



**DOSSIER**  
**AGEING, TERRITORY, AND**  
**ENVIRONMENT**

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# Senior Cohousing as a model of social support and mutual aid for aging in the community: a scoping review

## *Sênior Cohousing: um modelo de suporte social e apoio mútuo para o envelhecimento na comunidade: uma revisão de escopo*

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### Abstract

Population aging poses new challenges for traditional housing models. One alternative gaining global recognition is senior cohousing, a collaborative housing model for older adults that fosters the creation of self-sustaining communities where residents share responsibilities and mutual support. This study aimed to identify and synthesize the available scientific evidence on the senior cohousing model and its contribution to strengthening mutual support networks and social support among residents. A scoping review was conducted based on the Joanna Briggs Institute's methodology. The following databases were searched: PubMed, PubMed PMC, Scopus, MedLine, Ageline, Embase, ProQuest Central, Web of Science, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, and SciELO, with no temporal or geographical restrictions. A total of 72 publications from 2002 to 2024 were selected for full-text analysis. The findings indicate that cohousing fosters a strong sense of belonging and security, strengthens social bonds, and promotes the formation of an integrated community with high levels of social support. Therefore, senior cohousing emerges as an innovative and promising alternative for community-based aging, contributing to healthy aging and enabling older adults to remain in their communities for longer. The model offers a balanced combination of housing and social interaction, promoting mutual support among residents. Public policies encouraging the expansion of this housing model are essential, given its role in strengthening social support networks amid population aging.

**Keywords:** Healthy aging. Aging in place. Innovation. Housing. Older adults.

### Resumo

*O envelhecimento populacional impõe novos desafios aos modelos tradicionais de moradia. Uma alternativa que vem ganhando destaque mundialmente é o sênior cohousing, um modelo de habitação colaborativa voltado para pessoas idosas, que promove a criação de comunidades*



*autossustentáveis, nas quais os moradores compartilham responsabilidades e apoio mútuo. Este estudo teve como objetivo identificar e sintetizar as evidências científicas disponíveis sobre o modelo sênior cohousing, e sua contribuição para o fortalecimento das redes de apoio mútuo e suporte social entre os moradores. Trata-se de uma revisão de escopo baseada na metodologia do Instituto Joanna Briggs. Para tanto, foram utilizadas as seguintes bases de dados: PubMed, PubMed PMC, Scopus, MedLine, Ageline, Embase, Proquest Central, Web of Science, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global e Scielo, sem recorte temporal ou geográfico. Foram selecionadas 72 publicações entre 2002 e 2024 para análise completa. Os dados indicam que o cohousing proporciona um forte senso de pertencimento e segurança, fortalece os vínculos sociais e favorece a criação de uma comunidade integrada, com elevado suporte social. Assim, o sênior cohousing se destaca como uma alternativa inovadora e promissora para o envelhecimento na comunidade, contribuindo para o envelhecimento saudável e para a permanência por um maior tempo na própria comunidade. O modelo oferece uma combinação equilibrada de moradia e interação social, promovendo o apoio mútuo entre os residentes. Políticas públicas que incentivem a expansão desse tipo de moradia são fundamentais, dada sua contribuição para o fortalecimento da rede de apoio social mediante o envelhecimento populacional.*

**Palavras-chave:** Envelhecimento saudável. Envelhecimento na comunidade. Inovação. Moradia. Pessoa idosa.

## Introduction

Population aging represents significant progress for society. However, it is important to note that this phenomenon is associated with challenges that require effective approaches and solutions in various sectors, from healthcare to urban planning. Among the main challenges of aging is the need to create solutions that promote the autonomy and well-being of older adults, especially in a context marked by significant socioeconomic inequality, poverty, and institutional fragility (Veras, 2009). Opportunities to age with dignity vary significantly among different social groups, impacted by factors such as income, access to health services, education, housing, and security. These disparities become evident when we observe the diversity of trajectories and experiences of older adults in Brazil, reflecting the complex intersection between age, social class, gender, and territory.

Thus, an integrated approach to these cross-cutting determinants, recognizing gender and cultural differences as fundamental to building inclusive and healthy environments, has a direct impact on how different social groups age, influencing both access to opportunities and vulnerability to the challenges of aging.

Given this reality, important questions arise related to quality of life in old age, the promotion of environments that favor active and healthy aging, and the construction of social and family support networks. In this context, the built environment plays a central role, as it is an important determinant for enabling older adults to continue living independently in the community (Erickson *et al.*, 2006), which is the preference of most people who are aging, as highlighted by Bayer and Harper (2000). This concept, advocated by the World Health Organization (WHO), aligns with the idea of “aging in place,” which has been widely debated in the literature, and addressed by the (World Health Organization, 2018). The organization emphasizes the importance of a common understanding of the term in a broader sense. According to Nascimento (2023), the most appropriate term would be “aging in community,” as it emphasizes the relevance of the built environment and social connections in supporting healthy aging, going beyond the idea of simply aging in the physical location of one’s residence.

When configured as facilitators, environments promote engagement and emphasize the agency of older adults, as advocated in the global movement of the Decade of Healthy Aging (Organização Pan-Americana da Saúde, 2022), generating transformative changes in the means and process. The most suitable living arrangements for the aging population are those described

by Arigoni, Ceccon, and Damazio (2016), according to whom a design that favors autonomy and independence results in benefits not only in terms of living, but also in promoting well-being in a welcoming and individualized manner.

Alternatives in housing formats arise as a response to the needs that emanate from society, with collaborative housing demonstrates success in terms of social and environmental sustainability (Tummers, 2016). Integrated into a movement that goes beyond the mere act of residing, those involved in this process seek to adopt new practices that promote positive interaction with the environment around them.

Given this scenario, there is an urgent need for a new dynamic in the design of housing for aging, since, in Brazil, aging and housing are often low-priority issues. These issues require deeper attention and innovations guided by principles that prioritize empathy, collaboration, and experimentation.

One alternative that is gaining prominence worldwide is senior cohousing, a collaborative housing model geared toward older adults that promotes the creation of self-sustaining communities in which residents share responsibilities and mutual support.

With architectural and organizational features that promote a sense of security and protection, cohousing stands out for balancing privacy and coexistence, providing residents with the opportunity to strengthen social connections without giving up their autonomy.

