

## Overview: Organisation and structure of the EU-Project SIZE

Presentation for Final Workshop  
Brussels, 23rd - 24th of March 2006

**Ralf Risser**  
FACTUM, Vienna



life quality  
of senior citizens



in relation to  
mobility conditions



### EU-Objectives

Central goal of policies regarding elderly: Maintain mobility

An autonomous and independent life: Being mobile without being (too much) dependent on others

Mobility: An important stimulus to remain active

If outdoor activities vanishes → health effects, induces still greater isolation and passivity → **immobility**

→ Huge costs for society

## The goal: Health & Well Being

### WHO

"Health" implies possibility of leading a self-determined life

### SIZE

A self determined life is connected to being mobile in an agreeable and independent way and a precondition for good quality of life

## Mobility is a prerequisite for quality of life

### **Mobility is necessary**

- ... for maintaining autonomous living
- ... for social contacts & activities
- ... for keeping one's independence

## Targets Key Action 6.4

### Promote healthy ageing

Identify major factors governing the ageing process, as a basis for promoting healthy ageing, for delaying the onset of disability and for preventing frailty

## Targets Key Action 6.4

### Improve the management of age-related illnesses and cope better with disability

Improved methods to prevent, delay the onset, diagnose and treat major illnesses and disabling conditions of older people; more competitive and adapted technological products and services for coping with disability and for promoting the quality of life, autonomy and social integration

## Targets Key Action 6.4

### Improve the basis for the policy and planning of social welfare systems

Improved tools for analysing the implications of population ageing on the sustainability of social welfare systems; improved and economically sustainable modes of delivering health and social care to older people

### Overall target

*Extend the quality of life and enhance the functional independence of older people*

## SIZE objectives

### Objective 1:

To explain and to describe the present mobility situation of senior citizens from the target group's perspective

### Objective 2:

To motivate action from the side of the authorities and other relevant groups in society who are, or feel, responsible in this area

### Objective 3:

To provide guidance for the setting up and the implementation of policies towards "keeping the elderly mobile"

### → User-oriented approach

How senior citizens, or different groups of them, look at their own transport and mobility preconditions

Do responsible persons have correct assumptions?

## Activities to the advantage of senior citizens I

1. Allow independent lifestyle by maintaining or extending mobility
2. Support controlled change of types of mobility, e.g. from car to public transport, walking, cycling
3. Create awareness of functional limitations & enhance correct auto-assessment to be able to adapt behaviour to the circumstances
4. Trigger self-regulating processes & initiate compensation processes

## Activities to the advantage of senior citizens II

5. Lower the number of accidents
6. Decrease the severity of accidents
7. Raise satisfaction levels in general
8. Adapt environment in order to achieve these goals

## Hypotheses

\* if activities and measures are shaped according to the needs and interests of different groups of senior citizens,

\* and if information about existing options and possibilities is distributed accordingly

then transport and mobility preconditions will improve the life quality of senior citizens

## Necessary starting point

Better understanding of mobility problems of senior citizens under today's mobility preconditions

## Questions

- How do older citizens cope with the limitations of age?
- What is positive today, from their own point of view?  
What should be kept as it is?
- Which measures would improve their situation?
- Would these measures be feasible and realistic?
- What prevents measures that are considered useful from being implemented?

## The expected achievements of SIZE

Better understanding of needs, interests, deficits , as reflected by the mobility preconditions, focusing on determinants of healthy ageing and of well-being

Promotion of autonomy and social integration of older people

Promotion of self-reliance as central element of health (WHO) and of life quality

## Diversities

### SIZE ...

- takes account of regional diversities in cultural, life-style, demographic & economic characteristics (8 countries)
- takes account of the diversity of both the individual and the social context of different groups of older people
- takes account of possible discrepancies between the citizens' and the experts' view on the situation

## Gender Differences

Work reflects awareness of gender differences:

Today, women account for almost 2/3 of the population above 65, and their portion will increase, with increasing age



## Barriers to implementation

Solutions to certain problems are known, or at least so it seems, but they are sometimes not implemented

Barriers to their implementation may be related to opinions and attitudes of different groups of experts

They may also be related to conflicting interests of different societal groups

→ heuristics approach to make these aspects visible

## Needs to be considered

**Individual mobility:** To be able to do those outdoor errands one wants to in order to fulfil ones needs

**Safety and security:** To be safe **and** to feel safe

**Equity:** Not to be, or to feel as, a second class road user

**Comfort:** Comfort → accessibility and usability

**Aesthetics:** Especially relevant for unprotected road users

**Costs:** The feeling of paying too much must be avoided

**Social needs:** Contacts, communication, culture

## Accident risk of older persons

*"Can they still drive a car?"*

Accident involvement of older road users is relatively high

But: involvement probably not excessive when compared to other car driver groups with low yearly mileage

*As pedestrians they run greater risks*

The older people become, the more they depend on walking → **safety focus?**

Frailty = main problem: Hurt or killed more easily

## Reasons for reducing mobility

Older people suffer most from a perceived lack of safety  
→ many of them reduce their own mobility

Problems of comfort and affordance have similar effects

This leads to a disturbance of well-being → in the sense of the WHO a health deterioration → vicious circle

## Options for improving the situation

Basically two types of measures

- a) training to make the elderly more "system-friendly"*
- or
- b) adaptation of system to make it more "user-friendly"*

How the problems are seen by the elderly themselves?

