results**(What are you going to try to achieve? What are you trying to "prove" through your experimentation? How will you evaluate it?)

Collect feedback from passers-by to see if the guide is a good idea + new ideas for the guide

Objective: Return of at least 50 people with different typologies

That people can take hold of an idea to break their isolation

**Expert Comments:**

Producing the guide would be too time-consuming, but testing the idea of the guide is relevant. But it should be presented in the future tense: the City of Agen plans to make a guide, here are the elements what do you think? Imagine and propose possible content of the guide:

Tips and tricks for socializing with strangers

How to meet people: places and addresses

The experimentation should rather be used to test the guide, to focus on its content.

**Results of the Action:**

Testing Action of the guide : "NEVER ALONE AGAIN" learn how to socialize

The experiment took place on Saturday, April 12, 2025, on the Pedestrian Boulevard of Agen from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. A sample of the guide with a brief summary (with: Causes and consequences of social isolation, Autotest, What exists on our territory & How to move forward) was printed to help ULG members to explain it to people passing by.

➢ 12 ULG members took part

➢ 52 people participated

➢ the mayor stepped by

Cost of the Action: 200€

Positive results for this action.



**BREAKING  
ISOLATION**

IMPACT NETWORK OF EUROPEAN CITIES TACKLING SOCIAL ISOLATION

# EXPERIMENT'ACTION SHEET

<p><b>Name of the experiment (Catchy title)</b> <b>THE BENCH</b></p>	<p><b>Challenge(s) to which this action responds</b> <b>Raising awareness / Providing direct responses / Creating partnerships / Developing a common culture</b></p>
<p><b>Summary of the experiment</b> <i>(What it consists of in a few lines)</i> <b>A colourful friendship bench</b> <b>(we sit there to show that we are ready to talk)</b></p>	<p><b>Who the experiment is for ? (Which audience(s))</b> <b>Middle schools, high schools, all public (isolated)</b></p>
<p><b>Individuals in charge of experimentation</b> (<i>Who is going to do what, among the members of the local group, other actors involved? Which? Who contacts them?</i>) <b>At least 5 members of the local group + Youth Workcamp Names of volunteers to be defined</b></p>	<p><b>Location(s) of the experiment</b> (<i>Scouting / authorizations required</i>) <b>benches in parks + frequented places + universities /campuses or benches installed in neighbourhoods where there are no actors who fight against social isolation.Requires authorization from the public domain + information for merchants</b> <b>Middle schools, high schools, parks, theatres → 1 mobile, 1 at the NTJ, 1 at Dangla</b></p>
<p><b>Materials and expenses for experiments</b> (<i>Equipment to be purchased: quote to be made to... or equipment to borrow: from..., electricity/water required...</i>) <b>Organic paint, wood, material</b> <b>3 benches</b> <b>QR code and notebook/pencil to note each passage</b></p>	<p><b>Temporality of the experiment</b> (<i>1h, 1d, 1 month, set a calendar</i>) <b>During April</b> <b>Preparatory meetings for the organization of the workshops</b> <b>Create a WhatsApp group</b></p>
<p><b>Expected results</b> (<i>What are you going to try to achieve? What are you trying to "prove" through your experimentation? How will you evaluate it?</i>) <b>Collect feedback from students and teachers</b> <b>Objective: Return of at least 50 people with different typologies</b></p>	<p><b>What you will do concretely</b> (<i>what will happen step by step</i>) <b>Creation of a prototype: yellow bench (color of friendship) or other color + stencil Breaking Isolation logo or graphic artist on the theme of the fight against social isolation. Explanatory panel about the bench Partnership with Le Creuset for the manufacture of benches (without anti-homeless spikes) Call for a graphic artist and/or call for the youth service (Chantier jeunes) Communication plan based on "I am willing to discuss" with the help of the City's communication department Possibility of assistance from technical services for installation</b> <b>Install a bench at Paul Dangla College + in front of the NTJ4-seater bench with integrated game (see designer)Mobile bench for events (Neighbours' Day)Yellow bench with a blue or green roof (like a book?)Recover 3 wooden benches from the city if the designer's project does not succeedStorage of the mobile bench in the premises of the city's technical services</b></p>
<p><b>Expert Comments:</b> 2 questions to ask yourself: issues of the shape of the bench and its use. The bench is not necessarily the object of encounter. A bench must come alive, live. We need to think further. A simple bench is not enough. It is necessary to create an encounter around this bench with an exhibition or a book box. Increase/encourage use. Public space as a meeting place. The bench must be considered as a real design object, perhaps to be worked on with the city's technical services (valuing the work of the technical agents) or with the communication department. Equipment does not cause use, this difference between equipment and use must be taken into account. Possibility of proposing the project to students to design a bench that provokes encounters.</p>	<p><b>Results of the Action:</b> 3 benches were created by a craftsman volunteer of "Théâtre du Jour" and 8 young people of the Youth workcamp  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One was settled in the Theater Association</li> <li>- One was settled in the Dangla High School</li> <li>- One was settled in the street of Agen</li> </ul> They were inaugurated with actors who played to explain the aim of these benches.  <b>Cost of the Action:</b> 300€ per bench  <b>Positive results for this action.</b></p>