As Bestetti (2014) points out, preserving individual privacy is important for fostering more spontaneous social interactions, especially when there are spaces designed to promote these connections. Thus, the integration of this housing model, which combines autonomy and privacy with the benefits of community living, emerges as an alternative to the contemporary lifestyle, especially when considering the aging population.

In view of this, the objective of this scoping review is to document existing scientific studies, highlighting their scope and categorizing the main evidence that positions senior cohousing as a model of social support and mutual support for aging in the community. This study emerges as a contribution to the scientific framework, presenting substantial evidence that can be considered viable alternatives for the aging population. By providing an in-depth understanding of the benefits, challenges, and impacts associated with this type of housing, it contributes to the formulation of guidelines aimed at optimizing the well-being and quality of life of the elderly population.

## Methodological Procedures

The methodology employed was a scoping review, with the purpose of synthesizing and disseminating the results of studies through a qualitative analysis of the findings, following the methodological rigor recommended by the Joanna Briggs Institute Manual (Aromataris; Munn, 2020).

To this end, the following steps of the review process were adopted as a basis: (a) formulation of the research question; (b) identification of studies; (c) selection of relevant studies; (d) data mapping; (e) grouping, synthesis, and reporting of data.

To ensure a clear and well-defined structure of the determinants of interest in this scoping review, the guidelines proposed by Peters *et al.* (2020) were structured as follows: Participants: Older adults aged 50 years and above; Concept: Senior Cohousing (collaborative housing); Context: Social support and mutual support for aging.

The development and elaboration of the search strategy were conducted with the collaboration of a librarian specializing in scoping reviews, whose expertise and in-depth knowledge of scientific information indexing provided solid methodological support to the process.

The searches were conducted in the following databases: PubMed, PubMed PMC, Scopus, MedLine, Ageline, Embase, Proquest Central, Web of Science, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, and Scielo, on December 4, 2023, with a subsequent update on December 6, 2024, when a total of 2,241 works were retrieved. Publications from the gray literature, such as dissertations, theses, and books, which are not part of indexed journals, were also included.

The inclusion criteria established were: (a) original published scientific articles, theses, and dissertations; (b) publications without geographical or temporal restrictions; (c) publications available in full on line; (d) publications in English, Portuguese, and Spanish; (e) qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods; (f) studies involving residents of senior cohousing; (g) elderly people or people over 50 years of age.

Based on this strategy, the guiding question that was established was: “What scientific evidence has been produced on the concept of senior cohousing as collaborative housing that favors aging in the community in the context of social support and mutual support among residents?”

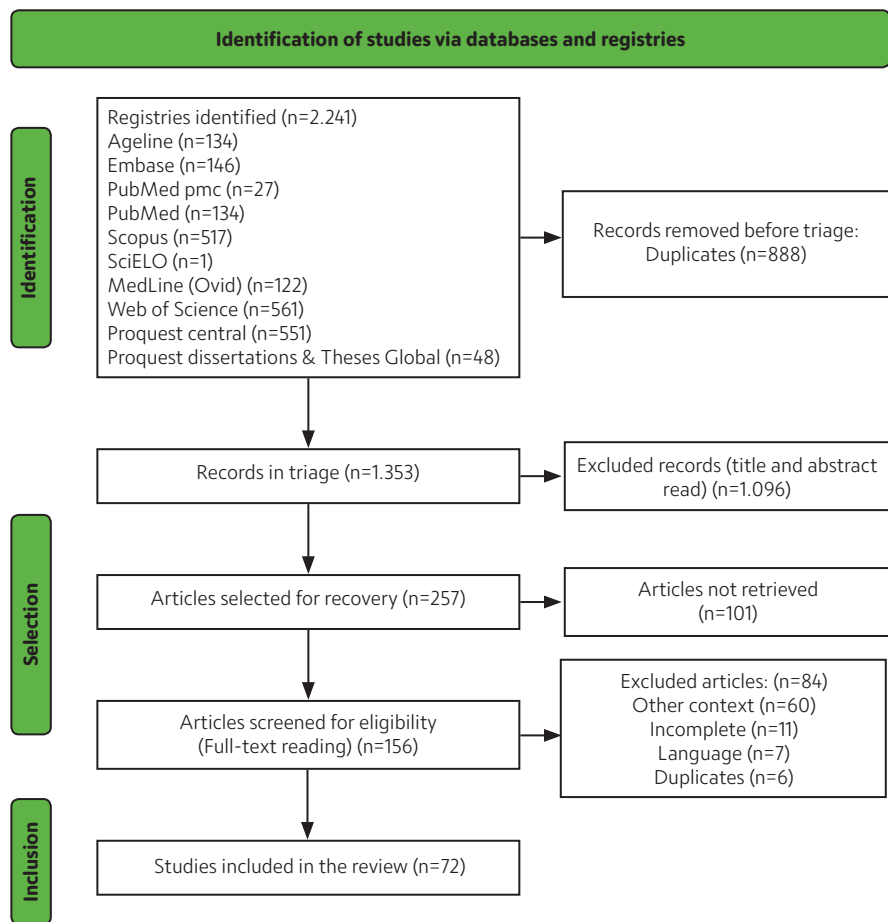
Duplicate works (n=888) were removed manually, while the remaining ones (n=1,353) proceeded to initial screening based on title and abstract. Two reviewers conducted this step independently, according to the established criteria, and any disagreements were resolved by the decision of a third reviewer.

The main reasons for excluding studies were related to an approach outside the context explored, in which issues of mutual support and social support among cohousing residents were not addressed. Therefore, to ensure homogeneity in the concept explored, only publications focusing on collaborative housing with independent residents – without formal assistance – were considered.

Finally, the selected studies (72 papers) were read in full and mapped using a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Identified evidence regarding aspects of support, positive outcomes, and limiting factors, followed by a qualitative content analysis.

## Results and Discussion

The systematization of the study selection process was guided by the PRISMA Statement (Tricco *et al.*, 2018) flowchart, described in Figure 1.



**Figure 1** - Study selection flowchart.

Source: Prisma (modified by the authors, 2025).

The selected studies were organized in chronological order, including the title, authors, year of publication, country, and method, followed by an index to aid understanding and analysis (Table 1).

