

# OLDER PEOPLE AND COMMON SPACES IN COLLECTIVE HOUSING IN CHILE:

## CHALLENGES FOR REGULATORY AND INDICATIVE INSTRUMENTS <sup>1</sup>

PERSONAS MAYORES Y ESPACIOS COMUNES DE VIVIENDA COLECTIVA EN CHILE:  
DESAFÍOS PARA LOS INSTRUMENTOS NORMATIVOS E INDICATIVOS

MARIE GERALDINE HERRMANN-LUNECKE <sup>2</sup>  
CRISTHIAN FIGUEROA-MARTÍNEZ <sup>3</sup>  
ROXANNA RÍOS-PETERS <sup>4</sup>  
ANTONIO ZUMELZU <sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Doctor in Urban Planning  
Associate Professor, Department of Urbanism  
University of Chile, Santiago, Chile.  
<http://orcid.org/0000-0003-0186-441X>  
[mherrmann@uchile.cl](mailto:mherrmann@uchile.cl)

<sup>3</sup> Doctor in Transportation Studies  
Assistant Professor, Department of Planning and Land Management, Faculty of Construction Sciences and Land Management -  
Researcher at the Center for Sustainable Urban Development (CEDEUS).  
Metropolitan Technological University, Santiago, Chile.  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6399-8360>  
[cfigueroa@utem.cl](mailto:cfigueroa@utem.cl)

<sup>4</sup> Master in Urban Development  
Head of Territorial Linkage Area, Policy and Practice Unit - Center for Sustainable Urban Development (CEDEUS)  
Pontifical Catholic University of Chile, Santiago, Chile.  
<https://orcid.org/0009-0006-3626-3509>  
[rrios1@uc.cl](mailto:rrios1@uc.cl)

<sup>5</sup> Doctor in Urban Planning  
Associate Professor Institute of Architecture and Urbanism  
Austral University of Chile, Valdivia, Chile.  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0257-1766>  
[antonio.zumelzu@uach.cl](mailto:antonio.zumelzu@uach.cl)

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La población mundial está envejeciendo rápidamente, y se prevé que en Chile para el año 2050 una de cada tres personas tendrá 60 años o más. En este contexto, un desafío clave del diseño urbano y arquitectónico es promover entornos construidos que sean más amigables para la vejez. En general, las investigaciones sobre entornos construidos y vejez han tendido a enfocarse en el espacio público barrial y en la accesibilidad de hogares y residencias de adultos mayores, prestándose poca atención a los espacios comunes de las viviendas colectivas, que pueden ser lugares importantes para las actividades cotidianas de personas mayores. En este marco, la presente investigación tiene como objetivo analizar en qué medida los instrumentos normativos e indicativos en Chile consideran a las personas mayores en el diseño de los espacios comunes de la vivienda colectiva. Con este fin, se revisaron 3 tratados y convenciones, 10 instrumentos normativos y 7 instrumentos indicativos, a partir del software de análisis cualitativo atlas.ti. Los resultados muestran que en los instrumentos normativos los espacios comunes no están concebidos para funciones que vayan más allá de la circulación de personas. Son espacios que deben estar libres de obstáculos y cuyos atributos no acogen prácticas cotidianas que implican permanencia e interacción social. El análisis también evidencia que las personas mayores se encuentran ausentes en los instrumentos normativos. Los instrumentos indicativos, por el contrario, las reconocen y buscan resguardar sus derechos y su diversidad. Los hallazgos finalmente indican que se requieren esfuerzos para que los requerimientos de las personas mayores, que ya se han ido incorporando en los instrumentos indicativos, sean también integrados en el cuerpo de instrumentos normativos. Esto para promover un envejecimiento activo y permitirles a las personas mayores permanecer en sus viviendas y sus barrios.

**Palabras clave:** personas mayores, espacios comunes, vivienda amigable, accesibilidad

The world's population is aging rapidly, and in Chile, it is foreseen that one in three people will be 60 or over in 2050. In this context, a key challenge of urban and architectural design is promoting built environments that are friendly for old age. In general, research on built environments and old age has tended to focus on neighborhood public spaces and the accessibility of homes and residences for older adults, paying little attention to the common spaces of collective housing, which can be important places for the daily activities of older people. In this framework, this research aims to analyze the extent to which regulatory and indicative instruments in Chile consider older people in the design of collective housing common spaces. 3 treaties and conventions, 10 regulatory instruments, and 7 indicative instruments were reviewed for this, using the qualitative analysis software atlas.ti. The results show that common spaces are not conceived for purposes beyond people's circulation in the regulatory instruments. These are spaces that must be obstacle-free and whose features do not involve daily practices that entail social interaction or remaining in these. The analysis also shows that older people are absent from regulatory instruments. On the other hand, indicative instruments recognize and look to safeguard their rights and diversity. Finally, the findings indicate that efforts are needed so that the requirements of older people, which have been included in indicative instruments, are also integrated into regulatory instruments. This would promote active aging and allow older people to remain in their homes and neighborhoods.

