



POLITECNICO  
DI TORINO

# Honors thesis

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Master of Science in Architecture Construction City

*Abstract*

## **Inclusive housing.**

An international cohousing project in the centre of Turin  
for self-sufficient elderly people

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The phenomenon of demographic ageing due to improved sanitary conditions, scientific progress and declining birth rates has led Italy to be the second oldest country in the world. However, this process does not coincide with an equally rapid and effective increase in support services for the changing needs of this large section of the population. Often the elderly age in solitude in empty and oversized houses and then, in the event of a considerable loss of autonomy, are transferred to health care facilities with a spatial and functional organisation similar to that of a generic hospital complex. The project proposal that is the subject of this thesis work is proposed as an intermediate solution between ageing in place and admission to health care facilities, and is therefore intended exclusively for the population that is still self-sufficient. The solution adopted is that of an intergenerational cohousing complex, in which single mothers and elderly people can live together, capable of activating an active network of mutual support that encourages the preservation of the latter's autonomy.

The process of defining the residential typology followed different phases. The starting point was the study of the different types of residences for the elderly most widespread in Italy, of the most recent experiments and the study of the alternatives proposed by European cases. This study was carried out by reading the regulations on assisted living in Italy and the subsequent analysis of case studies related to different types of residences. After analysing the existing situation, it was necessary to investigate the needs of the Italian elderly in the 21st century in order to decide which spaces to necessarily include in the project, to what extent, what the relationships between spaces should be and what the users should be. For these reasons a questionnaire was structured and administered to the Italian over-60s, via social networks. The questionnaire, circulated at the height of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, revealed new needs as the result of reflections arising from the considerable amount of time spent in their homes, with a reduced network of social relations and spaces that are not always adequate. However, the means of social sharing, the only one possible due to restrictions, led to the exclusion of the older part of the population. Since it could not be representative of the entire population, this study was supplemented by the results obtained from the ISTAT and Istituto Superiore di Sanità surveillance surveys, Passi d'Argento.

The reflections resulting from these analyses led to the choice of the cohousing model, which offers the elderly a private housing unit and collective spaces where they can cultivate their passions and socialise. Despite the presence of a common kitchen and dining room, the housing units include a kitchenette so that isolation is easily possible for health reasons, such as being positive for a virus like SARS-CoV-2. In the complex there are different housing units: one-room, two-room and three-room apartments, all designed with architectural devices to make them usable and adaptable to the changing needs of the elderly, but also of children.

The central location also allows users to be integrated into the life of the city, not only thanks to the proximity of any type of service of primary importance, but also of the numerous cultural centres. To fit into this context, the complex includes a number of spaces open to the neighbourhood to make the elderly residents an integral part of the community. The courtyard, a symbol of Turin's residential construction, in this case opens

up to the neighbourhood to make it an integral part of the life of the cohousing residents and to exclude the sense of loneliness from their lives.

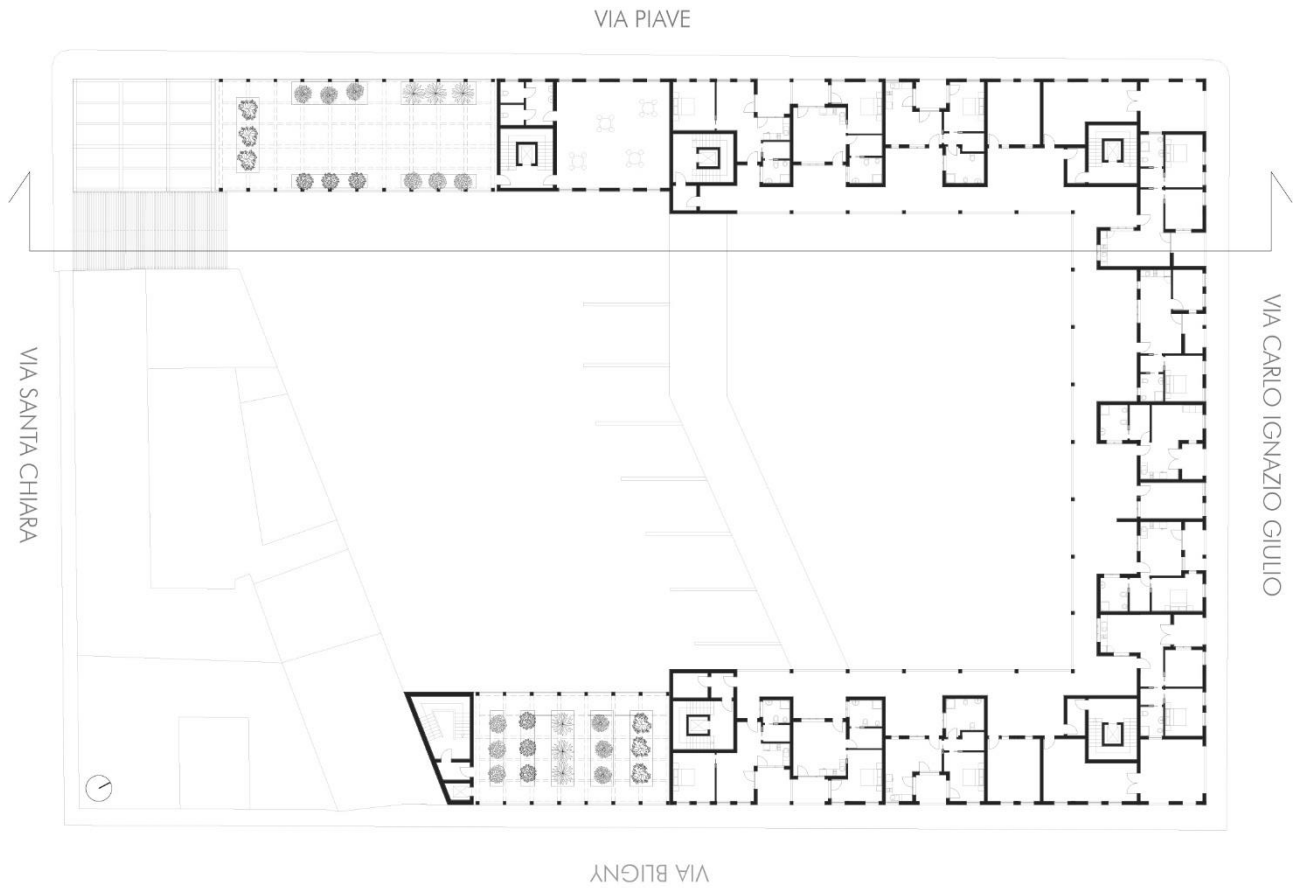


Figure 1: Second floor plan



Figure 2: Longitudinal section



Figure 3: View from the inside balcony