

Sense of home and well-being among older private renters

Finding happiness when renting as an older person in Flanders, Belgium

Researcher: Eva Severens - Faculty of Architecture and Arts
Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Ann Petermans - UHasselt - Faculty of Architecture and Arts
Co-supervisors: Prof. Dr. An-Sofie Smetcoren - VUB - Department of Educational Sciences,
Dr. Arch. Ruth Stevens - UHasselt - Faculty of Architecture and Arts

Problem statement

The sharp increases in our aging population, together with the growing wish of **ageing at home**, will significantly impact our housing sector, which at present is not adapted to this heterogeneous population, all the more looking at our **private rental housing market**.

The context wherein older private renters live will always need to address objective architectural parameters, but there is a growing request to also consider issues about people's **subjective wellbeing** (SWB).

It is clear that if policy and society aim to work on this matter, which would enable nations to impact economic costs of 'ill-being', more research is needed. The **redesign** of the built environment, also for older private renters, should be part of that strategy.

Step 1

Step 1 is to understand who the older Flemish private renters are by looking into specific **characteristics** such as personal details, housing typology, residential history, living environment... Based on this a typology will be made using the **Persona Technique**. In addition, a clear understanding of the working of the private rental housing market in Flanders is needed.

Step 2

In step 2 more information will be gathered on the impact of renting on the **homemaking** of the older Flemish private renters, using a combination of in-depth interviews, the diary method and photo-elicitation. Via the diary method a connection will be made between what the older renters are doing (homemaking), where they are doing it (architecture) and how they feel while doing it (SWB).

Step 3

Step 3 is to put together **a workshop** on how we can adapt the current rental housing stock in Flanders to fulfill the needs of older private renters within the current rental housing policy.