**Keywords:** older people, common spaces, friendly housing, accessibility

## I. INTRODUCTION

A key challenge of urban design is to reconfigure and adapt our built environment to the needs of a rapidly aging population. How we design the built environments - from neighborhoods to housing - is fundamental to promoting “healthy aging,” determining the levels of autonomy and dignity of people in old age (Garin et al., 2014). However, the vast majority of older people live in neighborhoods and homes whose designs and layouts do not consider their needs. This includes the collective housing complexes where older people currently live in Chile.

Collective housing complexes comprise a series of housing units linked by common spaces. These are for the entire community and can include hallways, staircases, elevators, common rooms, yards, and gardens, among others. They are particularly relevant for older people who tend to spend more time in their homes and residential surroundings (Yuen, 2019). In fact, recent evidence suggests that these are essential for the socio-spatial practices of older people (Henriquez, 2020; Mercader-Moyano *et al.*, 2020) and in crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic that affected the world between 2021 and 2022 (Herrmann-Lunecke *et al.*, 2022).

This research aims to analyze the extent to which Chile’s regulatory and indicative instruments consider older people in the design of the common spaces of collective housing. To this end, three treaties and conventions ratified by Chile, ten regulatory instruments, and seven indicative instruments were reviewed using the qualitative analysis software *Atlas.ti*.

This article is divided into four parts. The following section provides a brief theoretical framework on older people and common spaces of collective housing. Subsequently, the methodology, results, and discussion of the revision of the regulatory and indicative instruments that regulate the common spaces of collective housing in Chile are detailed. Finally, the conclusions and reflections on the challenges that regulatory and indicative instruments in Chile should address to promote more friendly residential environments for older people are presented.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### Older people and human rights

The Organization of American States (OAS, 2015) defines older people as those who are 60 or older. However, older people are a very diverse group. They are mostly independent and have different capacities and needs,

which vary according to their backgrounds, social networks, available resources, and the opportunities found in their regions, among other things (World Health Organization [WHO], 2015).

In Chile, older people are expected to comprise about a third of the population in thirty years. In this context, Chile has signed a series of agreements that ensure the rights, dignity, and well-being of older people (United Nations [UN], 2002; Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean [ECLAC], 2022). However, older people in Chile suffer from several vulnerabilities (Adams, 2012; Abusleme & Caballero, 2014). According to the Undersecretary of Social Evaluation (2020), almost a quarter of older people (22%) in Chile currently suffer from multidimensional poverty. Similarly, the National Survey of Quality of Life in Old Age (PUC and Caja Los Andes, 2022) indicates that a significant group of older people in Chile have unsatisfied financial (41%), health (36%), and recreational (38%) needs.

### Older people, the built environment, and common spaces of collective housing

The daily practices of older people occur in interaction with their built environment. However, homes and residential environments have not been designed to consider the needs and capabilities of people in old age. The same person’s body is different when they are a child, adult, or elderly since their “dimensions and abilities vary at different stages, and this means people relate to their residential habitat differently in different periods of life” (Gaete-Reyes, 2017 p. 281). Many older people, especially at an advanced age, suffer from some mobility limitation or other physical, cognitive, or mental problems. For example, the over-65s suffer the most falls with fatal consequences, and they are susceptible to changes in level and pavements in poor condition. In the context of an aging population, environments should be created that adapt more to older people, accommodate their functional capacity in old age, and promote their daily practices, social participation, health, and safety (WHO, 2019). Thus, in the last two decades, numerous initiatives have been formulated to promote “active” and “healthy” aging in inclusive neighborhoods and housing that respond to the needs of older people (e.g., *WHO Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities*).