# EXPERIMENT'ACTION SHEET

Name of the experiment (Catchy title)

INTERGENERATIONAL WORKSHOPS : to share between generations

Challenge(s) to which this action responds

Raising awareness / Providing direct responses to isolated people

Summary of the experiment

(What it consists of in a few lines)

The project will consist of several workshops where young people and seniors will meet to play together. The activities will be adapted according to the abilities of the participants.)

Individuals in charge of experimentation (Who is going to do what, among the members of the local group, other actors involved? Which? Who contacts them?)

Maison Montesquieu – Youth Club – Local Board Games Association

Materials and expenses for experiments

(Equipment to be purchased: quote to be made to... or equipment to borrow: from..., electricity/water required...)

Board Games (can be rented)

Sport equipment (can be rented)

Food and beverage

Who the experiment is for ?

(Which audience(s))

Local youth and elderly people

Location(s) of the experiment(Scouting / authorizations required)

Maison Montesquieu / Youth Centre

Temporality of the experiment(1h, 1d, 1 month, set a calendar)

During October 2024 and April 2025 – 1 afternoon

What you will do concretely(what will happen step by step)

Common meal plus explanation of the urbact system

Game sessions (define, an accessible and friendly place (think about accessibility for seniors). Former media library but not on the 1st floor

The duration is about 2 hours and will be animated by the animators.

Distribution of teams:

The participants will be divided into mixed teams, composed of young and senior players "2 young people and 2 seniors per table".

The objective is to promote cooperation and exchange between generations, with balanced teams (diversity and age).

Moments of exchange:

At the end of each game session, there is a time for discussion where participants can discuss their impressions, share anecdotes and deepen their knowledge of the games.

Have the survey completed for post-based exchanges

These exchanges can also include discussions about the history of the games of yesteryear or childhood memories of the elderly.

Common snack to finish in conviviality

Expected results(What are you going to try to achieve? What are you trying to "prove" through your experimentation? How will you evaluate it?)

Collect feedback from participants with a survey handed to them at the end of the day

Experiment would be a success if at least 8 youngs and 8 eldest would participate in the event and at least 5 of each group would be interested in doing it again

Expert Comments:

Relevant experiment, many examples already exist.

Opportunity to build on actions already taken

Results of the Action:

Both elderly and youngsters were thrilled. They played old and new games and each of them took the time to share their knowledge. While playing they managed to share their life experiences and started to create strong links. Majority of them asked for a day like that to be reorganized.

Cost of the Action: 25€ for snacks and drinks

Positive results for this action.



**BREAKING  
ISOLATION**  
URBACT NETWORK OF EUROPEAN CITIES TACKLING SOCIAL ISOLATION

# EXPERIMENT'ACTION SHEET

Name of the experiment (Catchy title)

ACTIVE RETIREMENT : to get involved in associations before retiring

Challenge(s) to which this action responds

Raising awareness / Preventing isolation / Diagnosing people at risk

Summary of the experiment

(What it consists of in a few lines)

To give to the agents of the local authority close to retirement, the possibility of dedicating time to an association to possibly Commit to it after retirement

Individuals in charge of experimentation (Who is going to do what, among the members of the local group, other actors involved? Which? Who contacts them?)

Municipality workers, HR and local associations

Materials and expenses for experiments

(Equipment to be purchased: quote to be made to... or equipment to borrow: from..., electricity/water required...)

No equipment required

Who the experiment is for ? (Which audience(s))

Municipality workers close to retirement

Location(s) of the experiment(Scouting / authorizations required)

In different local associations

Temporality of the experiment(1h, 1d, 1 month, set a calendar)

First encounters in July 2025

Start of the experiment : September 2025

Duration of the experiment : 1 month

What you will do concretely(what will happen step by step)

Propose to the municipality's workers close to retirement the possibility to dedicate one day or half a day from their work time to a local association : sports, culture, environnement... in order to help them organise their free time for after retirement.

Allowing them to enter an association while still working in order for them to keep an active life and a social link even after quitting their job.

The objective is for the worker to join and get involved in a dynamic activity that he will stay in after retiring, in order not to break the social interactions

Expected results(What are you going to try to achieve? What are you trying to "prove" through your experimentation? How will you evaluate it?)

