

# Growing Smaller

## A reflection on the quality of life, public space, and urban rehabilitation in everyday spaces

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### Abstract

*Can former rural settlements, now engulfed by urban sprawl, be transformed into small towns within a metropolitan area? We believe it is possible. We believe that urban regeneration and public realm interventions are crucial to improving the quality of life for people living in these areas. Small towns are a growing field of research that encompasses many different topics rather than focusing solely on exceptional solutions. The aim is to address essential issues such as urban revitalisation, maintaining and caring for public spaces, and improving everyday concerns related to proximity, available facilities, and increased mobility in smaller urban settlements.*

### Keywords

Small towns; Quality of life; Public space; Urban rehabilitation/regeneration; Everyday life; Lisbon metropolitan area; Queijas-Oeiras

## 1 Introduction and background

The study addresses the -apparent- paradoxical argument of considering the existence of small towns within a metropolitan area. In this case, based on the perceptions of the community. The case study application seeks to pave the way to finally disentangle the idea of small towns in only rural areas (sometimes classified as 'low-density areas') (European Commission. Statistical Office of the European Union., 2019), i.e. 'out of' metropolitan developments (de Olde and Oosterlynck, 2022; Morgado, 2022).

Urban development is widespread, with many facets and qualities (Brenner and Ghosh, 2022). Territories holding different fabrics and activities, ranging from densely urban to re-naturalised, sustain the need to withhold a more sustainable course in human activities and the plural and ever-changing landscape of ways of living.

The work stems from the reflections on participation in the ARL Working Group 'Small towns and metropolitan cores: towards cooperation?' (ARL - Academy for Territorial Development in the Leibniz Association, n.d.) where the definition of 'small town' was explored (Servillo et al., 2015; Klusáková, 2017; Demazière, 2022; Bański, 2022a, 2022b). It seeks to advance beyond the rural and metropolitan dichotomy (Ferreira and Condessa, 2012; Steinführer, 2022) and dives into local levels and proximity relationships applied to a small town (Queijas), in a particular municipality (Oeiras), within the Lisbon metropolitan area.

Despite the debate raised by perceptions and narratives on "small towns" in different geographic and cultural backgrounds, and following previous explorations interlinking small towns within a metropolitan context (Morgado, 2022), the current work refers to Statistics Portugal definition of "Vila" (INE/Statistics

Portugal, n.d.), that generally complies with current literature in Europe, and allows interlinking the study with official data and municipal data sets.

In this case, the study focuses on the pre-existing and formal rural settlements that evolve into residential areas and concrete small towns within the metropolitan context. In this respect, the interplay between quality of life, the public Realm (including public facilities and spaces) and urban rehabilitation appear to be locally vital and valued in the everyday practices of the community.

The article is divided into sections: 1. Introduction, 2. Identifying Operational Concepts, 3. Mixed methods and material, 4. The case study – application and discussion, 5. Conclusions. (see Figure 1).

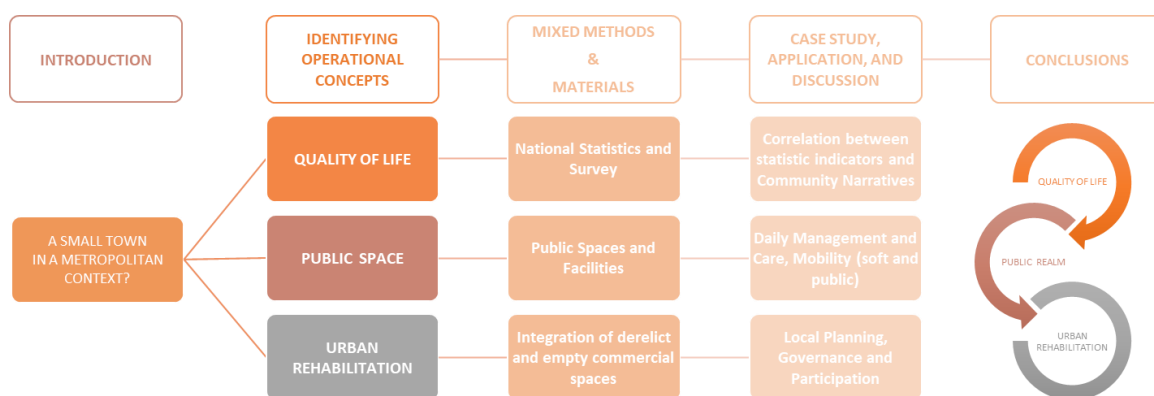


Figure 1. Diagram of the Study. Source: Own Production.