**Table 1** - Studies included in the review.

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Ref	Title	Authors	Country	Method
F1	Co-housing for Seniors Experienced as an Occupational Generative Environment	Andresen, M.; Runge, U. (2002)	Denmark	Qualitative
F2	Cohousing for older people: housing innovation in the Netherlands and Denmark	Bamford, G. (2005)	Australia	Qualitative
F3	The Next Phase: Senior Cohousing	Cohen, R. (2005)	USA	Qualitative
F4	Senior cohousing: a community approach to independent living	Durret, C. (2005)	USA	Qualitative
F5	Elder cohousing: an idea whose time has come?	Abraham, N.; Delagrang, K.; Ragland, C. (2006)	USA	Qualitative
F6	Evaluation of community planning and life of senior cohousing projects in northern European countries	Choi, J. S. (2007)	South Korea	Qualitative
F7	Community and Health: Immigrant Senior Cohousing in the Netherlands Communities.	Fromm, D.; Jong, E. (2009)	Netherlands	Qualitative
F8	Aging in a Community of Mutual Support: The Emergence of an Elder Intentional Cohousing Community in the United States	Glass, A. P. (2009)	USA	Qualitative
F9	The Making of Senior Cohousing: The Story of Wolf Creek Lodge	Marriott, S. (2010)	USA	Qualitative

Table 1 – Studies included in the review.

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Ref	Title	Authors	Country	Method
F10	Social and physical environments in senior communities: the Finnish experience	Tyvimaa, T. (2010)	Finland	Qualitative
F11	Evaluation of Common Activity and Life in Swedish_Cohousing Units	Choi, J. S.; Paulsson, J. (2011)	South Korea	Quantitative
F12	The Development of Co-Housing Initiatives in Germany	Ache, P.; Fedrowitz, M. (2012)	Germany	Qualitative
F13	Elder Co-Housing in the United States: Three Case Studies	Glass, A. P.; (2012)	USA	Qualitative
F14	When Do We Begin to Flourish in Senior Cohousing?	Critchlow, M.; Moore, A. (2012)	Canada	Qualitative
F15	Aging in Community: The Communitarian Alternative to Aging in Place, Alone	Blanchard, J. (2013)	USA	Qualitative
F16	Why Do People Move to Cohousing Communities in Sweden? - Are there any Significant Differences Between the +40 Cohousing and the Mixed-Age Cohousing?	Choi, J. S. (2013)	South Korea	Mixed
F17	Innovations in housing and assistive services to support aging in place	Fontaine, S. (2013)	USA	Qualitative
F18	A conceptual model for aging better together intentionally	Glass, A. P.; Plaats, R. S. V. (2013)	USA	Mixed
F19	Lessons Learned From a New Elder Cohousing Community	Glass, A. P. (2013)	USA	Qualitative
F20	Co-caring in senior cohousing: A Canadian model for social sustainability	Rodman, M. C. (2013)	Canada	Qualitative
F21	Participation in Common Activities and Satisfaction with Common Space- In a Tentative Framework of Housing Adjustment for Swedish Cohousing Residents	Choi, J.; Cho, J.; Suh, K. (2014)	South Korea	Quantitative
F22	Senior Cohousing in Canada: How Baby Boomers Can Build Social Portfolios for Aging Well	Critchlow, M. (2015)	Canada	Qualitative
F23	The Meaning of a "Sense of Community" in a Finnish Senior Co-Housing Community	Jolanki, O.; Vilkkö, A. (2015)	Finlândia	Qualitative
F24	Self-managed co-housing in the context of an ageing population in Europe	Labit, A. (2015)	France	Qualitative
F25	Senior Co-Housing Communities in Denmark	Pedersen, M. (2015)	Denmark	Mixed
F26	Beyond Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft. Cohousing Life in Contemporary Sweden	Sandstedt, E.; Westin, S. (2015)	Sweden	Mixed
F27	Resident-Managed Elder Intentional Neighborhoods: Do They Promote Social Resources for Older Adults?	Glass, A. P. (2016)	USA	Quantitative
F28	The Role of the Socio-Physical Environment on Aging in Place for Older Adults in Cohousing and Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities	Bigonnesse, C. (2017)	Canada	Quantitative
F29	<i>Una tendencia que crece, adultos mayores que viven en comunidad</i>	Jayson, S. (2017)	USA	Qualitative
F30	<i>La construcción social del cuidado comunitario en La Muralleta, una cooperativa autogestionada para gente mayor</i>	Alonso, N. R.; D'Argemir, D. C. (2017)	Spain	Qualitative
F31	Social architectures of agefriendly community resilience	Jarvis, H. (2018)	USA	Qualitative
F32	Intentional Sub-communities and Identity Continuity Among Baby Boomers: Grateful Dead Fans	Adams, R. G.; Harmon, J. T. (2018)	USA	Qualitative
F33	<i>Experiencias de vejez vital. Senior Cohousing: autonomía y participación</i>	López, S. T.; Hernández, P. V.; García-Pérez, O. (2018)	Spain	Qualitative
F34	Housing Models for Aging in Community	Ahrentzen, S.; Steiner, R. L. (2019)	England	Qualitative
F35	New perspectives from technology adoption in senior cohousing facilities	Angioni, M.; Musso, F. (2019)	Italy	Qualitative
F36	Initiating Senior Co-Housing: People, Place, And Long-Term Security	Baldwin, C.; Dendle, K.; McKinlay, A. (2019)	England	Mixed
F37	Moving House and Housing Preferences in Older Age in Slovenia	Hrast, M. F. et al. (2019)	Slovenia	Quantitative
F38	Sense of community, loneliness, and satisfaction in five elder cohousing neighborhoods	Glass, A. P. (2019)	USA	Mixed
F39	<i>El bienestar emocional como predictor de calidad de vida en los senior co-housing</i>	Serra, E. G.; Mora, M. R. C. (2019)	Spain	Quantitative
F40	Cohousing – social impacts and major implementation challenges	Hacke, U.; Müller, K.; Düttschke, E. (2019)	Germany	Qualitative