Collect feedback from passers-by to see if the guide is a good idea + new ideas for the guide

Objective: Return of at least 50 people with different typologies

That people can take hold of an idea to break their isolation

Expert Comments:

Results of the Action:

3 people were interested by the experimentation, only 2 were selected to take part in it.

Cost of the Action: 200€

Positive results for this action.



**BREAKING  
ISOLATION**

IMPACT NETWORK OF EUROPEAN CITIES TACKLING SOCIAL ISOLATION

# EXPERIMENT'ACTION SHEET

Name of the experiment (Catchy title)  
**CULTURE AND SHARING**

## Summary of the experiment

(What it consists of in a few lines)

**Cultural prescriptions by doctors**

Identification by a doctor, psychiatrist and/or psychologist of the conditions of isolation (arbitration by the health professional) prior to treatment

2 places for 1 entry to a cultural place OR 1 sports class: 2nd free place to recreate intra-family links or in the private sphere or for a volunteer registered on a list, ambassadors of social places such as associative cafés, social centers, senior centers, student centers...

Individuals in charge of experimentation (Who is going to do what, among the members of the local group, other actors involved? Which? Who contacts them?)

At least 5 members of the local group + Health professionals + Cultural and sports services

Names of volunteers:

Referents: skills to be identified

Perrine, Patricia, Sarah, IFPS Trainers, Alexia, Thomas or Daniel

Materials and expenses for experiments (Equipment to be purchased: quote to be made to... or equipment to borrow: from..., electricity/water required...)

Carnet souche: creation of the voucher / CPTS collaborator platform / cultural partners: NTJ/ Florida (Claire)/ Théâtre Ducourneau (Nina) / SUA (Sandrine Pequignot)

Volunteers for the pairs: association of the Friends of the Theatre / Youth of MJMLS / Youth of the CCAS (see with Sarah and Nina)

Expected results (What are you going to try to achieve? What are you trying to "prove" through your experimentation? How will you evaluate it?)

Number of beneficiaries + number of people who actually used the vouchers + feedback

Expert Comments:

Many examples already exist. Possibility of relying on the experience of Brussels.

## Challenge(s) to which this action responds

Preventing isolation / Diagnosing people at risk

## Who the experiment is for ?

(Which audience(s))

**Everyone**

Healthcare professionals

Cultural and Sports Services, young people

## Location(s) of the experiment (Scouting / authorizations required)

**Doctor**

Cultural and sports venues

Assemble le Son – Pharmacy – IFPS - SMR

## Temporality of the experiment (1h, 1d, 1 month, set a calendar)

Mid-April/mid-July (see programme)

At the end Lunch together Parc Pulet

## What you will do concretely (what will happen step by step)

**Define the doctor(s), psychiatrist(s), psychologist(s) who agree to participate in the experiment.**

**Creation of cultural prescription / cultural prescription to be signed and stamped by the doctor.**

Meeting with the cultural and sports services to ensure follow-up and find out who has benefited and how often.

Possibility of calling the person back to get feedback

Creation of formalised ordinances for the City of Agen, agreements with health professionals and agreements with cultural and sports venues

Call for volunteers to create a pool of volunteers

Volunteering charter? Help from the Montesquieu social center?

Carry out the cultural trail

Identification (by the addressee)

→ Prescription/Addressing (delivery of the invitation + proposal of pair)

→ Realization the pair goes to the cultural place)

→ Evaluations/Monitoring

## Results of the Action:

Cost of the Action:

Action cancelled, too complicated to set up



**BREAKING ISOLATION**  
IMPACT NETWORK OF EUROPEAN CITIES TACKLING SOCIAL ISOLATION

# EXPERIMENT'ACTION SHEET

Name of the experiment (Catchy title)  
**STAKEHOLDER COMMUNITY**

## Summary of the experiment

(What it consists of in a few lines)

**Coordination of actors dedicated to the fight against social isolation (existing places, rotations, pooling of resources, etc.)**

**Dematerialized exchange group**

**Individuals in charge of experimentation** (Who is going to do what, among the members of the local group, other actors involved? Which? Who contacts them?)

**At least 5 members of the local group**

**Names of volunteers:**

**Materials and expenses for experiments** (Equipment to be purchased: quote to be made to... or equipment to borrow: from..., electricity/water required...)

**Paper, prints, digital tools**

**Expected results** (What are you going to try to achieve? What are you trying to "prove" through your experimentation? How will you evaluate it?)

**Feedback from partners on their actions, their feelings of coordination: relevant, not relevant + remarks**

**2 different modalities of the same concept. Similar to the spirit of the Pombal Social Committee: brings social actors together.**

**Another aspect: Network of anti-isolation actors within the neighbourhoods. How to identify them to be more traceable.**

## Expert Comments:

There are 3 projects in 1 here: you have to define what the group wants to experiment with.

