life quality
of senior citizens

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in relation to
mobility conditions

SIZE FINAL WORKSHOP - BRUSSELS 23-24 March

QUALITATIVE STUDY WITH 'EXPERTS':
Methodology and Results

Speaker:
   Hector MONTERDE i BORT, *Psychonomy Research Unit,*
   UNIVERSITAT DE VALÈNCIA, Valencia (Spain). SIZE Partner #9

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ESTIMATED ↓

WHO WERE CONSIDERED
'EXPERTS'
for the SIZE project
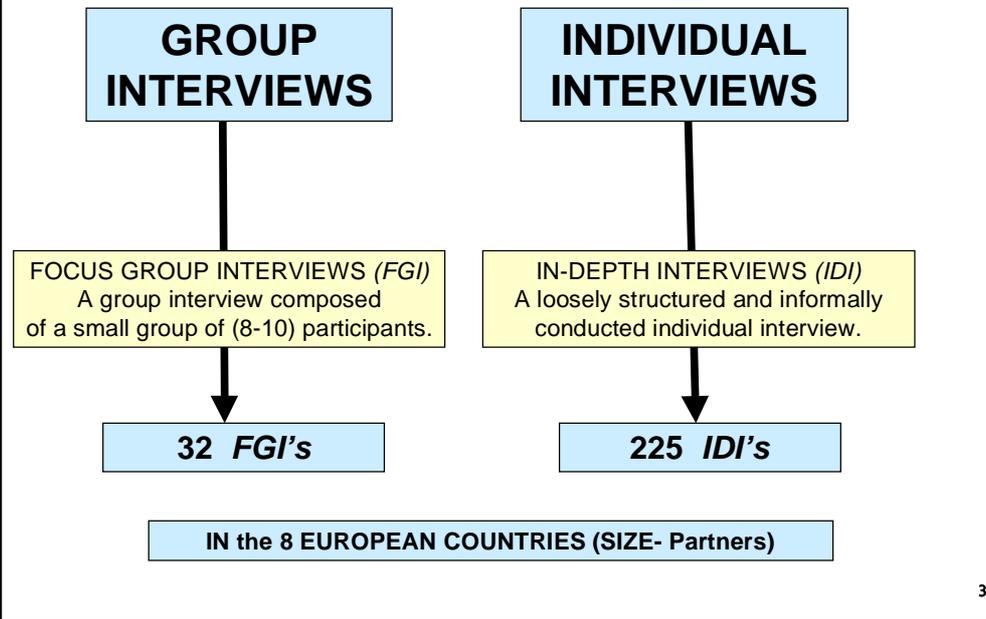
26% - POLITICIANS / DECISION MAKERS (regional or local authorities, local administrator,...),

41% - TECHNICIANS (engineer, town/city planner, transportation manager,...)

33% - ADVISORS (counsellor/consulter/advisor in legal/technical/scientific matters)

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GROUP INTERVIEWS	INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS *(FGI)*
A group interview composed
of a small group of (8-10) participants.

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS *(IDI)*
A loosely structured and informally
conducted individual interview.

32 *FGI's*

225 *IDI's*

IN the 8 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES (SIZE- Partners)

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common for all of the interviews

General: HOW DO older adults COPE with the present mobility situation?

Specifics:

B1)   WHAT ENHANCES the mobility of senior citizens?

B2)   WHAT LIMITS the mobility of senior citizens?

B3)   WHAT MEASURES ARE NECESSARY to improve the situation?

B4)   WHAT PREVENTS MEASURES that are considered useful from being implemented?.

more focused to experts (decision-makers, technicians, advisors)

The responses and comments to each question were written in a report (TRANSCRIPTION)
(in which everything said is written down)
1 interview (group or individual) = 1 transcription   (N of transcriptions = N of interviews)

The volume of gathered information was so large than it was necessary to develop a method for looking for concrete responses, quantifying their importance, selecting & classifying them. 4

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Method (1a): categorization (example)

Step 1: Searching for statements (ideas, sentences,... which represent concrete responses) **size**

TRANSCRIPTION OF GROUP INTERVIEW N.5
...   (fragment)
Question 3: What limits senior's mobility
...yes I also agree with that, but... it
is for me (one participant) a big problem
if I can't find toilets when I need to,
e.g. yesterday...,...for me too (declared
another participant).. ... .
... most of us lose our balance when walk
on the ramps for wheelchairs,...