**Table 1** – Studies included in the review.

Ref	Title	Authors	Country	Method
F41	"Not alone and not in a home!": The negotiation of later life as a cohousing group in Berlin	Hudson, J. (2019)	England	Qualitative
F42	Realizing innovative senior Housing practices in the U.S.	Pfeiffer, D. <i>et al.</i> (2019)	USA	Qualitative
F43	The Impact of Cohousing on Older Adults' Quality of Life	Puplampu, V. <i>et al.</i> (2019)	Canada	Mixed
F44	Senior Co-Housing in the Netherlands: Benefits and Drawbacks for Its Residents	Rusinovic, K.; van Bochove, M.; van de Sande, J. (2019)	Netherlands	Qualitative
F45	Barriers Faced in the Establishment of Cohousing Communities for Older Adults in Eastern Canada	Weeks, L. E. <i>et al.</i> (2019)	Canada	Qualitative
F46	In cohousing communities, UU seniors are finding new ways to 'age in place'	Willcox, K. (2019)	USA	Qualitative
F47	Examining Community-Based Housing Models to Support Aging in Place: A Scoping Review	Chum, K. <i>et al.</i> (2020)	Canada	Qualitative
F48	Supporting the elderly population: New strategies for housing in Italy	Giofrè, F.; Porro, L. (2020)	Italy	Qualitative
F49	Aging Better Together, Intentionally	Glass, A. P.; Lawlor, L. (2020)	USA	Qualitative
F50	Senior Housing as a Living Environment That Supports Well-Being in Old Age	Jolanki, O. H. (2020)	USA	Qualitative
F51	Community Housing for the Elderly as a Source of Social Support and Prevention of Social Exclusion.	Mojžíšová, A.; Dvořáčková, D.; Barták, M. (2020)	Czech Republic	Qualitative
F52	Forming and Living in a Seniors' Cohousing: The Impact on Older Adults' Healthy Aging in Place	Puplampu, V. (2020)	Canada	Qualitative
F53	Scoping review on the impact of cohousing on older adults' quality of life	Puplampu, V.; Peters, S.; Chipanshi, M. (2020)	Canada	Mixed
F54	<i>Viviendas colaborativas de personas mayores: democratizar el cuidado en la vejez</i>	Garganté, C. K.; Samper, S. E. (2021)	Spain	Qualitative
F55	A case based study of design strategies to explore the notion of age-friendly co-housing community	Ye, J.; Wu, Z. (2021)	China	Qualitative
F56	<i>Cuidados comunitarios y gobierno común de la dependencia: las viviendas colaborativas de personas mayores</i>	Leiras, A. A. (2021)	Spain	Qualitative
F57	Contextualizing Innovative Housing Models and Services Within the Age-Friendly Communities Framework	Mahmood, A. <i>et al.</i> (2021)	Canada	Mixed
F58	Senior Cohousing: The Social Architecture of Cohousing, Community Design & Well Being	Mandelman, M. (2021)	USA	Mixed
F59	Cohousing: a Housing Alternative for the Older Population: Contributions to the Applicability of the Concept in Portugal	Cordeiro, B. L. A. P. (2022)	Portugal	Qualitative
F60	Mature and Older Adults' Perception of Active Ageing and the Need for Supporting Services: Insights from a Qualitative Study	Barbaccia, V. <i>et al.</i> (2022)	Italy	Qualitative
F61	Seniors, fearful of long-term care homes and COVID-19, seek new ways to live together	Bielski, Z. (2022)	Canada	Qualitative
F62	<i>El cohousing senior en España. Cambios desde la economía social en los alojamientos y en la economía de los cuidados para personas mayores</i>	Chuliá, M. A. T.; Sundtröm, G. (2022)	Spain	Qualitative
F63	Finding Community in Elder Cohousing: Before and During COVID-19	Glass, A. P.; Norris, H. (2022)	USA	Quantitative
F64	Rethinking home: Exploring older adults' occupational engagement in senior cohousing	Pfaff, R.; Trentham, B. (2022)	Canada	Qualitative
F65	Exploring perspectives on healthy housing among low-income prospective residents of a future cohousing "Microvillage" in Geelong, Australia	Warner, E.; Chambers, L.; Andrews, F. J. (2022)	Australia	Qualitative
F66	The Best Place to Be? Experiences of Older Adults Living in Canadian Cohousing Communities During the COVID-19 Pandemic	Weeks, L. <i>et al.</i> (2022)	Canada	Qualitative
F67	Caregiving expectations and preferences in gay adult men during old age: barriers or difficulties associated with sexual orientation	Sánchez, C. C.; Martínez, J. M. C.; Hernandis, S. P. (2023)	Spain	Qualitative

**Table 1** – Studies included in the review.

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Ref	Title	Authors	Country	Method
F68	Embracing cohousing: advancing socio-ecological Housing models for the future	Cordeiro, B. A.; Szczygiel, N.; Dias, A. A. (2023)	Portugal	Qualitative
F69	Cohousing: A Way for Solo Agers to Build and Maintain Community	Durrett, C. (2023)	USA	Qualitative
F70	Older Adult Residents in Cohousing Communities: Impact and response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Part 2 (P2) Follow-Up Study	Koller, J. M.; Hutchings, B. L.; Zabotka, J. (2023)	USA	Mixed
F71	Active Aging in Senior Housing Residents and Community-Dwelling Older Adults: A Comparative Study in Finland	Siltanen, S. <i>et al.</i> (2023)	Finland	Quantitative
F72	<i>El derecho de las personas mayores a una vivienda adecuada: alternativas residenciales para un envejecimiento activo y participativo</i>	Font, J. G. (2024)	Brazil	Qualitative

Source: Prepared by the authors (2025).

Among the 72 works included in this scoping review, most are scientific articles (n=53), reflecting a predominant focus on research published in journals. To a lesser extent, book chapters (n=5) and news articles (n=9) are also included, indicating a presence in broader, more informative publications. Theses (n=3), dissertations (n=1), and books (n=1) complement the set of reviewed works, showing a diversity of approaches and formats in the literature on the subject.

Although no period was adopted as a criterion for selecting the works, and the first senior cohousing was established in 1987, the first publications on the subject only began to appear almost two decades later. It was only from 2002 onward that a gradual increase in publications focused on cohousing for the elderly population was observed.

The number of publications remained stable between 2002 and 2012, even though population aging was a concern in several countries. This fact can be attributed to low public awareness of housing alternatives during the period analyzed, given that solutions for older adults were still in their early stages of development.