- A committee or governance of actors who fight against isolation. A sort of observatory of isolation in Agen that meets 2-3 times a year (this would be a micro-experiment: to formalize it, we would have to call the partners to see if it is relevant or not).
- A community of actors who fight against isolation: a network aimed more at citizens.
- Animation and networking of actors.

## Challenge(s) to which this action responds

**Create partnerships in the territory and develop a common culture of the problem**

## Who the experiment is for ?

(Which audience(s))

**Actors in the territory who fight against isolation**

**Location(s) of the experiment** (Scouting / authorizations required)

**At the scale of a district**

**Temporality of the experiment** (1h, 1d, 1 month, set a calendar)

**3 months to start with an internal meeting to measure relevance**

**What you will do concretely** (what will happen step by step)

**Map a directory of existing actors in a district of the territory (private, public, associations, neighborhood councils, cultural venues, etc.) to set up a single gateway, a coordination that brings together partners**

**Develop a catalogue/booklet: name, contacts, target audience, actions carried out, etc.**

**Create a sticker ("solo friendly" label) visible to the actors or stencil with paint on the floor in front of establishments or at the entrance of places that fight against social isolation (restaurants, cinemas, theaters, cafes, associations...) to identify places where it is "ok" to go alone without being afraid of judgment (criterion to be defined).**

**To be exchanged with partners.**

**Whatsapp group?**

**Modus operandi to be defined: general meeting or visit on a case-by-case basis**

**List people**

**Identify contacts and their business numbers**

**Look for a medical application that would be the dematerialized medium**

**Map a directory of existing actors: limit to about fifteen people**

**Write a charter of use**

**Designate the group administrator**

## Results of the Action:

**Cost of the Action:**

**Action cancelled, Similar community already exist**



# Implementation Municipal structure of the Integrated Action Plan

## WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE?

Creation of a Municipal Centre for the Fight against Isolation: a central resource and reception centre, dedicated to the prevention and support of isolated people. Relying on the Solidarity Department to develop this concept



## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Implement and monitor the Integrated Action Plan

## OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

By taking into account the issue of social isolation at the heart of the project of a municipal structure



## KEY STEPS

1. Have the Integrated Action Plan voted on by the Municipal Council
2. Present the Integrated Action Plan to the structure's agents
3. Incorporate the Action Plan integrated into the structure's new social project contract
4. Raise awareness among the structure's volunteers about the problem of social isolation.
5. Create a Copil for the management of the Integrated Action Plan
6. Define a coordinator within the structure
6. Implementing the Integrated Action Plan
7. Ensure regular monitoring (coordination time) and an annual review of the Integrated Action Plan



## ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Co-leader: Municipal structure - partners - volunteers



## COSTS & FUNDING

Budget (Staff & operating) : 200 000€



## MONITORING INDICATORS & EVALUATION

Quantitative: Number of people related to social isolation attending the facility

Quantitative: Number of volunteers associated with the actions

Qualitative: Number of people participating in the Copil

Qualitative: Number of Actions implemented



## RISK MITIGATION

### RISKS

The centre's agents are hermetic to the project  
Lack of staff  
Inconspicuous location

### SOLUTIONS

To involve the agents, a specific presentation time is offered to them to remove concerns  
The team is strengthened by the involvement of civic services and volunteers  
Location communicated as part of the shock campaign

# Shocking Communication campaign on social Isolation & Guideline with self-test

## WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE?

Raise awareness about social isolation and health effects.

How can we become an actor in this fight?



## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Raise awareness & Develop a common culture of the problem

## OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Informing, sensitizing & proposing tools to realize their own situation



## KEY STEPS

1. Launch party for the general public with a speaker
2. Press relays, neighborhood councils, social media videos...
3. Carry out a shock campaign isolation = city centre posters (Decaux signs, lollipops),

electronic signs, local radio, Agen news, intranet....  
Campaign based on alerts and means of action (app, guide, etc.)

4. Annual Renewal Frequency
5. Campaign through an annual day on social isolation



## ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Co-leader: Municipal structure – Communication Department of the city of Agen



## COSTS & FUNDING

Budget (communication) : 15 000€

1



## MONITORING INDICATORS & EVALUATION

Quantitative: Number of people attending the conference

Quantitative: Number of press articles...

Qualitative: Number of people involved in the project (civic services, volunteers, etc.)



## RISK MITIGATION

### RISKS

People don't feel concerned  
It's useless  
Too mainstream

### SOLUTIONS

What if it was you?  
What if it was one of your loved ones?  
Targeted campaign  
Multiply files to better target

# Contact number and app to alert on isolated person

## WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE?

Enable citizens to engage and report the detection of potentially isolated people / Foster citizen engagement.



## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Raise awareness & Develop a common culture of the problem

## OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

→ Creating a reporting system



## KEY STEPS

1. Check if compatible with a Thelma extension or create a specific application by an external provider
2. Refer to the Thelma steps or set up a specification

3. Agent Training
4. Setting up a reporting process
5. Launch of information to the public once the application is launched



## ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Co-responsible: Municipal structure - Communication Department and City IT Department



## COSTS & FUNDING

Budget (Application) : 10 000€

2



## MONITORING INDICATORS & EVALUATION

Quantitative: Number of app downloads

Quantitative: Number of people reported

Qualitative: Number of people reported to be truly isolated

Qualitative: User feedback on the application



## RISK MITIGATION

### RISKS

Already few people use Thelma  
Will my report be processed?  
Reporting not anonymous

### SOLUTIONS

Make a communication campaign for the application  
A dedicated municipal structure with agents and resources  
Protecting anonymity

# Benches of friendship

## WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE?

Install "friendship benches" in easily identifiable schools as a place open to discussion to develop exchanges between students.



## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Raise awareness & Develop a common culture of the problem

## OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

→ Changing perceptions & encouraging partnerships on the territory



## KEY STEPS

1. Choosing the school
2. Imagine the design
3. Buy the equipment
4. Build the bench
5. Install the bench
6. Create an information plaque
7. Train staff and students on the theme



## ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Co-leader: Municipal structure - Youth department - Schools – Associations  
: NTJ - Le creuset

# 3



## COSTS & FUNDING

Budget (youth service/youth workcamps): 1 000€



## MONITORING INDICATORS & EVALUATION

Quantitative: Number of partner schools

Quantitative: Number of students involved in the project

Qualitative: Teachers' feedback on the use of the benches



## RISK MITIGATION

### RISKS

The bench will be degraded  
Expensive

### SOLUTIONS

Create groups of maintenance volunteers  
Calling on associations or creating youth workcamps, guild federations...

# AI support to identify isolated people

## WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE?

Use population data by cross-referencing them using an algorithm and grouping risk factors for social isolation to target isolated people.



## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Better identify socially isolated people →

## OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Diagnosing people at risk (early signs of isolation)



## KEY STEPS

1. Identify the tool
2. Setting up a public procurement
3. Agent Training
4. Deployment & process

- support for targeted people
5. AI feedback to agents on isolated people
6. Contact for isolated people through the Structure



## ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Co-responsible: Municipal structure - Service Com. Ville d'Agen



## COSTS & FUNDING

Budget (AI service provider): 20 000€

4



## MONITORING INDICATORS & EVALUATION

Quantitative: Number of people identified

Qualitative: Number of people identified as truly isolated



## RISK MITIGATION

### RISKS

High cost without knowing the real impact  
Young people would not necessarily be taken into account by AI because no social data

### SOLUTIONS

Political decision for budget allocated to the project  
Allows you to cast a wider net and prevent people from falling through the cracks  
Setting up filters

# Neighbors' support

## WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE?

Identify one person per street in charge of being a "caring neighbour", a person who volunteers to report a risk of isolation, who can also make himself available to help his neighbours, visit them and prevent the risks of social isolation.



## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Better identify socially isolated

## OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

→ Involving citizens



## KEY STEPS

1. Communicate to find volunteers
2. Train volunteers on the issue of social isolation

3. Create a charter
4. Sign the charter
5. Create a way to spot "Caring Neighbors" on the streets.



## ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Co-responsible: Municipal structure - Neighborhood Life Department – Communication Department of the City



## COSTS & FUNDING

Budget (coordination, communication & training) : 1 000€

5



## MONITORING INDICATORS & EVALUATION

Quantitative: Number of volunteers/neighborhoods involved

Quantitative: Number of people identified

Qualitative: Number of people reported to be truly isolated

Qualitative: Type of support and measurement



## RISK MITIGATION

### RISKS

You are not a social worker  
Individualistic state, what valorization?  
What does the family do?

## SOLUTIONS

This is everyone's role  
It is a question of relaying this information  
It's a tool: it's a net that will take the small meshes  
There are family breakups, it's a bulwark against loneliness

# Experts Unit

## WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE?

A unit of experts made up of professionals to whom the elements of first-level visits and reports are reported, to define corrective action and deal with risky or proven situations.



## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Better identify socially isolated people → Calling on professionals

## OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE



## KEY STEPS

1. Communicate to find professionals
2. Find key people amongst the partners related to social isolation

3. Add them to the Expert Unit
4. Organize regular meetings to deal with social isolation issues
5. Create specific tools to do a follow up



## ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Co-responsible: Municipal structure - Neighborhood Life Department – CCAS - Communication Department of the City



## COSTS & FUNDING

Budget (coordination, communication & meetings) : 1 000€



## MONITORING INDICATORS & EVALUATION

Quantitative: Number of professionals involved

Quantitative: Number of people identified

Qualitative: Number of people reported with severe issues

Qualitative: Type of support and measurement



## RISK MITIGATION

### RISKS

Poor implication of professionals  
No time to take part

### SOLUTIONS

Create a strong follow up  
Prepare the coordination  
Facilitate professional implication by organizing meetings when available.

