

## Shared AGE Platform Europe – Red Cross EU Office conclusions

Based on the workshop discussions, AGE Platform and the Red Cross EU Office draw the following conclusions:

### **On the framing of long-term care:**

Good care and support systems are an **opportunity** to enable older people's participation, contribution, and inclusion in society. Investment in long-term care is an investment in people's quality of life and improves social and intergenerational cohesion.

It is essential to promote a **life-course approach** to care that demonstrates the link between investments in people's health throughout their lives and the long-term care needs of people in older age. Looking at the projected increased costs of long-term care alone is partial and incomplete, as first and foremost, the sustainability of care systems will depend on people's ability to age in good health, from childhood to older age.

The design of care and support systems should adopt a **participatory approach** by involving older people and carers.

Care systems should promote **equality**: needing care is inherent to life and should not involve social stigma. Policies and services should aim to put an end to ageist and ableist biases – those based on prejudices, stereotypes, and discriminatory practices against people on the basis of age or disability.

**Community-based care contributes** to responding to the needs of older people by providing medical treatments and screening, offering wellness and healthy ageing programmes, supporting daily needs and promoting intergenerational activities.

Investment and reforms in care systems need to consider **diversity**, not only between EU countries, but also regional, local, urban, and rural peculiarities.

If combined with face-to-face professional services, **technology and digitalization** can play an important role in supporting older people in their daily care and tackling social isolation.

### **On the European Care Strategy:**

The European Care Strategy can be the EU's decisive action to trigger Member States' interest, level of ambition and action with regards to care and support. To achieve this, **the strategy must build a positive and compelling case for investments in care**, based on a life-course approach and the opportunities that better care systems offer to European societies.

The strategy should propose **indicators** on access to professional care and support services (measured in terms of met/unmet needs reported by people themselves), and access **targets**. This should offer disaggregated data according to care settings to monitor progress in improving access to home and community-based care, as mandated by principle 18 of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

The strategy should propose actions to build a **shared understanding of the quality of care** and support across Europe. This should include a European Quality Framework which is aligned with and linked to the Quality Framework on Social Services of Excellence announced for 2024 in the Disability Rights Strategy 2021-2030.

The EU should support and steer **long-term care reform** in Member States through the development



of guidance, research, and peer reviews on social protection for care, integrated care, palliative and end-of-life care and support to informal carers, among other key elements of the design of care systems.

The Commission should develop a **repository of promising practices in long-term care** to inspire reforms and facilitate exchange across Europe, with civil society involvement in both the selection and evaluation.

The strategy should also launch a **permanent EU-level platform on care** composed by the European Commission, the European Parliament, EU Member States and civil society-organisations to support and monitor its implementation.