In general, research on the built environment and old age tends to focus on the accessibility of homes (Wahl *et al.*, 2009; Gaete-Reyes, 2017) and neighborhood public spaces, where how the built environment affects the mobility of older people, especially walking, is analyzed (Graham *et al.*, 2018; Vecchio *et al.*, 2020; Herrmann-Lunecke *et al.*, 2022). Similarly, the relevance of the street and the public space for the care and participation of older people in society has been highlighted (Osorio-Parraguez *et al.*, 2019; Anigstein *et al.*, 2021). However, studies on older people and common spaces in collective housing are scarce.

Recent research on common spaces in collective housing highlights their importance for community encounters (Chiarito, 2014; Franco, 2017; Franco, 2022). They are considered spaces of transition between the public and the private sphere (Schlack, 2007), intermediate spaces capable of hosting social activities (Montoro, 2012), and spaces that relate the scale of the intimate with the communal and the urban in different transition gradients (Franco, 2017). The common spaces of collective housing allow individual and/or community activities and have the potential to promote relationships and socialization among their inhabitants.

Common spaces are places that are key to older people’s health, sociability, and integration (Henriquez, 2020). They can host various daily practices, such as physical activity (walking, physical conditioning), socialization (conversation with neighbors), rest (sitting), and care (play with children). However, existing research

has tended to focus on common spaces of places dedicated exclusively to older people, such as senior residences (Andersson *et al.*, 2014; Jansson, 2020). The limited evidence on collective housing complexes suggests that common spaces tend not to accommodate the needs of older people and reduce the opportunities to age in place (Canham *et al.*, 2018; Mercader-Moyano *et al.*, 2020; Walsh *et al.*, 2017).

### III. METHODOLOGY

This research aims to analyze to what extent Chile’s regulatory and indicative instruments consider older people in the design of common collective housing spaces. For this, international commitments (treaties), regulatory instruments (laws, decrees, and regulations), and Chilean indicative instruments (manuals)

Classification	Instrument (Author)	Year (Update)
International treaties and commitments	Political Declaration and Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (UN)	2002
	Decree 162. Passes the Inter-American Convention on the Protection of the Human Rights of Older Persons (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)	2017
	Declaration of Santiago. Fifth Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).	2022
Regulatory instruments	Decree 458. General Law of Urban Planning and Constructions (Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning)	1976 (2023)
	Decree 50, amending Decree 47. General Ordinance of Urban Planning and Constructions (Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning)	1992 (2023)
	Law 19828- Creates the National Service for Older People (Ministry General Secretariat of the Presidency)	2002
	National Policy for Older People (National Service for Older People)	2004
	Law 20.422. Equal Opportunities and Social Inclusion of People with Disabilities (Ministry of Planning)	2010
	Regulations of the Housing Solidarity Fund (Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning)	2012 (2020)
	National Urban Development Policy (Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning)	2014
	Exempt Resolution 1804. Approves technical guidelines, technical itemized annex on minimum conditions, and architectural program for the development of condominium projects of sheltered housing, or CVT, for older people (Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning)	2021
	Law 21.442 New Property Co-Ownership Law (Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning)	2022
Exempt Resolution 721. Type of Co-Ownership Regulation (Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning)	2023	
Indicative instruments	Design guide of residential spaces for older people (Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning)	2006
	Universal Accessibility Manual (Accessible City Corporation)	2010
	Universal Design in Public Space (Metropolitan Region Housing and Urban Planning Service)	2013
	Older People Fall Prevention Manual (Ministry of Health)	2015
	Guide to accessible solutions for public spaces and housing (Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning)	2018
	Supervised Housing Condominium Program (SENAMA)	2019
	Friendly Communes Program Technical Orientation Guide (SENAMA)	2021

Table 1. Documents analyzed and updated for 2024. Source: Preparation by the authors.