TRANSCRIPTION OF INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW N.17
...   (fragment)
Question 2: What enhances senior's mobility
...to carry a cellular telephone gives us a
lot of confidence to go outside
home...,...in any moment you can establish
contact with your family,... ... .
  Question 3: What limits senior's mobility
...because the lack of toilets in public
places is an important barrier to getting
around...

257 interviews with 'experts' ➜ 5337 (primary) statements

(average: 21 statements per interview)

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Method (1b): categorization (example)

Step 1: Searching for statements (ideas, sentences,... which represent concrete responses) **size**

TRANSCRIPTION OF GROUP INTERVIEW N.5
...   (fragment)
Question 3: What limits senior's mobility
...yes I also agree with that, but... it
is for me (one participant) a big problem
if I can't find toilets when I need to,
e.g. yesterday...,...for me too (declared
another participant).. ... .
... most of us lose our balance when walk
on the ramps for wheelchairs,...

TRANSCRIPTION OF INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW N.17
...   (fragment)
Question 2: What enhances senior's mobility
...to carry a cellular telephone gives us a
lot of confidence to go outside
home.......in any moment you can establish
contact with your family,... ... .
  Question 3: What limits senior's mobility
...because the lack of toilets in public
places is an important barrier to getting
around...

Step 2: Grouping by Frequencies **(a)** those statements which represented the same idea were grouped into a unique 'basic statement', and **(b)** computed its frequency (number of interviews –group or individual- in which this idea was expressed).

Question 2: WHAT ENHANCES…		
Statements	*Times*	*Freq*
Can carry a cellular (ordinary) telephone			1

(fragments of tabulating sheets)

Question 3: WHAT LIMITS…		
Statements	*Times*	*Freq*
Lack of toilets in public spaces	||	2
Ramps (for wheelchairs or for access to garages) on footpaths (e.g.: may cause loss of balance)			1

Result: 979 different categories or 'basic-statements' from 'experts' (after grouping)

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Step 3: Selection of basic-statements

- In order to characterise the *"elderly European population"* we emphasized the things our senior citizens have in common, along the different countries, rather than the ways they are different (leaving the national differences for national context).

- Criterion: statements which had appeared in at least 3 countries (communality = 3).

> Result: **133 'common basic statements'** (after selection)
> contributed by the "experts"

Step 4: Classification of the basic statements

First by big categories, associated to each interview question. ——▶ which are presented in printed sheets that you will have

And after by
logical factors:
- Fears. ———————————————————▶ (psychological barriers)
- Life-quality indicators related to mobility. ——▶ (What enhances…?)
- Barriers to mobility. ———————————▶ (What limits…?)
- Solutions to mobility. ——————————▶ (What measures…?)
- Problems for implementation. ——————▶ (What prevents…?

base for developing the standardized questionnaires used in the quantitative phase

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DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SENIOR CITIZENS AND EXPERTS/DECISION-MAKERS

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One of the aims of the qualitative studies was the comparison between the opinions of senior citizens and the opinions of 'experts'. Data revealed…

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SOME BUT NOT VERY RELEVANT DIFFERENCES between seniors and experts

Problem categories mentioned by seniors and experts	Seniors	Experts
Social issues and politics		
General preference of youth	✔	✔
Not very good position of seniors in society	✔	✔
Low political priority of issues concerning seniors' mobility	✔	
Technical problems and measures		
Barriers	✔	✔
Traffic safety	✔	✔
Orientation	✔	✔
Town planning	✔	✔
Aesthetic aspects (e.g. dirt in public space)	✔	
Traffic safety issues		
Enforcement of traffic safety needed	✔	
More traffic calming measures needed		✔

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GENERAL ISSUES

- **The opinions of experts did not differ substantially from the opinions of senior citizens** .

- Experts tend to see the things from more perspectives and propose more systematic measures.

