

Technological Change and Sustainable Ageing: Challenges and Opportunities

EAPS Working Group “Sustainable Ageing”, EPC 2026 side meeting

Aim of the meeting

The goal of the side meeting is to reflect on the role of technological change (robotisation, digitalisation, AI and related innovations) in helping societies to age sustainably.

Discussions will consider how technological change interacts with the key dimensions of sustainable ageing – including health and caregiving, employment and productivity at older ages, social participation and communication, risks of social isolation, ageism and intergenerational fairness, and broader institutional and policy frameworks. We aim to identify both opportunities and risks, as well as priorities for future research and collaboration within the Working Group.

Draft programme (14:00–17:00)

14:00–14:30 – Welcome and introduction

- Welcome by the coordinators of the Working Group *Sustainable Ageing*.
- Brief introduction to the purpose of the meeting and its link to the broader activities of the Working Group.
- Short presentation of a conceptual paper on sustainable ageing, outlining the multidimensional framework (health and care, economic security and employment, social relations and participation, intergenerational fairness, institutional and environmental contexts) and how technological change cuts across these dimensions.

14:30–15:15 – Presentations on technological change and sustainable ageing

- A set of short presentations (approx. 10 minutes each) addressing topics such as:
 - Technological innovation in care and long-term care (e.g. robotics, telecare, AI-based monitoring) and its implications for carers and care recipients wellbeing;
 - Digitalisation, automation and AI in the labour market, and their consequences for employment, skills and work conditions at older ages;
 - The role of digital tools for family communication, social participation and mitigating (or exacerbating) loneliness and social isolation;
 - Technological change, ageism and attitudes towards older people and intergenerational fairness.

- Presentations may cover theoretical, empirical, or methodological work, as well as research projects, practical interventions, and policy analyses or proposals.
- Presentations will highlight cross-national perspectives and potential policy implications.

15:15–16:30 – Working group discussions (breakout sessions)

Participants will be divided into small groups, each focusing on a specific aspect of technological change and sustainable ageing, for example:

- **Group 1:** Technology, caregiving and long-term care arrangements;
- **Group 2:** Technology, employment and skills in later life;
- **Group 3:** Digital communication, social networks and social isolation;
- **Group 4:** AI, ageism, rights and intergenerational fairness.

Each group will be asked to:

- Identify key conceptual and empirical challenges;
- Discuss data needs and methodological approaches;
- Propose future collaborative activities within the Working Group (joint papers, special sessions, special issues, policy briefs, project proposals).

16:30–17:00 – Plenary wrap-up and next steps

- Short reports from each breakout group.
- Discussion of common themes, research gaps and policy-relevant messages emerging from the discussions.
- Identification of concrete follow-up actions for the Working Group (e.g. preparation of joint publications, organisation of future events, development of collaborative grant applications).

Date: Wednesday, 3 June 2026, 14:00–17:00

Venue: Room Q, Plesso Belmeloro, Via Andreatta 8, Bologna

Organizers

Bruno Arpino (University of Padova) and Valeria Bordone (University of Vienna), EAPS Working Group “Sustainable Ageing”.

Contact: sustainableageing@gmail.com