Categories	Sub-categories	Codes (examples)
1. Older people (396) [according to treaties, regulatory instruments, and indicative instruments]	1.1. Denominations (287)	Older people (118), seniors (105), older adults (53), among others
	1.2. Capabilities and Functionality (73)	independence (32), autonomy (23), and self-validity (4), among others
	1.3. Rights (36)	human rights (33), right to the city (2), right to the territory (1)
2. Common spaces in collective housing (343) [according to regulatory instruments]	2.1. Denominations (70)	common goods or common domain (52), common spaces (3), public use spaces (1), common use premises (1), public use premises (3), and public service premises (4), among others
	2.2. Functions (12)	circulation (3), leisure (3), recreation (3), services (3)
	2.3. General characteristics (27)	accessible (9), safe (4), adapted (3), comfortable (2), usable (2), understandable (2), among others
	2.4. Uses (22)	green areas (8), equipment (6), roads (1), toilets (5), non-mechanized playgrounds with universal access (2)
	2.5. Physical-spatial elements (117)	accessible route (20), ramps (23), elevators (15), restrooms (6), and parking lots for people with disabilities (8), among others
	2.6. Characterization of residents (95)	people with disabilities (72), people with reduced mobility (10), children (1), women (1), among others
3. Senior-friendly common spaces in collective housing (307) [according to indicative instruments]	3.1. Denominations (47)	immediate environment (15), collective spaces (9), intermediate spaces (8), common spaces (4), among others
	3.2. Functions (5)	being (2), meeting (2), socializing (1)
	3.3. General characteristics (61)	suitable/appropriate (20), universally accessible (17), comprehensible (6), among others
	3.4. Uses (28)	social venues (4), multipurpose rooms (4), green areas (3), among others
	3.5. Physical-spatial elements (69)	accessible route (14), circulations (15), ramps (10), handrails or railing (7), among others
	3.6. Characterization of residents (97)	older people (49), older adults (36), older women (3), people with disabilities (2), among others
4. Daily practices of older people in common spaces of collective housing (28) [according to regulatory instruments and indicative instruments]	4.1. Permitted or restricted practices (7) [according to regulatory instruments]	bothersome noises (1), modifying or damaging common property (1), consumption and/or sale of alcohol and/or drugs (1), depositing garbage in unauthorized places (1), preventing free passage, access, or use (1), pet ownership (2)
	4.2. Practices of older people to be promoted (11) [according to indicative instruments]	cohabitation (5), socialization activities (2), physical activity (1), community activities (1), among others

**Table 2.** Codes and categories identified for 2024. Number of mentions in parentheses. Source: preparation by the authors.

that define public policies to contribute to the well-being of older people and regulate - or propose design guidelines for - common spaces in collective housing, were identified (Table 1).

The documents were then imported into the qualitative data analysis software *atlas.ti* (version 8.0) and fragments

were identified that contained references to: i) older people, ii) common spaces of collective housing, iii) senior-friendly common spaces in collective housing, and iv) daily practices of older people in common spaces of collective housing. Then, the fragments were assigned codes, which were grouped into categories that formed a “tree-like” structure. As a result of this

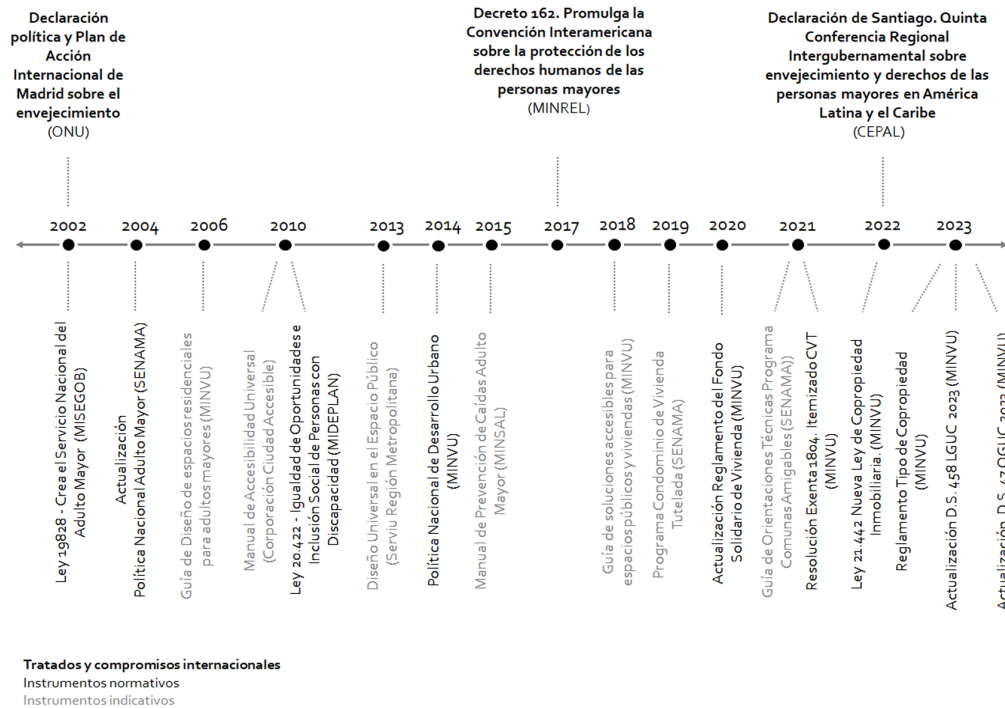


Figure 1. Timeline of analyzed documents, last update 2024. Source: Preparation by the authors.

process, 151 codes were identified, which were grouped into 4 categories and 17 subcategories (Table 2).