# 6

# Trainning sessions added to mental health session

## WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE?

Enable community workers and volunteers to learn about mental health to better understand social isolation.



## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Better identify socially isolated people →

## OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Knowing what to do when confronted to isolated people



## KEY STEPS

1. Bring together HR and professionals to create the training module with educational tools

2. Reorganize training time  
3. Communicate about training  
4. Open registration  
5. Setting up the sessions



## ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Co-leader: Municipal structure - HR Department - Health Department - CLSM



## COSTS & FUNDING

Budget (training) : 5 000€

7



## MONITORING INDICATORS & EVALUATION

Quantitative: number of people trained

Quantitative: number of training sessions offered

Qualitative: feedback by the trainees on the relevance of the training



## RISK MITIGATION

### RISKS

Budget too short, high cost of training

This issue of mental health is of no interest to anyone, no one to train

Why create a training course that already exists

### SOLUTIONS

Search for funding (ARS, CNSA, CPAM, Agglo, Europe, etc.)

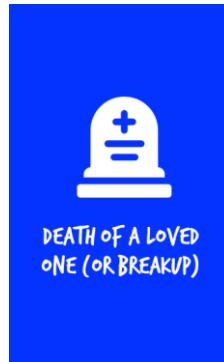
Identify healthcare professionals

Make 1 inventory of the existing situation in terms of local training

# Bereavement Follow-up

## WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE?

Contact recently bereaved people to take stock of their situation (entourage, finances, etc.) and support them by directing them to appropriate structures



## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Provide direct answers to isolated people  
&  
Prevent isolation

## OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

→ Developing preventive solutions and protocols for high-risk situation



## KEY STEPS

1. Identifying the bereaved
2. Create a tracking log
3. Contact people
4. Welcome people and accompany them if necessary
5. Follow the evolution
6. Make an assessment of situations



## ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Co-leader: Municipal structure - Civil Registry Department of the City



## COSTS & FUNDING

Budget (coordination): 300€



## MONITORING INDICATORS & EVALUATION

Quantitative: Number of people contacted

Quantitative: Number of people followed

Qualitative: Type of support and measures taken

Qualitative: Number of people being monitored coming out of isolation



## RISK MITIGATION

### RISKS

It won't work because people are not trained in this support

Different situations and ways of grieving therefore different needs to accompany it

Refusal of accompaniment

### SOLUTIONS

Calling on health professionals (training) + coordination  
Municipal Registry of Persons  
Training proposal

8

# Local citizen teams

## WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE?

Teams (of pairs) created to visit isolated people detected in order to accompany them and offer them quality social interaction (development of the NINAA system)



## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Provide direct answers to isolated people & Prevent isolation

## OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

→ Getting isolated people out of isolation



## KEY STEPS

1. Identify isolated people
2. Recruit volunteers/Civic services
3. Train people
4. Create pairs
5. Contact isolated people
6. Identify needs
7. Arrange visits
8. Plan an end-of-visit evaluation



## ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Co-leader: Municipal Structure – Civic Services – Citizen Volunteers



## COSTS & FUNDING

Budget (Civic Services): €5,000 / Civic Service  
+ Training of volunteers and agents, possible transport, meals, snacks...



## MONITORING INDICATORS & EVALUATION

Quantitative: Number of people isolated / Number of volunteers involved

Quantitative: Number of people called/visited

Qualitative: Type of support and measures taken

Qualitative: Number of people coming out of isolation



## RISK MITIGATION

### RISKS

The involvement of volunteers, high turnover and therefore difficulty in monitoring people  
Difficult to find the right profile  
Not everyone is detected  
These teams cannot absorb all situations

## SOLUTIONS

No fixed pair  
Conduct several interviews and establish the missions well + make a job description  
Identification of citizen teams + AI detection software  
Developing the neighbourhood network to alert  
Developing the network of volunteers

# 9

# Intergenerational projects

## WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE?

Set up various workshops (digital, gardening, reading, etc.) between young people and seniors to develop intergenerational links and knowledge sharing



## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Provide direct answers to isolated people & Prevent isolation

## OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

→ Getting isolated people out of isolation



## KEY STEPS

1. Get in touch with the youth service and/or associations
2. Create an entertainment program
3. Communicate with seniors and young people
4. Organize workshops
5. Make an assessment



## ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Co-leader: Municipal Structure – Youth Department – Agen Associations



