Silver Empowerment

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Published by Leuven University Press

Van Regenmortel, Tine and Jasper De Witte.
Silver Empowerment: Fostering Strengths and Connections for an Age-Friendly Society.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Jasper De Witte** has a PhD in sociology (KU Leuven), and he works as a research expert on inclusion and care for socially vulnerable groups at HIVA – KU Leuven, where he is active in the group Social and Economic Policy & Social Inclusion. His research focuses on socially vulnerable groups such as persons with limitations, minors who receive youth care, homeless persons and people who live in poverty. Between 2018 and 2022, he conducted research on vulnerable older persons for the be.Source University Chair Empowerment of Underprivileged Elderly. Currently, he is coordinator of the Strategic Basic Research (SBO) project of the Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO) about the impact of the neighbourhood where people live on feelings of loneliness in Flanders, Belgium.

Professor **Tine Van Regenmortel**, doctor in psychology, is head of the Social and Economic Policy & Social Inclusion Research Group at HIVA – KU Leuven. She is an international expert on empowerment and inclusion of vulnerable groups. She teaches about ‘Empowerment: theory, practice and (evaluation) research’ in the Master of Social Work and Social Policy at the KU Leuven Faculty of Social Sciences. She is also Professor of Social Work at Tranzo at the Tilburg University, Tilburg School of Social and Behavioral Sciences (the Netherlands), where she leads the Academic Collaborative Centre Social Work. She supervises several PhDs on inclusion and vulnerability, and she is holder of the KU Leuven be.source Chair Empowerment of Underprivileged Elderly. Finally, she is Promotor of the Strategic Basic Research (SBO) project of the Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO) about loneliness and the influence of neighbourhood and environment.

**Leen Heylen** is a sociologist. She earned her PhD in 2011 with a dissertation on the risk factors for social and emotional loneliness in old age. Since 2011, she works as a senior researcher at Thomas More University of Applied Sciences (Flanders, Belgium). At Thomas More, she conducts evidence- and practice-based research. She works on the topics of loneliness, informal care, neighbourhood-oriented care and caring neighbourhoods.
**Benedicte De Koker** has a degree in sociology and a PhD in social sciences, specifically in social work. Benedicte is head of the research centre 360° Care and Well-being at HOGENT. The centre focuses on practice-oriented multidisciplinary research to enhance quality and sustainability of care. Benedicte also works as a lecturer in the programme of occupational therapy, where she teaches research methods, political reasoning and occupational therapy from international perspectives. Benedicte has extensive expertise on the topic of informal caregiving. Her dissertation, defended at the University of Antwerp in 2018, examines the role and experiences of informal caregivers in Flanders in the context of community care.

**Dimitri Mortelmans** is Professor in Sociology at the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Antwerp (Belgium). He is head of the Centre for Population, Family and Health. His research concentrates on family sociology and the sociology of labour. He has published on divorce, new constituted families, gendered labour careers and work-life balance. In 2022, he acquired an Employee Retention Credit Advanced Grant on singleness in the life course (Singleton project). He is also the main author of the *Step in Statistics* book series (in Dutch) (Acco, since 2010). On qualitative methodology, he has published the *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods* (Acco, 2020) and *Qualitative Analysis with NVivo* (Acco, 2017). In demography, he co-edited *Changing Family Dynamics and Demographic Evolution. The Family Kaleidoscope* (Edward Elgar, 2016), *Lone Parenthood in the Life Course* (Springer, 2017), *Divorce in Europe* (Springer, 2020) and *Shared Physical Custody* (Springer, 2021).

**Anja Declercq** studied applied economics and sociology, and she has a PhD in sociology. She is a Professor at KU Leuven, Faculty of Social Sciences (sociological research unit), the promotor-coordinator of the Policy Research Centre for Well-being, Public Health and the Family and a project leader (director from 1 October 2022 on) at LUCAS – Centre for Care Research and Consultancy. Her research interests include the organisation of care, quality of care and the quality of life of people who need or give care and support, and the analysis of societal changes that have an impact on care and care systems.

**Tineke Abma** is Professor ‘Participation of older people’ at Leiden University Medical Center, and she is Executive Director of Leyden Academy on Vitality and Ageing in Leiden. In 2010, she was appointed as an Endowed Chair in the field of client participation in elderly care. She is a member of the International Collaboration for Participatory Health Research (ICPHR) and Director of
the International Longevity Centre (ILC) NL that is part of ILC Global Alliance. Abma has published extensively in the fields of patient participation, participatory action research and responsive evaluation. Her work has been awarded for its social value impact. New books include *Evaluation for a Caring Society* (JAI Press, 2018) and *Participatory Research for Health and Social Well-Being* (Springer, 2019).