The analysis, similar to that employed in other works (Herrmann-Lunecke *et al.*, 2021), followed a discovery-oriented approach (Fossey *et al.*, 2002) and was refined in meetings between research team members. Finally, it is important to note that, due to the nature of the work, underlying beliefs or nuances that may be inferred from uncoded fragments could have been left out of the analysis.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Definitions of older people

The different documents analyzed name older people in multiple ways, the most frequent being "older people" (118 mentions), "seniors" (105 mentions), and "older adults" (53 mentions). The first two meanings are mainly found in international treaties and conventions signed by Chile that address population aging as a matter of public policy (e.g., Inter-American Convention on the Rights of Older Persons, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2017; Santiago Charter, ECLAC, 2022). These designations are also found in national indicative documents that are commonly cited and conform to the

guidelines provided by treaties and conventions. The term "older adults," on the other hand, is used in documents that the National Service for Older Adults (SENAMA) has prepared, both regulatory (MISEGPRES, 2002) and indicative (SENAMA, 2021). The documents analyzed in this research show a transition from a language that is still "ageist" to one that recognizes older people as subjects of law. At the same time, they show how the treaties and conventions signed by Chile have permeated the regulatory instruments and have shaped others that, even of an indicative nature, clearly recognize the needs of older people (Figure 1).

### Definitions and characteristics of the common spaces of collective housing according to Chilean regulations

In Chile, no binding or indicative documents regulate in detail the physical characteristics and uses of the common spaces of collective housing. Common spaces are broadly regulated by the General Law of Urbanism and Constructions (MINVU, 1976), the General Ordinance of Urbanism and Constructions (MINVU, 1992), which regulates constructions, and the New Property Co-Ownership Law (MINVU, 2022) regulates the cohabitation of a group of people who live in a community and share ownership over a property (co-ownership). The latter categorizes common spaces as "common goods" or "common domain goods" (52 mentions) and defines as common goods a variety of elements that include:



**Figure 2.** Elements defined as “common domain goods” according to the regulations drawn up in 2023. Source: Preparation by the authors.

The land on which the buildings, circulations, or green areas are located; the horizontal and vertical structural constructive elements, such as walls, facades, slabs, and roofs; the networks and facilities of basic services; the goods destined to service, leisure, and recreation; or the goods needed for the performance of roles by the contracted personnel; among others [...]. (MINVU, 2022, p. 2)

Meanwhile, the General Ordinance of Urban Planning and Constructions (MINVU, 1992) generally refers to common spaces. It does so in multiple ways, highlighting the following three meanings: spaces (common or public use), areas or zones (common and external use susceptible of being occupied by people), and enclosures (public use, common use, or public attention). This shows that in Chile’s regulatory instruments, there is no clear definition of the common spaces that, as Figure 2 shows, are of a diverse nature and use.

The regulations also assign generic functions to common spaces, which include circulation, leisure, recreation, and services. Regarding their characteristics, the regulatory documents indicate that common spaces should be accessible, safe, adapted, comfortable, usable, and understandable (Figure 5). Likewise, the uses assigned to common spaces are also not specific. They are linked to the requirements that the rules request for new urbanization or construction (e.g., green areas, equipment, roads) and, particularly, to the accessibility of

people with disability or reduced mobility (e.g., restrooms and non-mechanized playgrounds with universal access).

In practice, the regulatory instruments’ main requirement for designing common collective housing spaces is accessibility for people with disabilities or reduced mobility (86 mentions). The relevance that is given to accessibility is embodied in the so-called “accessible route,” which, as evidenced by the following fragment of the General Ordinance of Urbanism and Constructions (MINVU, 1992), defines many of the characteristics that the common spaces of collective housing should have:

[The accessible route is a] free and continuous space [...] intended for the movement of people on a sidewalk, in a public space, or inside a building; free of obstacles, steps, or other barriers that hinder movement and the perception of it [...] suitable for the safe movement of all people. (MINVU, 1992, p. 15, updated version of 2023)

The accessible route appears for the first time in 2016 (MINVU, 2016). It is established as an empty volume of 2.1 m height by approximately 1.2-1.5 m width, length, and variable slope, and it defines at least three key aspects of common spaces. First, the accessible route specifies the circulations’ minimum dimensions (minimum width and height). Secondly, it establishes the possible unevenness of those circulations and how they are resolved (ramps between 8% and 12% slope, depending on the length of the ramp). Third, the accessible route defines how housing



Figure 3. Prohibited practices in common spaces of collective housing, photographs prepared in 2023. Source: Preparation by the authors.

units and common spaces are connected to each other (e.g., corridors) and the outside (e.g., accesses). Here, the standard pays special attention to the attributes and elements of elevators, restrooms, and parking lots for people with disabilities.

