

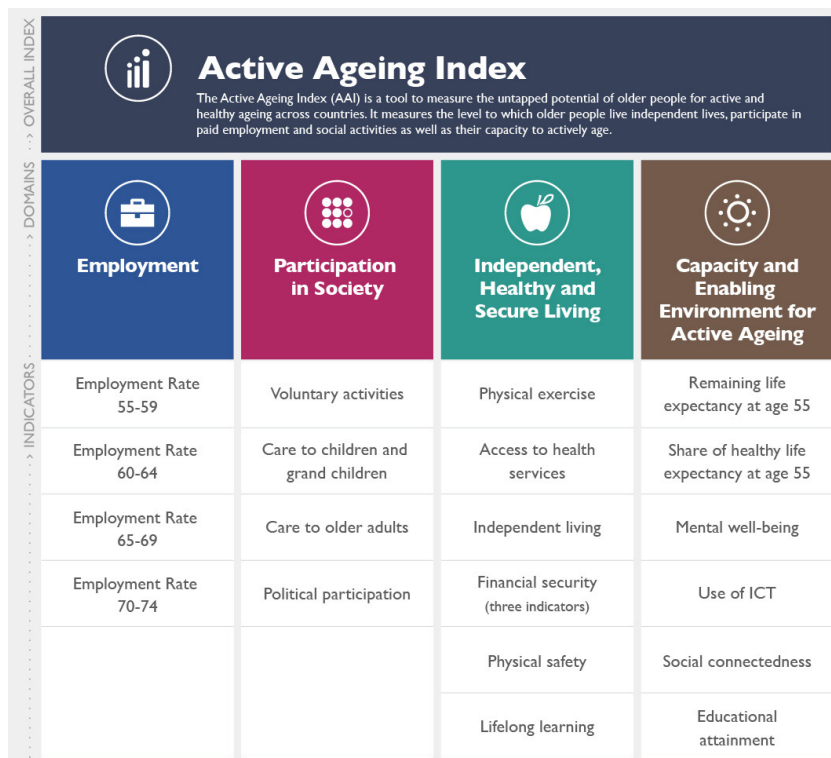
# ACTIVE AGEING INDEX

## ...and what it can do for you

**Active ageing** is a multidimensional concept referring to a situation where people continue to participate in the formal labour market, engage in unpaid productive activities (such as care provision to family members and volunteering), and live healthy, independent and secure lives as they age. Active ageing **policies** thus need to address this variety of dimensions: enable possibilities for longer working life, ensure social involvement, encourage healthy lifestyles, and provide opportunities for independent living for both men and women. **Monitoring** such policy implementation requires a comprehensive tool that encompasses the multitude of aspects of active ageing.

The **Active Ageing Index** (AAI) is such a tool. It captures various facets of active ageing: it measures how much of older men and women's potential to contribute to the economy and society is used and to what extent their living environment enables them. They contribute by working, volunteering, providing informal care, living independently, and staying healthy.

The Active Ageing Index is a rather simple tool: it includes **22 indicators** grouped into **4 domains** that are shown in the figure below. All the indicators are measured separately for men and women; this makes it possible to detect **gender gaps** in active ageing.



The index values range from 0 to 100. Higher values indicate a higher extent of realizing the potential of older men and women. While reaching 100 points is neither a realistic nor necessary goal, achieving the highest results among a certain group of countries can be a useful goalpost.

AAI offers a **flexible framework** that can be applied to different countries and at national as well as subnational (regional and local) levels. It

depicts the **current situation** and highlights the areas where **future gains** can be made. A country might have high results in one domain, for example employment, with relatively low results in another one, such as independent living. This signals that matters enabling independent living need particular attention.

If calculated regularly, AAI allows to measure progress over time and helps to identify successful policy measures.

In **Poland**, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy used AAI across 16 regions to find out where active ageing was insufficiently supported and identify areas requiring action from regional and local authorities. As a result, a number of policy measures were introduced including the national Programme for Social Participation of Older People (ASOS). So far there have been three waves of AAI calculation: 2013, 2014, and 2015.

An example at regional level is **Biscay Province (Spain)** where AAI has been used since 2013 to build evidence on the situation of older people and identify priority areas for action to improve active ageing experiences and outcomes. The index is used to monitor the implementation of the 2013 Biscay Strategic Plan for Older People. To obtain missing data at subnational level, a phone survey based on the original AAI questions was carried out in 2014 and 2015.

These examples illustrate that the AAI can be used in a variety of ways. Users may wish to:

- » Compare AAI results for their country/region/community against those of another one (or a group of those).
- » Compare their own AAI results over time to monitor progress made.
- » Compare AAI results for men and women or other population groups, for example with different socio-economic status.

The AAI results in each of these cases can be improved through:

- » Targeting areas where a user's country/region/community lags behind with relevant measures.
- » Targeting areas that prevent the overall results from further improvement.
- » Applying measures to reduce the gender gap and other inequalities between different groups.

In conclusion, AAI is a comprehensive and flexible tool that provides evidence for informed decision-making, development, and monitoring of policies and strategies on ageing. AAI is **comprehensive** because it helps to ensure that users consider the multitude of active ageing aspects rather than focussing on one of them. AAI is **flexible** because it can be adjusted to users' needs in different contexts while preserving its core.

The AAI project is run jointly by the Population Unit of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the European Commission's Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL). It benefits from the advice of the Expert Group on AAI and cooperation with the Southampton University.

**For more information on AAI and the project please visit**  
<https://statswiki.unece.org/display/AAI/Active+Ageing+Index+Home>



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