

TRANSITION FROM WORKING LIFE TO RETIREMENT: WHAT ARE THE MOBILITY NEEDS OF RETIREES IN SWEDEN AND HOW DO THEY MAINTAIN SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT MODES IN THEIR EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES

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Abstract

§ Purpose: The transition from working life to retirement is arguably one of the most important, identity-defining transitions that occur in older persons' lives and has significant consequences for patterns of everyday mobility in numerous ways. When an older person stops commuting to a workplace on a daily basis, the new life situation has implications for time use, the structuring of daily life, patterns of sociality and often patterns and modes of travel. The purpose of the study is to explore in-depth 1) the everyday practices of older persons in Sweden in adapting their mobility in connection with the transition from working life to retirement, 2) their perspectives, resources and experiences of sustainable transport modes such as walking or bicycling and 3) the implications of these perspectives for future policy to stimulate and support a health promoting mobility among older persons'.

§ Methodology: The study will explore the mobility of heterogeneous groups of older persons (e.g. older women/older men, rural/urban older persons) who have retired within the last 6-12 months. The study will take a qualitative approach using travel diaries followed by in-depth interviews. The empirical focus of the project will be their *narratives* concerning the implications of this transition for their everyday mobility (e.g. travel patterns, type of errands and activities, choice of transport modes, and constraints and opportunities to walk or bicycle as transportation modes). As a conceptual framework, time geography, will be used. Time geography gives the

opportunity to observe sequences of activities of individuals rather than aggregated flows within transport systems. Rather than predicting travel behavior, the focus of time geography is on spatial and temporal constraints which influence the individual's freedom of action.

§ Expected results: This study can be expected to generate new insights about the linkages between retirement and the shaping of older persons' everyday mobility by sustainable transportation modes such as walking or bicycling, and the ways in which older persons experience these linkages as expressed in their own narratives.

§ Conclusion: Physical activity is one of the major public health issues of our time. Health and transportation researchers have been investigating physical activity from different perspectives. Health research has focused on people's lifestyle and behavioral factors while transportation researches' main focus has been on injuries and deaths as well as air pollution in the transport area. By using these different perspectives as a transdisciplinary approach, a better understanding of what factors that affect a sustainable, health promoting behavior and the use of non-motorized transport can be made. (416 words).

§ Topic code: D