- Experts showed more knowledge about technical and legal aspects of the problems, but displayed an insufficient insight to the everyday routines for older people.

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ABOUT PERSONAL AIMS, MOTIVATIONS, STRATEGIES AND LIMITATIONS OF SENIORS

☞ Experts tend to perceive senior citizens as a homogeneous group of people with similar problems, interests and ways of living (without differentiating).

☞ Experts seem to be well informed about health limitations of older people and useful measures that help them in the environment. Seniors reported more about their psychological limitations (fears, stress and strains) and about the personal strategies they were using.

☞ Experts were less positive concerning the seniors' mobility situation than the own seniors.

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SOCIAL ISSUES

🖐 Both experts and seniors agreed that modern society shows a preference for the youth and that senior citizens are not accorded a significance social status (arriving to find a *manifest attitude of rejection* in young people, and furthermore some seniors consider themselves as *"useless"*).

🖐 This disadvantage seems to be due to a lack of social and political pressure from senior citizens (as collective) in contrast with the efforts of other groups as *wheelchair-users* and *the blind*. Besides of a lack of consciousness about the Elderly:

➔ Both experts and seniors agreed that senior citizens would need a strong lobby.

➔ Also experts and seniors agreed that situation of disadvantage is worsened by the poor financial conditions of the Elderly.

➔ People in decision-making positions should learn more about seniors citizens.

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TECHNICAL PROBLEMS AND MEASURES

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👁 Different character: experts tend to propose concrete measures and ways for their implementation / seniors tend to list detailed problems and to describe how they affect them (personal perspective).

👁 Experts tend to think in isolated measures for concrete problems whilst seniors have a more simple but wider perspective (at least when those measures affect to them):

➜ some implemented solutions for increasing the mobility of certain collectives (e.g., ramps in sidewalks or roundabouts in urban areas), block and/or threaten the mobility of senior citizens.

It has been revealed the importance and the necessity of debating the planned measures with the different collectives.

👁 Seniors were more sensitive to details and aesthetic aspects (like, dirt in public places, unfriendly design in vehicles), and gave more importance to the human and social factor (antipathy of bus drivers, abruptness in bus driving,…), than experts.

👁 While seniors put the accent on enforcement, experts put it on traffic calming measures.

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POLITICAL PROBLEMS AND MEASURES

💬 Responses seem to be influenced by the level of consciousness of interviewees.

💬 Experts didn't be aware of the low political priority of issues concerning senior's mobility, since their participation in the project.

💬 Evidence about the necessity of incrementing the *lobby* effect of senior citizens as a collective:
   🏯 Fomenting the association.
   🏯 Proposing the figure of an ***elder's defender*** *(elder's ombudsman)* within each level of administration / government (local, federal, national, EU,...)

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END

The level of development of the modern society demands a new change in our minds:

**NOW,
THE SENIOR CITIZENS ALSO MEAN FUTURE !!!**

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Thanks!

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Experts' participation

Country	Participants	%
Austria	28	12%
Germany	26	12%
Ireland	30	13%
Italy	22	10%
Sweden	20	9%
Poland	30	13%
Czech	38	17%
Spain	31	14%
Total	**225**	**100%**

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Method (1c): freqs by country (example)

GENERAL CATEGORIZATION(2ndlevel)

- **Common for all SIZE countries.**
- **From the national result table-sheets.**

Step 3b: **Reception of table-sheets** by the partner responsible (UV)

In order to check them and continue with a centralized process.

Step 3c: **Joint statements & transfer freqs. by country**

Using as input the table-sheets filled in by each country and following a process similar to that described, a general table-sheet like this was built :

Statements	Austria freq,	Germany freq,	Ireland freq,	Italy freq,	Sweden freq,	Poland freq,	Czech R. freq,	Spain freq,
Statement 1	5	2	7			2	1	3
Statement 2		1	4	1		5		2
Statement 3				1				1
... /...	1	1			5		3	

(all statements found)   *(all countries involved in the SIZE project)*

505 interviews processed → 2645 basic statements (1666 from 'Seniors' + 979 from 'Experts') 18

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