## COSTS & FUNDING

Budget (Animation workshops): 2500€

# 10



## MONITORING INDICATORS & EVALUATION

Quantitative: Number of participants (seniors & youth)

Quantitative: Number of workshops set up

Qualitative: Social impact on people (satisfaction, breaking isolation)

Qualitative: Number of people returning to the workshops



## RISK MITIGATION

### RISKS

The problem is that at the end of the workshop they will remain isolated

It is unrealistic to think that isolated people are interested in workshops organized by young people

What argument to retain young people  
Significant generational gap

### SOLUTIONS

It is a moment of escape that is part of a project and a continuity  
Workshops can be done at home

Promoting the actions carried out

Create a bond of trust by telling each person's own story  
Time for interacquaintance (role-playing)

# "Active retirement" process

## WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE?

To allow municipal employees, 6 months before their retirement, to get involved in an association (cultural, sporting, social, etc.) during their working hours to prepare for their departure

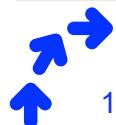


## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Provide direct answers to isolated people & Prevent isolation

## OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

→ Acting on risk factors



## KEY STEPS

1. Communicate with civil servants about the project
2. Identify with the HR Department the civil servants close to retirement with a risk profile
3. Receive civil servants to identify their areas of interest
4. Contact the selected associations

5. Connect the civil servant to the association that corresponds to her/him
6. Sign an employment contract between the HR department and the association
7. Ensure a follow-up and end-of-project evaluation with the civil servant, the association and the HR department.



## ACTION LEAD & PARTNERS

Co-responsible: Municipal Structure – City HR Department – Agen Associations



## COSTS & FUNDING

Budget (provision of an agent 1/2 day/week):  
2200€/agent

11



## MONITORING INDICATORS & EVALUATION

Quantitative: Number of agents involved in this action

Quantitative: Number of interested associations

Qualitative: Relevance of the missions offered to agents

Qualitative: Number of agents still involved after retirement



## RISK MITIGATION

### RISKS

Will the community be able to absorb the cost?

The associations will not be satisfied with 1/2 day

For 6 months, who will replace the agents?

Risk that the agent will not remain in the association after 6 months

## SOLUTIONS

To get closer to associations to define the support of these volunteers and the missions  
In the context of QWL, take this time into account so that this transition is more fluid  
Well-being at work  
Valuing this time and sorting the candidates

# BREAKING ISOLATION SONGS 🎵

BY LEAD EXPERT - CHRISTOPHE GOVACHE

To highlight social isolation, our Lead Expert created AI-assisted 3 songs and a songbook. They became anthems of the Breaking Isolation network, performed at TNMs, they fostered unity among partners

## A CALL TO BREAK ISOLATION



(Verse 1)

Woke up this morning, the sun was up,  
I felt no joy, no wish to get up,  
Some say, my life is social blackout  
Some say, more often I should go out

No phone call, no chat in the hallway  
No true friend, no one to share pathway  
I'm not ok, but tell that I am  
Feeling alone, don't tell that I am

Listen to the whisper in the air,  
A call to reach out for mutual care,  
In Jumilla and in Isernia,  
To the mountains of Skofja Loka,

(Chorus)

**It's a call to break isolation**  
**It's a call sent all around Europe**  
**Its a call to break isolation**  
**It's a call sent to re-new hope**

**It's a call to break isolation**  
**It's a call sent all around Europe**  
**Its a call to break isolation**  
**It's a call sent to re-new hope**

(Verse 2)

The whisper is now getting louder  
An unstoppable call in Tønder  
It is now a chorus of voices  
Singing together in all places

The call for breaking isolation

Echoes in Fot like an ovation  
In Serres, or in Bijelo Polje,  
Human connections are just toll-free  
(Chorus)

**It's a call to break isolation**  
**It's a call sent all around Europe**  
**Its a call to break isolation**  
**It's a call sent to re-new hope**

**It's a call to break isolation**  
**It's a call sent all around Europe**  
**Its a call to break isolation**  
**It's a call sent to re-new hope**

(Verse 3)  
No one should ever be left aside  
Yet more and more folks are put aside  
Opening up their arms in Roman  
Relations are what makes us human

With the warmth of love and tenderness  
In Pombal or Agen, face to face  
We break the walls of isolation  
we need everyone to take action

(End)  
We are Europe, we are URBACT  
We are cities, we are citizens, we are  
elected officials, we are civil servants, we  
are here  
Together to create change so that no one  
Is ever abandoned and left with no  
connection

Lyrics written by Christophe Gouache | Music by Suno AI

# SONG Book



URBACT



Co-funded by  
the European Union  
Interreg

# IT'S HIGH TIME WE CARE AGAIN



## (Verse 1)

She's sixty seven and he's twenty three,  
He's not even twelve, she just turned  
eighty,  
No one to talk to, no one to turn to,  
Isolation? Freaking universal!

