

# ROSEnet – Reducing Old-Age Social Exclusion: Collaborations in Research and Policy

## Summary

Reducing the number of people at risk of social exclusion is a headline target of the Europe 2020 strategy. Population ageing and low economic growth pose major challenges to meeting this target, emphasizing the necessity to tackle old-age exclusion. While risks of exclusion of older people are widening and deepening, damaging gaps in understanding old-age exclusion exist across Europe. Existing knowledge is poorly developed, lacks synthesis and is spread across highly disparate disciplines. This Action aims to overcome fragmentation and critical gaps in conceptual innovation on old-age exclusion across the life course, in order to address the research-policy disconnect and tackle social exclusion amongst older people in Europe. The action will engage with researchers and policy stakeholders to develop shared understandings and to direct the development of new policy and practice interventions, which can be practically and effectively implemented, for reducing exclusion in diverse European ageing societies. The Action will establish an innovative participatory, interdisciplinary and cross-European collaboration that will: (1) synthesize existing knowledge; (2) critically investigate the construction of life-course old-age exclusion (3) assess the implications of old-age exclusion across the life course; (4) Develop new conceptual frameworks on old-age exclusion; and (5) identify innovative, and implementable, policy and practice for reducing old-age exclusion. The Action focuses on economic, social, service, civic rights, and community/spatial exclusion. With deliverables that include conferences, workshop-policy events, briefing papers, early-career investigator development, and a repository of innovative practice and policy, the Action will forge much-needed new links between research and policy, enhancing evidence-based and effective innovation.

## Perinence and Justification

Scientific understanding of old-age exclusion as a multidimensional phenomenon is severely limited. There is a damaging lack of conceptual innovation on old-age exclusion. Only a handful of conceptual frameworks specifically consider exclusion in later life and often neglect theoretical explanations of why exclusion occurs in older age. Work on individual domains of exclusion (i.e. economic, social, service, civic rights, and community domains) is also underdeveloped, giving rise to significant knowledge gaps on these different areas of life. Research that has been completed lacks a critical perspective, and fails to explore interconnections between process and outcomes across the different forms of exclusion. There is as a result an underdeveloped scientific discourse on multi-dimensional old-age exclusion.

Old-age exclusion is a direct and significant barrier to European Union (EU) goals, and World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations (UN) recommendations on active and healthy ageing (EIP-AHA 2011; UN 2002; WHO, 2002). It undermines citizens' ability to lead healthy, active and independent lives as they age, and to contribute in meaningful ways to European societies. Old-age exclusion has negative outcomes for European societies, affecting individuals, families, welfare and care system sustainability, and ultimately socio-economic stability. Old-age exclusion is, therefore, a major challenge for Europe today and into the future.

There is an absence of a comprehensive conceptual framework to guide policy development on age-related disadvantage. Existing policy lacks relevance, exhibits low political prioritization and fails to address the importance of jurisdictional contexts and the role of individual diversity and the lived experience. Critically, current policy debates also lack awareness of the intersection between demographic ageing and social exclusion. Reducing the number of people at risk of exclusion by 20 million is a Europe 2020 strategy headline target (EC 2010). Extended lifespans, stagnating populations, and limited economic growth render this target difficult to achieve. This is particularly because older people alone will account for 17 million additional citizens, and 104 million people overall (20%), by 2020 in Europe (Eurostat 2012).

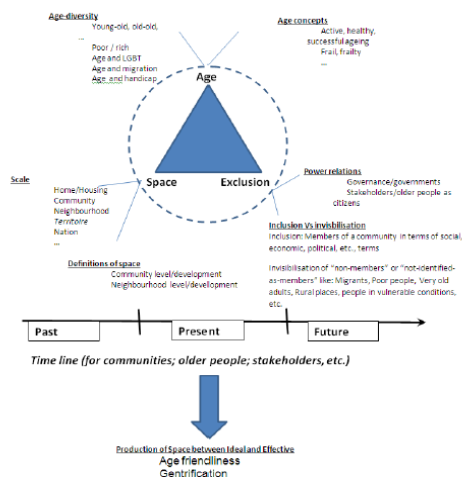


Figure 1. Interactions between age, space and exclusion.

## Objectives

ROSEnet aims to overcome fragmentation and critical gaps in conceptual innovation on old-age exclusion across the life course, in order to address the research-policy disconnect and tackle social exclusion amongst older people in Europe. The

## Project Reference

COST Action CA15122

## Leading Institution

ICSG – Irish Centre for Social Gerontology, University of Galway (Ireland)

## Partners

35 European countries represented in the Management Committee, plus 6 partner countries

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## CERIS Research Team

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## Funding

COST – European Cooperation in Science and Technology

## Period

2016-2020

## Total

-

## CERIS

15 000€

## Project Website

[rosenetcost.com](http://rosenetcost.com)

action will engage researchers and policy stakeholders in creating shared understandings and directing the development of new policy and practice interventions that can be practically and effectively implemented, to reduce exclusion in diverse European ageing societies.

#### Research Coordination Objectives

- Synthesize existing knowledge from regional, disciplinary and sectoral disparate dialogues, forming a coherent scientific discourse on old-age exclusion.
- Critically investigate the construction of life-course old-age exclusion across economic, social, service, civic rights, and community/spatial domains.
- Assess the implications of old-age exclusion across the life course within economic, social, service, civic rights, and community/spatial domains.
- Develop new conceptual and theoretical frameworks that can be practically applied in understanding and combating the exclusion of older people in European societies.
- Identify innovative, and implementable, policy and practice for reducing old-age exclusion amongst different groups of older

people and in different jurisdictional and regional contexts.

#### Capacity-building Objectives

- Establish an innovative, interdisciplinary and participatory European collaboration, involving researchers, policy stakeholders and older people, to address the disconnection between research and policy on multi-dimensional old-age exclusion.
- Build cross-European interdisciplinary research capacity, enhancing early-career investigator development, and actively ensuring a gender balance across investigators to nurture and sustain the study of old-age exclusion and to create competitive advantage.
- Institute collaborative research relationships with COST neighbouring nations and international countries to strengthen Europe's leadership role and establish the European Research Area as a hub of interdisciplinary excellence in innovation for the study of ageing and disadvantage.
- Drive a collaborative cross-European program that cements the participation and leadership of COST Inclusiveness Target Countries in the study of old-age exclusion.