The increase in the number of publications since 2019 is related both to the acceleration of population aging and to the introduction of the topic in several international organizations. A significant example is the discussion to the topic in 2017 by the United Nations advisory body during its annual summit, which focused on changes in the age structures of the population (UN, 2017).

Another important milestone was the launch by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2017) of strategies for the period 2016–2020. These strategies predicted that, by 2020, evidence and partnerships would be established to support the Decade of Healthy Aging (2020–2030), in which one of the objectives was focused on housing issues for the elderly population.

The countries with the highest number of publications among the studies included in this scoping review were the United States (n=23) and Canada (n=13). This fact suggests that senior cohousing has been widely studied in North America, demonstrating great academic and practical interest in exposing alternative solutions for aging.

The predominance of publications identified in the United States highlights the growth of senior cohousing as an adaptive response to the housing needs of American society, favored by a context conducive to its development and adaptation to local particularities.

Cultural factors that value independence and autonomy, predominant in American society, combined with the rapid aging of the country's population, are favorable to the characteristics established in this housing model, offering the possibility of a balance between privacy and community support for the needs of this age group.

Many of the countries that have produced fewer publications have a tradition of social models of care for aging, as well as public policies focused on well-being, which can facilitate the development of cohousing projects. The fact that Denmark, a pioneer in cohousing, has a low number of publications (n=2) focused on the housing model used for the elderly can be explained by the fact that it is an established and widely accepted practice, as well as being integrated into society.

In Spain (n=7), the collaborative housing model has become significantly established and is gaining notoriety due to the growing support of local governments.

The growing number of publications in Asian countries reflects a response to demographic and social changes, in which traditional family support structures are being challenged by the rapid aging of the population, suggesting new housing arrangements that can replace or complement traditional models.

In Brazil, no studies have been identified that relate collaborative housing to the elderly population. Only one publication in a national magazine was identified, which was developed in Spain by a Spanish researcher affiliated with the Autonomous University of Barcelona.

This scenario shows that the concept of senior cohousing is still recent in Brazil, reflecting limited dissemination of the topic and the absence of consolidated experiences or practical examples in the local context. In the academic and political spheres, Brazilian publications have focused on traditional models of care, such as long-term care facilities for the elderly and family assistance, devoting less attention to alternative and innovative solutions, such as senior cohousing.

An analysis of the methods used in the studies included patterns and trends in the use of qualitative (75%), quantitative (9.7%), and mixed (15.3%) methods over the years in the publications analyzed.

South Korea, with a total of four studies analyzed, showed a predominance of quantitative or mixed methods, with only one study adopting a qualitative approach. In contrast, the United States and Canada, countries with the highest number of publications on the subject, reveal a strong preference for the use of qualitative methods.

The most cited authors in the studies analyzed on cohousing were identified based on a detailed review of the reference lists of each work included in the research. This survey allowed us to identify the names of each author most frequently mentioned in the context of the topic. Charles Durrett stood out as the most cited author, present in 60% (n=43) of the works, followed by Anne Glass, mentioned in 51% (n=37) of the studies. J. Choi was referred to in 32% (n=23) of the publications, while M. Breton and Max Pedersen appeared in 24% (n=17) and of the studies analyzed.

Charles Durrett emerges as a central figure in the dissemination of the concept of cohousing outside Europe, especially in the United States. After studying the model developed in Denmark, where cohousing has established itself as an innovative and collaborative housing alternative, Durrett adapted and propagated the idea to the North American context, gaining in the United States and other North American countries. His work, not only as a researcher but also as an architect and advocate of the model, made him a global reference on the subject, which explains his high frequency in citations. He played an important role in translating Scandinavian practices into different cultural and urban realities, promoting cohousing as a sustainable solution to contemporary housing challenges.

In his process of evolving the concept, Durrett initially addressed intergenerational cohousing, highlighting its advantages in creating inclusive and diverse communities (McCamant;

Durrett; Hertzman, 1994). Subsequently, he explored the specifics of senior cohousing, emphasizing its benefits in promoting active aging, social support, and reducing isolation (Durrett, 2016). More recently, Durrett has broadened his focus to the benefits of cohousing for neurodivergent people, highlighting how this format can offer adapted and welcoming environments, promoting greater autonomy, well-being, and social integration for individuals with specific needs.

This evolution reflects his ability to adapt the cohousing model to emerging social demands, reaffirming his relevance as a pioneer and innovator in this field. Anne Glass, in turn, complements this view by exploring cohousing from a gerontological perspective, highlighting the social, psychological, and health benefits associated with the model, especially for older populations. Her approach broadens the understanding of cohousing as a space that promotes not only physical sharing, but also emotional support and healthy aging. Other authors, such as J. Choi, M. Breton, and Max Pedersen, contribute specific analyses on the planning, implementation, and social impacts of cohousing, addressing issues ranging from community formation to the challenges of collective management.

Given these data, it is possible to identify that these researchers provide a solid basis for the study of cohousing as an innovative practice of housing and coexistence. The predominance of Durrett and Glass in the citations reflects the relevance of their work for the consolidation of cohousing as a topic of global interest, as well as their ability to articulate the advantages of this model for different audiences and contexts.

Table 2 presents a compilation of the main characteristics identified in the works selected for the study, in which are the main questions, sub-questions, and objectives established for this review listed, in addition to the main findings identified in the included studies. This approach allowed for an integrated and structured view, ensuring greater clarity in the presentation of data and promoting a more consistent comparative analysis, relating to the evidence identified in the included studies.

