

## **A multidisciplinary approach of ageing well in place: perspectives and experiences from six related key fields**

### **Gwendoline Schaff**

University of Liège, Faculty of Architecture, Boulevard de la Constitution 41, 4020 Liège, Belgium  
e-mail: [g.schaff@uliege.be](mailto:g.schaff@uliege.be)

### **Fabienne Courtejoie**

University of Liège, Faculty of Architecture, Boulevard de la Constitution 41, 4020 Liège, Belgium  
e-mail: [fcourtejoie@uliege.be](mailto:fcourtejoie@uliege.be)

### **Jan Vanrie**

Hasselt University, Faculty of Architecture and Arts, Campus Diepenbeek, Agoralaan Gebouw E, 3590  
Diepenbeek, Belgium  
e-mail: [jan.vanrie@uhasselt.be](mailto:jan.vanrie@uhasselt.be)

### **Catherine Elsen**

University of Liège, Faculty of Applied Sciences, Quartier Polytech 1, Allée de la Découverte 9,  
Bâtiment B52, 4000 Liège, Belgium  
e-mail: [catherine.elsen@uliege.be](mailto:catherine.elsen@uliege.be)

### **Ann Petermans**

Hasselt University, Faculty of Architecture and Arts, Campus Diepenbeek, Agoralaan Gebouw E, 3590  
Diepenbeek, Belgium  
e-mail: [ann.petermans@uhasselt.be](mailto:ann.petermans@uhasselt.be)

### **Abstract**

Demographic ageing is a considerable challenge of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In 2050, more than a third of the European population will be over 60 years old. This perspective drives our society to reconsider housing for older people, among other key challenges. In the French speaking part of Belgium (Wallonia), as in many other European areas, both the government and seniors themselves prefer to continue living at home and make use of home-support systems rather than move to institutional care, due to wellbeing and economic reasons. But how can we support people to be able to continue to live as long and as pleasantly as possible at home when they get older? It is indeed nowadays essential to explore future housing possibilities and thus to research the intertwined factors impacting the quality of the living environment for everyone.

To provide answers to this question, which touches upon multiple disciplines, we brought together Walloon experts from six key fields that are tightly related to the issue of “ageing well in place”: the architectural sphere, the political sphere, the contextual sphere, the psychological sphere, the sociological sphere and finally the sphere of health and care. Two focus groups were conducted with, each time, one stakeholder representing each sphere. In these meetings, the participants, from their specific perspectives, highlighted several essential points to take into account when reflecting on ageing well in place. They also pointed out some alternatives to homes and institutional care/housing, and shared their points-of-view on the issue of dividing the house into different parts for a collective dwelling perspective. Finally, the experts discussed different perspectives on ageing well in place that they deem essential to investigate now in architecture and architectural research.

Keywords: ageing well in place, older people, home, focus group, multidisciplinary