On the other hand, outdoor communal spaces, whether the accessible route or spaces that connect to it, tend to follow the design principles that govern public spaces, which are mainly oriented to movement. In this sense, this coincides with the findings of Herrmann-Lunecke *et al.* (2021), who point out that the body of binding instruments privileges movement over activities that involve permanence and consequently describe vertical elements or furniture as obstacles, though they could enrich the experience and comfort of the people occupying common spaces. Trees, for example, are mentioned when detailing the distance that should separate them from the accessible route and the arrangement of tree wells and irrigation dishes. In both cases, the purpose is to keep the circulation space free. In no fragment of the rules or indicative documents are the benefits mentioned that trees could have for permanence activities or, in bioclimatic terms, in common spaces.

### Daily practices in the common spaces of collective housing according to Chilean regulations

The regulatory instruments have numerous references to people with disabilities (51 mentions) or with reduced mobility (10 mentions), which coincides with the relevance given to universal accessibility in the design of common spaces. On the contrary, references to older people as users of common spaces

are very scarce in regulatory instruments. Only one fragment mentions older people when detailing adequate access to the cycle parking lots of collective housing (MINVU, 1992). Other vulnerable groups follow similar patterns and are rarely mentioned in regulatory documents. Children are mentioned in the same passage, which refers to older people, regarding cycle parking. At the same time, women are mentioned only once (Inclusion Law, MIDEPLAN, 2010), linked to the recognition of the particular vulnerability that women with disabilities have.

Possible daily practices in common spaces are rarely mentioned in the regulatory instruments and regulations that focus on the prohibitions of certain behaviors. Thus, the Co-Ownership Regulation (MINVU, 2023), which establishes the set of rights and obligations that occupants of collective housing have, indicates that prohibited practices are those that cause noise or are annoying, modify or damage common property, involve polluting the whole (e.g., accumulating garbage, dog feces) or selling or consuming illicit substances. The only indirectly protected/permitted practices are those associated with keeping and caring for pets or companion animals protected by law (MINVU, 2023). The regulatory instruments do not mention activities such as playing sports, caring for someone, or meeting neighbors. The analysis shows that cohabitation in the common spaces of collective housing is conceived in the regulatory instruments from an individual perspective and, as Figure 3 shows, from the prohibition. They are not designed as a collective aspect, and the fact that they are called “common” does not indicate that they allow the community to meet.





Figure 4. A common space that allows socialization and meetings between older people. Prepared in 2023. Source: Preparation by the authors.

### Friendly common spaces for older people in collective housing according to indicative instruments

In Chile, for almost two decades (although in a dispersed way), instruments have been developed that make recommendations on how spaces for older people should be designed, such as, for example, the Residential Spaces for Older People Design Guide (MINVU, 2006), the Older People Falls Prevention Manual (MINSAL, 2015), the Supervised Housing Unit Program Manual (SENAMA, 2019), the Friendly Communes Program Technical Guidelines (SENAMA, 2021) and Exempt Resolution 1804 Technical Itemized List MINVU Supervised Housing Condominiums (MINVU, 2021), the latter being the only binding instrument.