**Table 2** - Evidence Identified in the Studies.

References	Evidence																		
	Benefits									Challenges									
	Mutual support	Active aging	Autonomy/Independence	Well-being/Quality of life	Education of innovation	Sustainability	Reduction of loneliness	Sense of Community	Economic	LGBTQIA+ people	Pandemic	Policy needs Públicas/Regulamentações	Burden on residents	Physical adaptation	Technological adaptation	Conflict Management	Financial/Development	Difficulty Adapting Personally	Cultural issues
Andresen, M.; Runge, U. (2002)	X		X	X	X			X	X				X			X			
Bamford, G. (2005)	X		X	X	X		X	X			X		X						
Cohen, R. (2005)	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X					X			
Durrett, C. (2005)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X				X	X	X
Abraham, N.; Delagrange, K.; Ragland, C. (2005)	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X		X				X		
Choi, J. S. (2007)	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X					X			
Fromm, D.; Jong, E. (2009)	X		X	X	X		X	X			X						X	X	X
Glass, A. P. (2009)	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X		X			X			
Marriott, S. (2010)	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X					X	X		
Tyvima, T. (2010)	X			X	X			X					X			X	X		

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Choi, J. S.; Paulsson, J. (2011)	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X		X		X				
Ache, P.; Fedrowitz, M. (2012)	X				X	X		X	X		X						X		
Glass, A. P. (2012)	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X			X	
Critchlow, M.; Moore, A. (2012)	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X		X						
Blanchard, J. (2013)	X		X	X	X		X		X		X					X	X		
Choi, J. S. (2013)	X		X	X	X			X			X		X		X				
Fontaine, S. (2013)	X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X		X	X			X		
Glass, A. P.; Plaats, R. S. V. (2013)	X	X	X	X	X	X					X		X		X	X			
Glass, A. P. (2013)	X	X	X	X	X						X		X		X	X			
Rodman, M. C. (2013)	X		X	X	X	X	X	X			X					X	X		
Choi, J. S.; Cho, J.; Kueesook S. (2014)	X	X		X	X		X	X			X		X		X				
Critchlow, M. (2015)	X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X		X						
Jolanki, O.; Viikko, A. (2015)	X			X	X		X	X								X	X	X	
Labit, A. (2015)	X	X	X	X	X		X				X		X				X		
Pedersen, M. (2015)	X		X	X	X		X	X	X		X		X		X	X	X	X	
Sandstedt, E.; Westin, S. (2015)	X		X	X	X						X		X		X	X			
Glass, A. P. (2016)	X	X	X	X	X			X			X		X		X	X			
Bigonnesse, C. (2017)	X		X	X	X			X	X		X		X		X				
Jayson, S. (2017)	X	X		X	X		X	X	X		X		X		X	X			
Alonso, N. R.; D'Argemir, D. C. (2017)	X		X		X			X					X				X		
Jarvis, H. (2018)	X	X		X	X			X			X		X				X		
Adams, R. G.; Harmon, J. T. (2018)	X	X		X	X						X								X
López, S.T.; Hernández, P. V.; García-Pérez, O. (2018)	X	X	X	X	X						X		X		X				
Ahrentzen, S.; Steiner, R. L. (2019)	X	X	X		X		X	X					X				X		
Angioni, M.; Musso, F. (2019)	X		X	X	X		X	X					X	X			X		
Baldwin, C.; Dendle, K.; McKinlay, A. (2019)	X			X	X		X	X	X		X					X			
Hrast, M. F. <i>et al.</i> (2019)	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X		X				X		X
Glass, A. P. (2019)	X		X	X	X		X	X					X		X	X			
Serra, E. G.; Mora, M. R. C. (2019)	X		X	X	X		X				X		X		X	X			
Hacke, U.; Müller, K.; Dütschke, E. (2019)	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X		X		X	X			
Hudson, J. (2019)	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X		X		X	X			
Pfeiffer, D. <i>et al.</i> (2019)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X	X	X	X	X
Puplampu, V. <i>et al.</i> (2019)	X	X	X	X	X		X				X		X		X	X			

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	Benefits										Challenges								
	Mutual support	Active aging	Autonomy/Independence	Well-being/Quality of life	Education of innovation	Sustainability	Reduction of loneliness	Sense of Community	Economic	LGBTQIA+ people	Pandemic	Policy needs Públicas/Regulamentações	Burden on residents	Physical adaptation	Technological adaptation	Conflict Management	Financial/Development	Difficulty Adapting Personally	Cultural issues
Rusinovic, K.; Bochove, M.; Sande, J. (2019)	X		X	X	X		X					X		X		X	X		
Weeks, L. E. <i>et al.</i> (2019)	X	X	X		X	X		X			X								X
Willcox, K. (2019)	X	X			X									X					X
Chum, K. <i>et al.</i> (2020)	X		X	X	X			X			X		X						X
Giofrè, F.; Porro, L. (2020)	X		X	X	X	X		X			X		X		X				
Glass, A. P.; Lawlor, L. (2020)	X	X		X	X			X			X		X						X
Jolanki, O. H. (2020)	X	X	X	X	X			X			X		X						X
Mojžišová, A.; Dvořáčková, D.; Barták, M. (2020)	X			X	X			X			X		X						X
Puplampu, V. (2020)	X	X	X	X	X			X			X		X			X			X
Puplampu V.; Peters S.; Chipanshi M. (2020)	X		X	X	X			X			X		X						
Garganté, C. K.; Samper, S.E. (2021)	X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X		X			X			
Ye, J.; Wu, Z. (2021)	X	X		X	X								X	X	X	X			X
Leiras, A. A. (2021)	X			X	X			X			X								X
Mahmood, A. <i>et al.</i> (2021)	X			X	X			X			X		X	X					X
Mandelman, M. (2021)	X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X		X			X			X
Cordeiro, B. A. (2022)	X		X	X	X			X	X	X	X		X			X	X	X	X
Barbaccia, V. <i>et al.</i> (2022)	X	X	X	X	X						X		X						X
Bielski, Z. (2022)	X		X		X			X	X										X
Chuliá, M. A. T.; Sundtröm, G. (2022)	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X		X						
Glass, A. P.; Norris, H. (2022)	X			X	X			X	X		X	X							
Pfaff, R.; Trentham, B. (2022)	X		X	X	X			X			X		X						X
Warner, E. W.; Chambers, L.; Andrews, F. J. (2022)	X		X	X	X	X		X			X		X						X
Weeks, L. E. <i>et al.</i> (2022)	X		X	X	X			X	X	X			X						
Sanchez, C.C.; Martinez, J.M.C.; Hernandis, S.P. (2023)	X		X	X	X			X	X		X		X						X
Cordeiro, B. A.; Szczygiel, N.; Dias, A. A. (2023)	X			X	X			X	X	X			X						X
Durrett, C. (2023)	X		X	X	X			X	X	X						X			
Koller, J. M.; Hutchings, B. L.; Zobotka, J. (2023)	X			X	X			X	X		X	X	X						
Siltanen, S. <i>et al.</i> (2023)	X	X	X	X	X			X					X				X	X	X
Font, J.G. (2024)	X	X	X	X	X			X			X		X				X		X

Source: Prepared by the authors (2025).

