

## Using natural language AI to detect loneliness in older people

<b><u>Organisation(s):</u></b>	Madrid City Council	
<b><u>Country:</u></b>	Spain	
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<b><u>Theme:</u></b> <i>Choose at least one option</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ageing & Care <input type="checkbox"/> Asylum & Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Young People <input type="checkbox"/> Support for Children & Families <input type="checkbox"/> Community Care <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Integrated Care & Support <input type="checkbox"/> Co-Production <input type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Housing & Homelessness <input type="checkbox"/> Artificial Intelligence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digitalisation <input type="checkbox"/> Quality Care	<input type="checkbox"/> Labour Market Inclusion <input type="checkbox"/> Social Inclusion <input type="checkbox"/> Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce and Leadership <input type="checkbox"/> Social Benefits <input type="checkbox"/> EU Funding <input type="checkbox"/> Social Service's Resilience <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Person-Centred Care <input type="checkbox"/> Research & Use of Evidence <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:
<b><u>Principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights:</u></b> <i>Check the 20 principles <a href="#">here</a>.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Education, training, life-long learning <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Gender equality <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Equal opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Active support to employment <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Secure and adaptable employment <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Fair Wages <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Transparent employment conditions <input type="checkbox"/> 8. Social dialogue <input type="checkbox"/> 9. Work-life balance <input type="checkbox"/> 10. Healthy, safe work environment	<input type="checkbox"/> 11. Childcare and child support <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 12. Social protection <input type="checkbox"/> 13. Unemployment benefits <input type="checkbox"/> 14. Minimum income <input type="checkbox"/> 15. Old age income and pensions <input type="checkbox"/> 16. Health care <input type="checkbox"/> 17. Inclusion of people with disabilities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18. Long-term care <input type="checkbox"/> 19. Housing and assistance to homeless <input type="checkbox"/> 20. Access to essential services
<b><u>Current status of the practice:</u></b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept and Design Phase <input type="checkbox"/> Execution & Monitoring Phase <input type="checkbox"/> Consolidation Phase <input type="checkbox"/> Scaling Up and Transformation Phase <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)	
<b><u>Context/ Social issues addressed</u></b> <i>Please explain the problem you attempt to solve.</i>	<p>Loneliness is a subjective feeling that a person's social relationships are less than they would like to have. It negatively impacts the health and well-being of the person who suffers from loneliness. It is present in all ages but is more prevalent in older people.</p> <p>Although the Municipality of Madrid has several initiatives to help with this issue, one problem we face is reaching the people who need these initiatives. Traditional approaches</p>	

	include sending postal letters or assessing loneliness in people already using other services the Municipality provides. The use of AI to make automated phone calls to detect the risk of loneliness helps us identify persons who would be difficult to reach by other means. It's also more efficient in time and money than using a call center to make the calls.
<b>Objectives:</b> Please provide a <b>maximum of three</b> objectives in bullet points.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The practice sought to validate using a conversational AI to make phone calls to older people to detect loneliness.</li> </ul>
<b>Activities:</b> Please summarise the activities put in place to achieve the objectives (maximum 300 words).	<p>The Social Policies Area of the Municipality of Madrid conducted a pilot by making 5,000 phone calls to citizens older than 75 who live alone. The calls were made by an AI that understands natural spoken language and can thus hold a conversation with the person called. The AI followed a script with four questions designed to identify the risk of loneliness.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you usually feel alone?</li> <li>2. Do you have family or friends with whom you can share your concerns?</li> <li>3. Do you have someone to help you if you need it?</li> <li>4. Do you go out of home, or do you receive visits?</li> </ol> <p>The AI-powered tool asked structured questions to identify whether these people felt lonely, had family, friends or someone they could turn to, went out of the home, received visits or wished to have a follow-up from municipal services. More than 600 required follow-ups, so caseworkers from the social services department contacted them for assessment or referral.</p> <p>Municipal social services are now determining the type of support they can provide them, and more broadly, how to turn the pilot scheme into a more permanent programme, how to adapt protocols to make it happen, and where else they could use this technology.</p>
<b>Outcomes:</b> Please explain what the results were/are so far and how you evaluated this.	<p>Although being a pilot project, the municipality measured every result and every step of the calling process and evaluated the number of calls attended, number of calls completed, number of people whose answers showed them to be at risk of loneliness, number of people that asked for a follow-up and number of people with a high risk of loneliness. Also, age, gender, and the district where the participants live were measured to understand differences in the responses for these categories. Although the project was limited in reach and time, the results have been highly positive, both in the number of calls held and completed and the number of people who asked for a follow-up. In this regard, the municipality is preparing a more advanced project that will be integrated into the loneliness prevention strategy of the Social Policies Area.</p>
<b>Links to supporting documents:</b> e.g. website or report of the practice	<a href="https://diario.madrid.es/blog/notas-de-prensa/madrid-inicia-la-atencion-social-a-mas-de-600-mayores-en-soledad-no-deseada-detectados-mediante-inteligencia-artificial/">https://diario.madrid.es/blog/notas-de-prensa/madrid-inicia-la-atencion-social-a-mas-de-600-mayores-en-soledad-no-deseada-detectados-mediante-inteligencia-artificial/</a>
<b>Comments and tips i.e. for people willing to use your Practice</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Start with a pilot project to test your assumptions and be ready to expand what works and change what doesn't work.</li> <li>2. Measure everything you can to make informed decisions about what needs to be improved in new versions.</li> <li>3. Try to make the conversation as simple as possible with only a few questions (5 or less).</li> <li>4. Be honest about using AI and tell that first to the people you call.</li> </ol>