The principles of user-friendliness, of participation, of acceptance and reactance call for such a perspective

## Arguments

- 1) The "advantage-for-all" perspective: Consider needs of elderly pedestrians → advantage for all non-motorised road users
- 2) The "value-per-se"-perspective: To provide good life quality for senior citizens is a value per se
- 3) The economic perspective: To keep senior citizens mobile is cost effective, it reduces costs of social services, etc.
- 4) The marketing perspective: Focus on the senior citizens' perceived life quality will improve communication with this group
- 5) The safety perspective: Perceived lack of safety reduces mobility and self-reliance (and ends up with huge costs for the society)

## Measures and perceived life-quality

Improvements → Improvements of the QoL?	Correlation with QoL	
Comfort for pedestrians	0,50	high
Usability for elderly and disabled person	0,48	high
Feeling safe	0,47	high
Social interaction with other persons	0,47	high
Traffic safety	0,45	high
Children`s safety	0,44	high
Smooth traffic flow for pedestrians	0,44	high
Beauty and aesthetics of the urban space	0,43	high
Dwelling in this area is more enjoyable than before	0,42	high
Safety of elderly and disabled person	0,40	high
Equity between road users	0,38	moderate
Environmental quality (air, noise)	0,38	moderate
Smooth traffic flow for car drivers	0,15	no
Comfort for car drivers	0,02	no

## Types of measures

Offer support for adaptation of seniors: Advice, training, rehabilitation, communication through mass media

Help adapt preconditions: Legal measures, measures that facilitate communication between road users, infrastructure measures including public transport, de-dynamise road traffic

Adapt vehicles: Ergonomic adaptation of vehicles (cars, bicycles, public transport), electronic assistance and assets

## New "products"

### Better communication →

"Product shaping" of vehicles and infrastructure according to needs: better ergonomics, IT-equipment, assets, etc

Appropriate communication measures (information, instruction, persuasion, hints)

Incentives that will be accepted by the target groups

## How to understand needs?

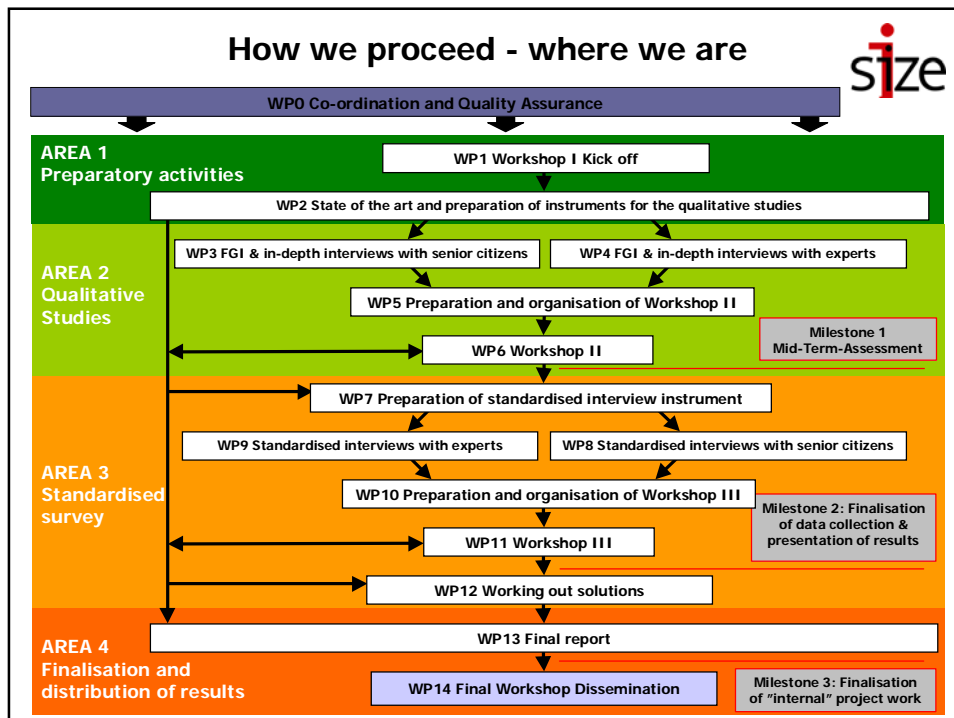
Analyses of senior citizens' needs have to be carried out so that experts arrive at correct conclusions and, thus, solutions

Relevant needs become only transparent when appropriate methods are used: A combination of qualitative, quantitative and heuristic methods seems appropriate to us

## Innovation by SIZE

Communication with target groups → **methodology improved** by elaborated collection/processing of verbal data

- 1) "Understand motives" → **qualitative procedures** (interviews & focus group interviews)
- 2) Measure distribution of certain answer types in the population → **quantitative procedures** (surveys)
- 3) Interpret meanings of results and draw conclusions for practice → **heuristic procedures** (workshops)



## Description of the consortium

Psychologists, sociologists, architects and civil engineers, experts in the field of traffic and transport (traffic safety, mobility, sustainability)

Gerontologists and Geronto-psychologists

Civil engineers specialised in urban research, and architects: Sustainable urban development, road design, pedestrian mobility, vulnerable road users

## European dimension

Partners from the Centre, East, North, South and West of Europe

Supported by **5 national senior citizens associations**, involved in dissemination activities: Their channels distribute the materials produced by SIZE and use them for lobbying activities

## Expected recommendations for practical solutions:

- Individual training and education
- Support of communication procedures
- Infrastructure improvements
- Vehicle improvements
- Structural and legal improvements

## After the lifetime of the project

We aim at achieving that the SIZE methodology -  
**qualitative & quantitative & heuristic procedures**  
- continues to be applied





DANKE IHNEN  
TACK SÅ MYCKET  
MI RINGRAZIO  
MUCHAS GRACIAS  
DZIĘKUJĘ  
THANK YOU VERY MUCH  
DEKUJI  
GO RAIBH MÍLE MAITH AGAT