**Elena Bendien** is a social scientist, social and cultural gerontologist, senior researcher and lecturer at Leyden Academy on Vitality and Ageing (the Netherlands). Her expertise lies in the transdisciplinary field of ageing studies, with a focus on life course perspective, life review, ageism and the intersection between gender and ageing. She specialises in intersectional analysis and participatory action research with older co-researchers. Dr. Bendien is a representative of the International Longevity Centres (ILC) the Netherlands in the working group of ILC Women and Ageing.

**Susan Woelders** is senior researcher at Leyden Academy on Vitality and Ageing in Leiden, the Netherlands. She has an MSc degree in Organizational Science (Culture, Organization and Management). Woelders finished her PhD, entitled *Power-full Patient Participation*, at the Department of Medical Humanities, VU University Medical Center in Amsterdam. Her research focuses on the participation of diverse patient and client groups, including older people, through dialogue in long-term care organisations and research approaches.

**Meriam Janssen** is employed as research broker and senior researcher at the Academic Collaborative Center Older Adults of Tranzo, Tilburg University. She has an educational background in Health Sciences. Until 2017, she worked in the area of public health, including active ageing. She has experience in combining working in practice of public health and conducting scientific research, and her areas of expertise are qualitative research and autonomy for older adults.

**Katrien Luijkx** is employed as professor to the Academic Collaborative Centre Older Adults of Tranzo, Tilburg University. She has an educational background in interdisciplinary social sciences and aims to contribute to person-centred care for older adults using science. Therefore, it is important to study the perspective of frail older adults themselves. Characteristic for her work is co-creation with different stakeholders during the process of knowledge creation and translation of research findings into care practice. The research of Luijkx and her PhD students is related to care practice.
Aukelien Scheffelaar is employed as research broker and senior researcher at the Academic Collaborative Center Older Adults of Tranzo, Tilburg University. Dr Scheffelaar has an educational background in interdisciplinary social sciences. Her areas of expertise concern participatory research and qualitative methods for quality research in long-term care.

Annerieke Stoop is employed as research broker and senior researcher at the Academic Collaborative Center Older Adults of Tranzo, Tilburg University. Her PhD project focused on integrated care for older people. She has an educational background in International Development Studies and Health Sciences. Her areas of interest are qualitative research and family caregiving.

Jozef Pacolet has a PhD in Economics, and he is Emeritus Professor with formal duties in the group Social and Economic Policy & Social Inclusion at HIVA – KU Leuven, of which he was head from 1983 until 2017. Since 1983, he has conducted research on the relation between the economy and the welfare state, focusing on the relation between the economy, ageing and social protection and the financing of the social security in Belgium and on the European level. In his research, special attention is given to the system of pensions, healthcare and long-term care.

Gregorio Rodríguez Cabrero has a PhD in economics, and he is Emeritus Professor at the University of Alcalá, where he was Dean of the Faculty of Economics. He has been a national expert of the European Commission of independent experts on social inclusion (2008–2014) and European Social Policy Network (ESPN) (2014–2022). His main fields of research are social protection and social inclusion, welfare state comparative analysis, non-profit sector and social economy, and longevity and long-term care. He coordinated in 2011 and 2022 the evaluation of the Spanish long-term care system.

Simón Sosvilla-Rivero has a BA in Economics from Universidad de La Laguna (1984), an MSc in Economics from Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (1986), an MSc in Economics from London School of Economics (1987) and a PhD in Economics from the University of Birmingham (1990). He is currently a Professor of Economic Analysis at Universidad Complutense de Madrid, a Senior Research Fellow at the Complutense Institute for Economic Analysis (ICAE) and a Research Fellow at the Riskcenter (IREA – Universitat de Barcelona). His research interests include time-series analysis, macro-econometric modelling, international finance, the welfare state and European integration.
Katrien Steenssens is a sociological research expert at the research group Social and Economic Policy & Social Inclusion of HIVA – KU Leuven. In her research, she focuses on social exclusion and integration, mainly through the use of qualitative research methods. Within the empowerment framework, she has been researching poverty and activation towards the labour market, proactive action to reduce non-take-up of social benefits, homelessness in Flanders, residential youth care and the development and use of empowerment evaluation instruments.