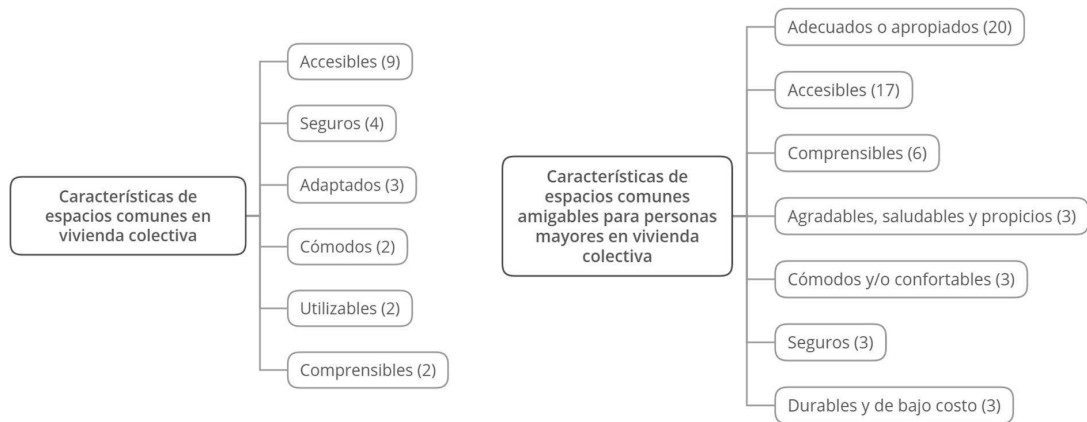
This body of instruments analyzed shows that there are advances in the conception of common spaces of housing and the role assigned to them for the life of older people. In this way, the words space and environment are frequently used for the denomination of common spaces, where the adjectives collective, intermediate, exterior, and common are associated with these places. The set of instruments analyzed recognizes common spaces as “mediators” between public and private (Schlack, 2007; Franco, 2017) and part of the nearby environment that is key for older people, to the extent that in old age, more time is spent at home and the spaces that are in their vicinity (Yuen, 2019). In line with the findings in the literature (Montoro,

2012), the indicative instruments argue that common spaces are crucial places for the well-being of older people:

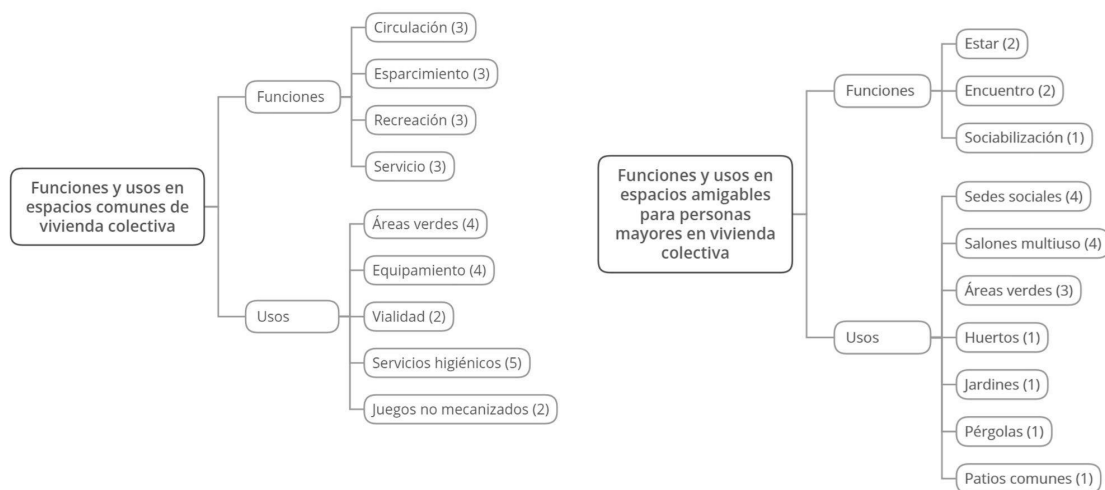
The immediate environment is one of the aspects that influences the level of satisfaction that the housing provides, since older people demand it to perform recreational and socialization activities. (MINVU, 2006, p. 9)

Universal accessibility is still relevant in how this group of documents conceives common spaces. Thus, the concept of an accessible route is literally present in recent documents (MINVU, 2021), but also implicitly in older documents (MINVU, 2006). The vast majority of the regulated elements and the definitions made about characteristics and dimensions coincide with those defined for the accessible route. However, the indicative instruments also highlight other elements that are very relevant for older people. Considering how the body's relationship with the environment changes with age (Gaete-Reyes, 2017), one of the frequently appearing elements is the handrail or railing, highlighting the need to have these support elements in indoor and outdoor circulation spaces. The minimum recommended dimensions for the circulations are also larger (1.5 m minimum width), indicating that two people should be allowed to pass simultaneously.

In addition to universal accessibility, the design of common housing spaces according to the indicative instruments should consider the citizens and physical safety of older people. Likewise, as Figure 5 shows, the characteristics assigned to common spaces are significantly more comprehensive when compared to the regulatory



**Figure 5.** Comparison of the characteristics of common spaces of collective housing according to regulatory instruments (left) and characteristics of senior-friendly common spaces in collective housing, according to indicative instruments (right). Source: Preparation by the authors.