He's a catholic, she's an orthodox,  
A buddhist, a muslim, an atheist,  
Inside, he knows no one should be  
alone,  
But even she, believes they always will.

She is retired, he just dropped out of  
school  
He's Black, she is white, hetero, gay,  
trans,  
She lost her position, he lost his wife,  
She ran out of money, he does  
gambling.

## (Chorus)

**Breaking breaking isolation,  
Breaking breaking isolation,  
It's high time we re-connect  
It's high time we care again  
It's high time we re-connect  
It's high time we care again**

## (Verse 2)

He's your discreet neighbour, she's a  
cousin,  
He has been your friend, she's an ex  
colleague,  
once they might have been all former  
school mates,  
now, strangers avoiding one another.

We don't know he's here, or pretend  
not to,  
He lives in an apartment in Pombal,  
She's stuck inside with a chronic disease  
She lives in a house in Isernia,

No one hears, but her heart cries every

## night,

She lives in a nursing home in Agen,  
a bit each day, He drinks his life away,  
He lives in a homestead in Jumilla.

## (Chorus)

**Breaking breaking isolation,  
Breaking breaking isolation,  
It's high time we re-connect  
It's high time we care again  
It's high time we re-connect  
It's high time we care again**

## (Verse 3)

Every single day she wakes up sorrow,  
She lives in a remote farmhouse in Fot,  
He spends his life on social media,  
He lives in a flat in Skofja Loka.

She's never been taught how to behave  
right,  
She lives in social housing in Serres,  
Weirdo or crazy are the names he's  
given,  
He lives in a flat in Bijelo Polje.

Beaten by her proper-looking husband,  
she lives in a nice cottage in Tønder,  
He got rejected like an old tissue,  
He lives in a studio in Roman;

## (Chorus)

**Breaking breaking isolation,  
Breaking breaking isolation,  
It's high time we re-connect  
It's high time we care again  
It's high time we re-connect  
It's high time we care again**

## (End)

No family no more, no friends no more,  
No relations, only deep emptiness,  
A feeling of distress and nothingness,  
Isolation? Freaking universal!

# TOGETHER AND CARE



## (Verse 1)

7 o'clock, in Agen, France,  
the police breaks the door,  
she's laying down on the floor,  
the doctor say she must have died 2  
years ago.

9 o'clock, in Isernia, Italy,  
the postman rings the bell  
almost like breaking a spell,  
the man's last visit must have been 3  
months ago.

11 o'clock, in Bijelo Polje, Montenegro,  
two children and single,  
no extra time to mingle,  
he left her with nothing about 4 years  
ago.

12 o'clock, in Fot, Hungary  
plays alone in the street,  
each day feeling bittersweet,  
not even one friend yet moved in 9  
months ago.

## (chorus)

**Isolation is not a choice  
Isolation is not a retreat  
Isolation is no one's desire**

**We must unite to break isolation  
We must come together and care  
We must unite to break isolation  
We must come together and care**

## (verse 2)

2 o'clock, in Serres, Greece,  
she's shaking all over,  
got beaten like life's over,  
regretting to have married him 3 years  
ago.

4 o'clock, in Tønder, Denmark,  
he wakes up in distress,  
feeling each day like a mess,  
always together, lost his wife a year ago,

6 o'clock, in Skofja Loka, Slovenia,  
she looks at the window,  
never out, she's in limbo,  
distant, got PTSD 3 years ago.

## (chorus)

**Isolation is not a choice  
Isolation is not a retreat  
Isolation is no one's desire**

**We must unite to break isolation  
We must come together and care  
We must unite to break isolation  
We must come together and care**

## (verse 3)

8 o'clock, in Roman, Romania,  
Daily Harassed in school,  
he walks head down, that isn't cool,  
Pushed and mocked, it all started a few  
months ago.

10 o'clock, in Jumilla, Spain,  
going out she might, but  
to move her legs it's a fight,  
got into a bad accident, 2 years ago.

Midnight, in Pombal, Portugal  
coming home finally,  
drunken inexorably,  
never stopped since she left, that was 9  
months ago.

## (Chorus)

**Isolation is not a choice  
Isolation is not a retreat  
Isolation is no one's desire  
Isolation is a social straitjacket  
a social straitjacket**

**Isolation is not a choice  
Isolation is not a retreat  
Isolation is no one's desire  
Isolation is a social straitjacket  
a social straitjacket**



# BREAKING ISOLATION

URBACT NETWORK OF EUROPEAN CITIES TACKLING SOCIAL ISOLATION



URBACT

[www.agen.fr](http://www.agen.fr)



Co-funded by  
the European Union  
Interreg