

# Mobility

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Interview with: Sibila Marques and Jan Alexandersson, University of Lisbon and DFKI

## Mobility affects the quality of life

Immobile persons are typically unhappy persons. **Mobility** keeps people alive and **fit**. That is why it is an important issue which is related to active and healthy ageing.

## Access to public transport

One key point is public **transport** which is not accessible to everybody. This is particularly true in some European countries, like Portugal for instance, where the lack of mobility is extreme. In those cases, it's very hard for older people to improve their mobility. They are **stuck in their home**, they are locked in, just because don't have means to get out of the building and they really can't even use the public transportation. Usually, older people don't go out because they have the feeling they will get lost while the place to be reached is just a couple of hundred meters from their homes.

Several measures have been taken to help people using **public transport**. Researchers have been working on intelligent devices that can help the elderly navigate, orientate, go to church, for instance.

## Mobility means also autonomy

Equipping older people with **navigation systems** means that they can go to church, find the way and remain autonomous. It is an aspect of their life of paramount importance.

There is also a trade-off, between technological devices and the **willingness to get helped**. Some people do not **accept technology** to help them, they do not even accept service personnel. They want to be autonomous by themselves. So, again, we have a plurality of different people who have to be considered when thinking about solutions for mobility.

## Urban planning and social inclusion

Another problem is that often **urban planning** is not done in the proper way. Urban planning is not adequate, because its design is not inclusive at all, it is thought neither for older people, nor for younger ones or blind people. There are some important initiatives that have been conducted in this field, like friendly cities, but there is still much to do.

A very important issue which is related to urban planning and social inclusion is the need to increase the **competence** among decision makers. They will have to decide on how to design and



develop the society of the future. Get specific competences on what social inclusion is, what the needs of the various age groups are and how to meet them within urban plans is of prior importance.

### **Work together for a more inclusive society**

Also people have to be well educated about social inclusion and mobility, which is an important issue.

SiforAGE is one of the tools that could help society to improve, not just for elderly people but for people of all ages. The hope is that SiforAGE and also subsequent projects will give a concrete contribution to the general awareness on active and healthy ageing and social inclusion. The information deficit is still high, it is really an issue in the current society.

It is also important that **older people** feel that they **should participate** more and, in case they participate, that they can demand more. And that, not only for older people but for people of all ages. It is really mandatory that we think about an **inclusive society for all**.