**Figure 6.** Comparison of the functions and uses of common spaces of collective housing according to regulatory instruments (left) and the functions and uses of senior-friendly common spaces in collective housing, according to indicative instruments (right). Source: Preparation by the authors.

instruments. The indicative instruments recommend that spaces for older people are suitable or appropriate for their particular needs and characteristics, universally accessible both in circulation and living spaces, understandable to facilitate spatial orientation, pleasant, healthy, and appropriate. The spaces for older people also have to be comfortable, in addition to adjusting to their physiological needs, safe to promote their use, durable and low-cost, and maintained to prolong their useful life.

In the revised indicative documents, older people are the protagonists of the common spaces. In line with existing studies (WHO, 2015), they are characterized as residents who may have different particularities that recognize diversity based on their

different levels of dependence (independent, semi-independent, and dependent, 7 mentions), gender (older women, 3 mentions) and age range (young older adults and fourth age, 1 mention each).

The documents also recognize that common spaces should facilitate practices that promote connection, participation, integration, and socialization of older people in addition to serving circulation. As Figure 5 illustrates, the indicative instruments indicate as functions of common spaces, living, meeting, and socialization. In the same way, the suggested uses are more numerous than those in the regulatory documents, focused on group activities or contact with nature, and include social venues, multipurpose rooms, green areas, orchards, gardens, pergolas, and common patios.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

In the Chilean regulations, the common spaces of collective housing are not clearly defined. They are named in multiple ways and are part of a broad set of common domain goods. Similarly, the common spaces are not designed for roles that go beyond the circulation of people, making invisible the relevance of socio-spatial practices that imply permanence and social interaction. The focus on circulation has also reduced common spaces to places of passage that must be free of obstructions, and has reduced any element that could enrich them (e.g., trees, furniture) to “obstacles.” This coincides with Herrmann-Lunecke *et al.* (2021), who, studying pedestrian infrastructure with a similar methodological approach, concluded that Chilean regulations tend to strip spaces of amenities that could improve people’s experience and daily life.

The results also show that older adults and other vulnerable groups, such as women and children, are absent from the regulatory instruments. On the contrary, the indicative instruments have followed the guidelines present in the agreements signed by Chile (UN, 2002; ECLAC, 2022), which recognize, on the one hand, older people, their rights, and their diversity (WHO, 2015) and highlight, on the other, the multiple roles that common spaces have (Schlack, 2007; Franco, 2017) and the relevance they have for the meeting and sociability of older people (Montoro, 2012). In this sense, the recommendations of indicative instruments, particularly regarding housing for older people, can be a good reference for developing housing regulations that promote age-friendly common spaces.

This study shows the need to update regulatory instruments to include the needs and rights of older people explicitly. Regulations associated with the design of common spaces should be reviewed to facilitate their use by older people. For example, a minimum of seats could be established in common spaces, handrails could be included in corridors of common spaces, and the minimum width of the accessible route could be increased to 1.5 m to allow the passage of two people, taking into consideration older people who walk with a caregiver. Integrating the requirements of older people into regulatory frameworks would not only improve their quality of life, but would also contribute to the social cohesion of communities. These efforts are crucial to promote healthy aging (Garin *et al.*, 2014) and allow older people to stay in their homes and neighborhoods (Canham *et al.*, 2018; Walsh *et al.*, 2017).

## VII. CONTRIBUTIONS FROM CREDIT AUTHORS

Conceptualization, M.G.H.-L., A.Z.S.; Data curation, C.F.-M., PR; Formal analysis, M.G.H.-L., C.F.-M., PR; Acquisition of financing, M.G.H.-L.; Research, M.G.H.-L., C.F.-M., R.R.P., A.Z.S.; Methodology, M.G.H.-L., A.Z.S.; Project Management, M.G.H.-L.; Resources, M.G.H.-L.; Software, C.F.-M., R.R.P.; Supervision, M.G.H.-L.; Validation, M.G.H.-L., C.F.-M., R.R.P., A.Z.S.; Visualization, M.G.H.-L., C.F.-M., R.R.P.; Writing – draft original, M.G.H.-L., C.F.-M., R.R.P., A.Z.S.; Writing – revision and editing, M.G.H.-L., C.F.-M., R.R.P., A.Z.S.

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