Accessibility regulations: a tool for designing elderly-friendly cities?
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**Introduction**

The WHO predicts that between 2015 and 2050 the proportion of people aged 60 and over worldwide will almost double, rising from 12% to 22%.

**Background**

Although disability-free life expectancy is increasing, limitations in physical, cognitive and perceptual abilities often go hand in hand with ageing.

**Method**

A comparative analysis between the requirements deriving from French accessibility regulations and the main needs of older people highlights a number of points of convergence.

**Results**

Regulatory requirements such as the dimensional characteristics of navigation paths and the quality of surface coverings facilitate the movements of the elderly and make them safer. In addition, in the face of difficulties in standing and problems with balance, particular care is required to ensure that the amenity provides supports.

Requirements concerning the quality of lighting, consideration of visual and tactile contrasts and the marking of crossings on public spaces make it easier for older people to find where they are and move around. Similarly, accessibility requirements for signage are also fundamental.

**Conclusion**

Taking accessibility into account, whether in public spaces, buildings or transport, is a key factor in enabling and facilitating people’s mobility and therefore, more broadly, remaining independent and continuing to participate in social life.

However, it appears that further action is required to adapt the facilities and organisation in towns to ageing users. In particular, difficulty in walking long distances or standing for long periods of time makes seating essential for older people. Implementing additional measures as part of the design of intersections and crossings is also a particularly important point in order to reduce accidents among older pedestrians. Finally, the maintenance of outdoor spaces is also an important factor in terms of safety and travel comfort, as is the presence of sanitary facilities.

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