



EDITORIAL

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**Received**

Dec. 5, 2024

**Approved**

Dec. 5, 2024

# Dossier on Aging, Territory, and Environment

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**Como citar este artigo/How to cite this article:** Pérez-Duarte Fernandez, A.; Samora, P.R. Editorial. *Oculum Ensaíos*, v. 24, e2414884. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.24220/2318-0919v21e2024a14882en>.

This special issue was marked by an unexpectedly high number of article proposals, which can be interpreted as evidence of a social demand arising from Brazil's transition into an advanced aging stage. In this context, it is anticipated that, over the coming decades, diverse effects, phenomena, and pressures will emerge across various domains, including the economy, the pension system, healthcare and social care services, and even the urban habitat itself – encompassing both cities and their built environments. This scenario necessitates a critical rethinking of territorial and spatial models, along with their governance, within the framework of a new paradigm: the “city of care.” This dossier of *Oculum Ensaíos* seeks to contribute to this evolving field by fostering new gerontological knowledge.

Since the call for papers on this issue, the distinct and accelerated aging process in Latin America has been highlighted, revealing a unique profile compared to other regions. The urban and spatial studies conducted on this topic thus far predominantly reflect contexts and cultural realities distant from the specificities of Brazil. Consequently, it is essential to characterize, comprehend, and analyze an aging process imbued with the region's complexities. This includes addressing historical regional dimensions, such as spatial segregation and urban inequality, which remain deeply embedded in our cities and far from being resolved.

In this first set of papers published in the journal *Oculum Ensaíos*, we have identified several thematic affinities and suggest the reading through three key axes: “Municipal policies for aging”, “City and urban mobility” and “Architecture and environments”.

In the first axis, “Municipal policies for aging”, the article by [Nespolo, Bordin and Bernartt](#) presents 27 municipal plans in Brazil that officially include considerations on aging, identifying 1,026 actions in key areas such as “Community support and health services”, “Respect and inclusion” or “Social participation”. A second similar study by [Dumont et al.](#) analyzes quantitatively and qualitatively official documents from 31 municipalities in Minas Gerais, correlating them using Pearson's method. This study reveals, among other things, that municipalities with a greater number of regulations are the ones that carry out fewer actions and, most notably, highlight a concerning gap in physical and social accessibility. The third paper, by [Bonichenha](#),

analyzes the municipality of São Paulo, cross-referencing data on demographics, health, territory, and housing from official databases, interpreted through graphs. The study shows the growth of two age groups of older people between 1990 and 2022, presenting consistent concentric patterns of aging.

The second axis brings together two papers on “City and urban mobility”. The first, by *Matos et al.*, uses origin and destination surveys along with census data to detect an increase in motorized travel by older people in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte. However, this increase is seen more in private transport than in public transport, raising questions about the sustainability of urban mobility given the aging population’s travel habits. The second study, by *Schmitt et al.*, focuses on walking – a paradigm of healthy aging – and links it to the presence of urban green spaces that encourage daily walking. Based on nearly 5,000 questionnaires conducted between 2010 and 2019, the study shows that parks are key attractions that promote walking across all socioeconomic and educational groups.

Finally, the third axis addresses “Environments and Architecture”, starting with the work of *Nebot and Costa*, which explores collective housing through housing programs designed for the elderly, particularly independent individuals, such as the Vila DignIDADE project. It then investigates aging in place within the traditional single-family dwelling, diagnosing inadequacies based on a recent 2022 report, and concludes with a discussion of aspects to consider in an environment attached to the needs of the elderly. The subsequent article by *Tissot and Vergara* provides guidelines for adapting the interior of homes, focusing on physical safety aspects and identifying grab bars, non-slip floors, ramps, and smoke detectors as key elements while emphasizing the bathroom as an area requiring special attention. This axis concludes with the work of *Bestetti and Nascimento*, which explores institutionalized collective housing through a broad understanding of domestic space, addressing physical safety, privacy, and the psycho-emotional environment. The study is based on a qualitative exploration with 61 residents of Estruturas Residenciais para Pessoas Idosas (ERPI) in Lisbon, equivalent to Brazil’s ILPIs (Instituições de Longa Permanência). The study highlights subtle aspects of the environment, such as offering residents agency over their space and lives and facilitating the appropriation of spaces outside the bedroom and in communal areas to foster a greater sense of domesticity. Drawing on key principles of environmental gerontology, the paper addresses autonomy, well-being, belonging sense, and the complex social dynamics with caregivers. It concludes by identifying the beneficial effects of activities such as gardening, contact with animals, and interactions with children, closing with photographic documentation and observations that illustrate the discussed points.

We would like to express our gratitude to all who submitted papers for this call and wish our readers an enjoyable reading experience. We look forward to a second special issue on the same topic.