The contributions of the 72 studies included in the construction of concepts about senior cohousing focused on aging reveal a consistent pattern in highlighting social support and mutual support as elements that make up the structure of collaborative housing. These aspects were central to all included studies (n=72), suggesting not only the role of an alternative housing model

but also its functioning as a complex structure of interpersonal and community support. In addition, mutual support was identified as a daily practice that encourages interdependence, contributing to the autonomy of residents and highlighting how these practices positively impact emotional and mental health, serving as a preventive factor against social isolation and loneliness, which are risks often associated with aging.

An approach to active aging was identified in 51% of the studies (n=37), characterized by the encouragement of participation in community activities and the improvement of physical and mental well-being (F3, F4, F5, F6, F8, F9, F11, F14, F17, F18, F19, F21, F22, F24, F27, F29, F31, F32, F33, F34, F37, F40, F41, F42, F43, F45, F46, F49, F50, F52, F54, F55, F58, F60, F62, F71, and F62). Furthermore, the association of cohousing with active aging highlights a complexity in relating the different contexts of existing housing, pointing to the need for improvements and specific interventions in traditional models when analyzing the possibilities for achieving active aging (F71).

An active lifestyle is linked to the opportunities for daily participation provided by the physical environment, promoting engagement and social interaction. This dynamic recognizes older adults as active agents and essential resources for productivity in society, highlighting the role of educational interventions as key elements for optimizing capacities for individual and social development (F33).

Commitment among residents is seen as a social process that nurtures a sense of community, being observed in 65% (n=47) of the studies reviewed (F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F7, F8, F9, F10, F11, F12, F13, F14, F16, F17, F20, F21, F22, F23, F25, F27, F28, F29, F30, F31, F34, F35, F36, F38, F41, F42, F45, F47, F54, F58, F59, F61, F62, F63, F64, F65, F66, F67, F68, F69, and F70), where residents experience security and mutual care. Cooperation among cohousing residents is greater than in traditional housing, where a sense of purpose is provided through community involvement, creating an opportunity for personal growth and fulfillment among residents (F14, F16, F49, and F69).

Residents' well-being and quality of life in aging were related to the physical environment of cohousing in 92% (n=66) of the studies (F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F7, F8, F9, F10, F11, F13, F14, F15, F16, F17, F18, F19, F20, F21, F22, F23, F24, F25, F26, F27, F28, F29, F31, F32, F33, F35, F36, F37, F38, F39, F40, F41, F42, F43, F44, F47, F48, F49, F50, F51, F52, F53, F54, F55, F56, F57, F58, F59, F60, F62, F63, F64, F65, F66, F67, F68, F69, F70, F71, and F72), in which emotional and mental health reflected relevant aspects.

Shared spaces, when well-structured to promote interaction and active participation by residents, foster greater life satisfaction, as evidenced by the residents themselves (F21). This dynamic stimulates the desire to remain in the community, encouraging healthy behaviors and generating positive impacts on the overall well-being of individuals. The adoption of a user-centered approach to design, which gives cohousing its characteristics, is reflected in the high level of satisfaction among residents, who highlight the relevance of structural considerations, as well as location, in ensuring the reported quality of life (F6 and F16).

This quality of life is also intrinsically related to emotional and mental support, which function as enhancers of individual well-being. Living together in a cohousing environment, by encouraging interdependence and mutual care, provides a greater sense of belonging and connection, contributing to a lower prevalence of loneliness and highlighting the potential for mitigating social isolation. The approach focused on reducing social isolation is present in 64% (n=46) of the included studies (F2, F4, F5, F7, F9, F11, F13, F14, F15, F20, F21, F23, F24, F25, F29, F34, F35, F36, F37, F38, F39, F40, F41, F42, F43, F44, F48, F49, F50, F51, F52, F53, F56, F57, F58, F59, F61, F62, F63, F66, F67, F68, F69, F70, F71, and F72), demonstrating its potential as a model of emotionally healthy living.

The opportunity to interact regularly with other residents through shared responsibilities and decision-making processes that promote frequent integration into group activities, as well as communal meals, encourages a positive attitude toward aging, providing an environment where older people are valued for their experiences and contributions (F23, F49, and F69). Consequently, this results in the construction of a culture of respect for the aging process and its acceptance. These points become even more relevant when considering different family configurations, or even the absence of them, in the context of aging. By meeting the needs of diverse groups, these interactions contribute to greater security through the familiarity built and stronger social connections among residents, which foster a natural and secure support network, promoting a significant improvement in the overall quality of life within a cohousing community (F16, F27, F30, F32, F36, and F42).

A meaningful and rewarding living environment, tailored to residents' preferences and needs, is characterized by the autonomy and independence that the model provides, with these characteristics being highlighted in 76% (n=55) of the studies presented here (F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F7, F8, F9, F11, F13, F14, F15, F16, F17, F18, F19, F20, F22, F24, F25, F26, F27, F28, F30, F33, F34, F35, F37, F38, F39, F40, F41, F42, F43, F44, F45, F47, F48, F50, F52, F53, F54, F58, F59, F60, F61, F62, F64, F65, F66, F67, F69, F71, and F72).

These factors promote the continuity of residents' family life within the society built by the community (F30), even in the face of some functional losses, serving as an alternative to traditional models of care and avoiding early institutionalization, which allows them to remain in their residence for a longer period (F42, F48, F56, F58, and F71).

However, ensuring that the distribution of responsibilities and care in cohousing is balanced among residents is essential, as it prevents care overload for some residents, which would imply an imbalance in the stability of cohousing and compromise its cohesion (F1 and F13). The emphasis on including the voices of the elderly residents of cohousing in the formulation of their occupations and in the construction of their community life enriches the understanding of the needs and aspirations of residents, filling a gap in both literature and practice (F64). This gap is relevant when incorporating the multiple dimensions of diversity, whether in terms of sexual orientation, gender, affinities, or functionality.

Among the multiple dimensions of diversity, the experience of the LGBTQIA+ people stands out, comprising only 3% (n=2) of the studies that addressed this theme, whose demands and preferences reveal the need for innovative housing and care alternatives. Unlike traditional models focused on sharing care resources, these initiatives emphasize coexistence in spaces that promote common interests and lifestyles, such as LGBTQIA+ or LGBT-friendly communities (F62 and F67), prioritizing projects based on shared values and the creation of safe and respectful environments.

