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Special Session: Ageing Mobilities in Urban Environments: Patterns, Drivers, and Personal Well-Being in an Accelerating World

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This session is promoted by Grampcity (<http://www.grampcity.org>), a 3-year research project on the mobility of older adults, involving 4 Portuguese Universities.

The world's population is ageing. In Europe, the demographic old-age dependency ratio (65+/(15-64)) is expected to rise from 27.8 in 2013 to 32.1% in 2020, and to 46.1% in 2040. In an increasingly urbanised and globalised world, ageing in urban environments has become a significant scientific and political challenge. Globalisation has modified the context shaping population ageing by accelerating daily life, rescaling personal interests, connections and citizenship. The new cohorts of elders are (and will be) more mobile and car-dependent, and (will) have greater access to digital tools than their predecessors. Lastly, an increasing trend toward individualisation has engendered the replacement of former routines with new forms of personal engagement, widening the world of choices, needs and aspirations.

While age-friendly environments have gained new attention, leading to many initiatives with positive impacts on ageing, mobility issues and the inability to access resources and opportunities may threaten the success of policies intended to implement safe, healthy, liveable and inclusive communities. Facing cognitive and/or physical impairment at different rates and with varying speeds of decline, elders tend to suffer from mobility issues that hamper walking capacity and lead to driving cessation; thus threatening the ability to move and reducing the life spaces that are accessible to them. While the loss of mobility and autonomy are among the main predictors of depressive symptoms and social isolation, unresolved issues persist concerning how to prepare for and deal with them.

This is because of the persistence of several gaps in knowledge. The fairly normative and standardised nature of the active ageing concept tends to favour solutions frequently marred by ageism. Ageing individuals vary in age itself, as well as in their abilities, personal preferences, and meanings. Position, status, gender, ethnicity, the degree of cognitive impairment, physical health conditions, socio-demographics, and the existence of family support significantly influence their perceptions and experiences of mobility and accessibility to resources. The effects on perceived well-being and the sense of meaningful life arising from both outdoor living environment and mobility issues have not been fully understood and incorporated into policy actions. There is a need

for subjective and transactional approaches, particularly to balance more traditional methods using checklists of actions, as quality of life and wellbeing are fluid concepts that require the incorporation of the perspectives and experiences of older people.

In this session, we seek to explore current and emergent questions related to post-retirement mobilities in urban environments. We welcome empirical and theoretical contributions spanning the complex links between ageing, mobility, place, and contemporary urban trends. We will pay special attention to the diversity of elderly people, incorporating distributional issues and inequality effects arising from the potential accumulation of social burdens, transport disadvantage and several causes of impairment. We hope the discussions will provide a deeper understanding of elders' mobility, geographical accessibility and life space, through both metrics and personal experience accounts, and of how these dimensions affect older adults' sense of ageing well and their perception of meaningful life.

Please submit your abstracts (maximum 250 words) to <https://www.eugeo2019.eu/submissions> by January 14th 2019.

For more information, go to www.eugeo2019.eu or please contact Miguel Padeiro (jmnp@uc.pt).

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