In this context, cohousing enables the construction of a cohesive community when it incorporates the LGBTQIA+ people, as well as those with functional diversity (F62), standing out – unlike traditional approaches to aging – for its capacity for adaptation and acceptance, ensuring that no individual is marginalized and promoting healthy and respectful aging for all. The security and emotional support offered by the cohousing model, which goes beyond the physical environment, make the space more inclusive for members regardless of their identities, forming meaningful bonds in the face of additional challenges related to aging and discrimination (F19, F22, F25, F27, F31, F32, F46, F61, and F62).

The self-organization of cohousing projects within their structure enables the reduction of overall costs, proving to be a more economical model, with this approach being evident in 36% (n=26) of the studies (F1, F2, F3, F4, F6, F8, F11, F12, F13, F15, F17, F22, F25, F28, F29, F36, F37, F40, F42,

F48, F54, F59, F62, F66, F68, and F69). This is due to the sharing of facilities and equipment, as well as a reduction in resource consumption using ecological innovations that promote sustainability (F4, F12, F13, F18, F20, F42, F45, F48, and F65).

However, collective management may require a keen eye for identifying and managing conflicts, which are inherent in community dynamics composed of individuals with diverse experiences, values, and needs. In this sense, it is essential to implement clear and structured mechanisms for conflict resolution, such as regular meetings for open discussions and the establishment of previously agreed-upon rules of coexistence. In this case, the need for specialized mediation may emerge as an effective tool to facilitate dialogue, reduce deadlocks, and promote collaborative solutions. Mediation, conducted by a trained professional or a neutral member of the community, can play an important role in helping residents express their perspectives constructively, strengthening community ties, and ensuring the harmonious continuity of the collective model.

This factor proved to be significant when addressed as a point of attention by 50% (n=36) of the studies included in this scoping review, highlighting its relevance in addressing conflicts as a challenge to be observed, as well as the need to develop group communication skills to ensure an inclusive and welcoming environment (F1, F3, F6, F8, F9, F10, F11, F13, F15, F16, F18, F19, F20, F21, F23, F25, F26, F27, F28, F29, F33, F36, F38, F39, F40, F41, F42, F43, F44, F48, F52, F54, F55, F58, F59, and F69).

The possible difficulties of personal adaptation, identified in nine studies, as well as aspects of collaboration and sharing among residents, represented a smaller percentage (13%), but still reveal issues of great relevance.

However, this lower representation does not reduce the significance of these issues in the context of cohousing. Adapting to the shared management model can represent a significant challenge for some individuals, especially those who are accustomed to traditional housing systems where responsibilities are delegated to external administrators (F4, F7, F13, F25, F42, F59, F60, and F71).

In crisis situations, such as those observed during the COVID-19 pandemic, the model shows promise, reinforcing the importance of housing structures that offer emotional, social, and practical support in different challenging scenarios (F24, F57, F59, F61, F62, F63, F66, F67, and F70). However, issues such as financial support, legal recognition, and difficulties associated with a lack of knowledge about the model in some regions can lead to cultural resistance to the adoption of collaborative housing models, which limits its expansion (F32, F34, F36, F47, F48, F50, and F71).

Given this scenario, the formulation of specific public policies that encourage both the creation and financing of cohousing initiatives was addressed in 81% (n=58) of the studies examined here (F2, F3, F5, F6, F7, F8, F9, F11, F12, F14, F15, F16, F17, F18, F19, F20, F21, F22, F24, F25, F26, F27, F28, F29, F31, F32, F33, F36, F37, F39, F40, F41, F42, F43, F44, F45, F47, F48, F49, F50, F51, F52, F53, F54, F56, F57, F58, F59, F60, F62, F63, F64, F65, F67, F68, F69, F70, and F72), suggesting greater social inclusion and outreach for older persons, favoring inclusive and adaptable housing for aging (F36, F48, F49, F50, and F71).

## Final Considerations

The literature shows that senior cohousing has the potential to contribute positively to social and mutual support among residents, promoting aging in the community. Remaining integrated into society, with opportunities to stay active and engaged in collaborative dynamics within senior cohousing, promotes autonomy and independence, while strengthening the sense of community.

This model encourages the maintenance of responsibilities both in daily self-care activities and in collective actions.

Offering housing alternatives with the possibility of choosing “where I want to live” reinforces the sense of responsibility and commitment to the environment, further strengthened by the social support provided by cohousing. This support contributes to prolonged residence in the home, delaying early institutionalization and reducing the costs associated with this transition. The planning, creation, and management conducted by the residents themselves allows this housing model to be adapted to the values, interests, and needs of everyone.

The social capital promoted by the support network (formal and informal) within the community expands as it integrates with the surrounding area through participatory activities. These actions foster engagement, connections, and the exchange of ideas and information, contributing to personal and collective evolution through internal and external ties. Additionally, cohousing presents strategies that mitigate the impacts observed in situations such as pandemics, whose frequency tends to increase due to climate and environmental crises. These events profoundly affect social and emotional dynamics in different configurations, highlighting the importance of planned communities in promoting resilience and emotional well-being even in scenarios of isolation or adversity.

Further research is needed, focusing on the role of the public sector in developing and strengthening cohousing communities, given the evidence highlighted. These investigations should explore how public policies and partnerships between the public and private sectors can be structured to regulate and encourage the formation of these communities, promoting an environment that supports aging in the dimensions studied in this paper.

The involvement of the public sector is essential to reduce inequalities in access to innovative housing models, allowing for greater economic, cultural, and social diversity. Through well-structured public policies, it is possible to establish standards of sustainability and mutual support, promoting more inclusive and democratic environments. In addition, the adoption of complementary practices, such as the revitalization of underutilized urban areas and the incorporation of sustainable solutions in housing planning, is indispensable for addressing contemporary urban challenges. These strategies not only respond to current demands for housing innovations for aging, but also contribute to achieving global sustainability goals, particularly Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11, which promotes inclusive and sustainable cities by integrating social innovation, sustainable planning, and intersectoral collaboration in a coordinated and effective manner. This contextualization seeks to offer a reflection on the potential of a new type of housing aimed at supporting aging.

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