## 2 Identifying the operational concepts

In a small town, the provision of everyday public facilities and spaces, a mix of diverse shops, offices and services, gives residents a sense of belonging, the perception that local authorities are reliable, and the overall social fabric offers well-being and open participation. This neighbourhood life has developed in centres once considered 'suburban' but has begun to evolve into a more interdependent urban and social fabric.

The study builds on a rationale of three operational concepts, and beyond that, effective apparatuses that are embedded in current ways of living - quality of life, public space, urban rehabilitation - and that correlate intrinsically with the communities' sense of belonging and proactive participation in everyday management (see Figure 2).

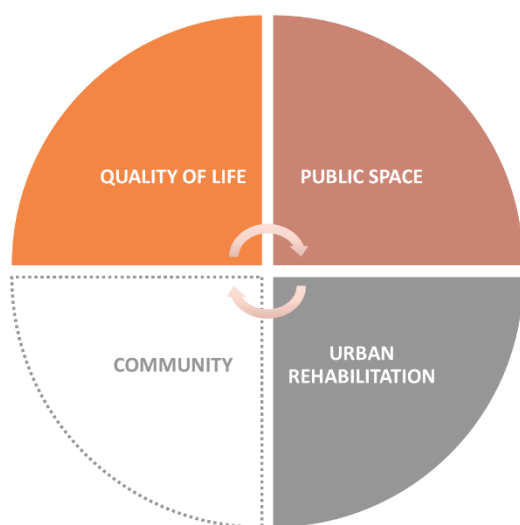


Figure 2. Interplay between the main concepts. Source: Own Production.

### 3 Mixed methods and materials

The materials and methods respond to the need to demonstrate that the interplay between the three operational concepts contributes to the perception that a particular urban settlement has an individual character and is perceived as a place with its own identity and a certain autonomy, i.e. a small town, beyond statistical or administrative definitions. A mixed methodology approach, with recourse to qualitative and interpretive research methods.

These include 1) a literature review; 2) documentation, analysis and systematisation of urban planning; 3) Statistics (Statistics Portugal/INE), desktop research on Urban Planning (Oeiras Interativa, CMO) and Survey (Morgado and Cunha, 2023); 4) Spatial analysis, and 5) Observation and site documentation.

While identifying the operational concepts that could be redesigned through the literature review and tested through different empirical sets, the study presents a limitation: the inability to provide evidence that the operational concepts correlate and contribute to the definition of a small town. For this reason, the relationship between space and society is inferred through perceptions and previous experiences rather than through evidence. For this purpose, the survey has also acted as a filter.

### 4 Case study: operational concepts, application, and discussion

Portugal has been a member of the European Union since 1986 and actively supports the recommendations and signed agreements of the European Union and the UN Agenda 2030, as well as those promoted by the United Nations. The Lisbon Metropolitan Area (LMA) is part of a territorial development along the Atlantic façade of Portugal, stretching from Sines to La Coruña in Spain. With 18 municipalities around the Tagus estuary, the LMA has existed as a legal entity since 1991. (see Figure 3).

In Portugal, spatial and urban planning is publicly led, resulting in an increasingly interconnected network of walkable and safe public spaces, a metropolitan public transport network and related soft mobility services such as bicycles. This way, local urban planning and design align with recognised targets and national legislation and incorporate climate-smart, inclusive, and equitable objectives according to the municipality or region. Communities are involved in such goals and contribute through citizens' movements

and tools, which have recourse to participatory local government actions (Assembleia da República Portuguesa, 2014).

Building on the earlier consideration of the south bank of the Tagus estuary, the study of small municipalities in the Lisbon conurbation extends to Oeiras, a municipality on the north bank. With nine small towns, the municipality of Oeiras stands out in the Lisbon metropolitan area. This allows us to prepare a case study bridging the municipal level and one of these small towns.

While metropolitan areas and municipalities have statistical and administrative definitions and competencies, small towns do not quite fit into this architecture. They have inherited cultural and social perceptions we want to explore (Morgado, 2022).

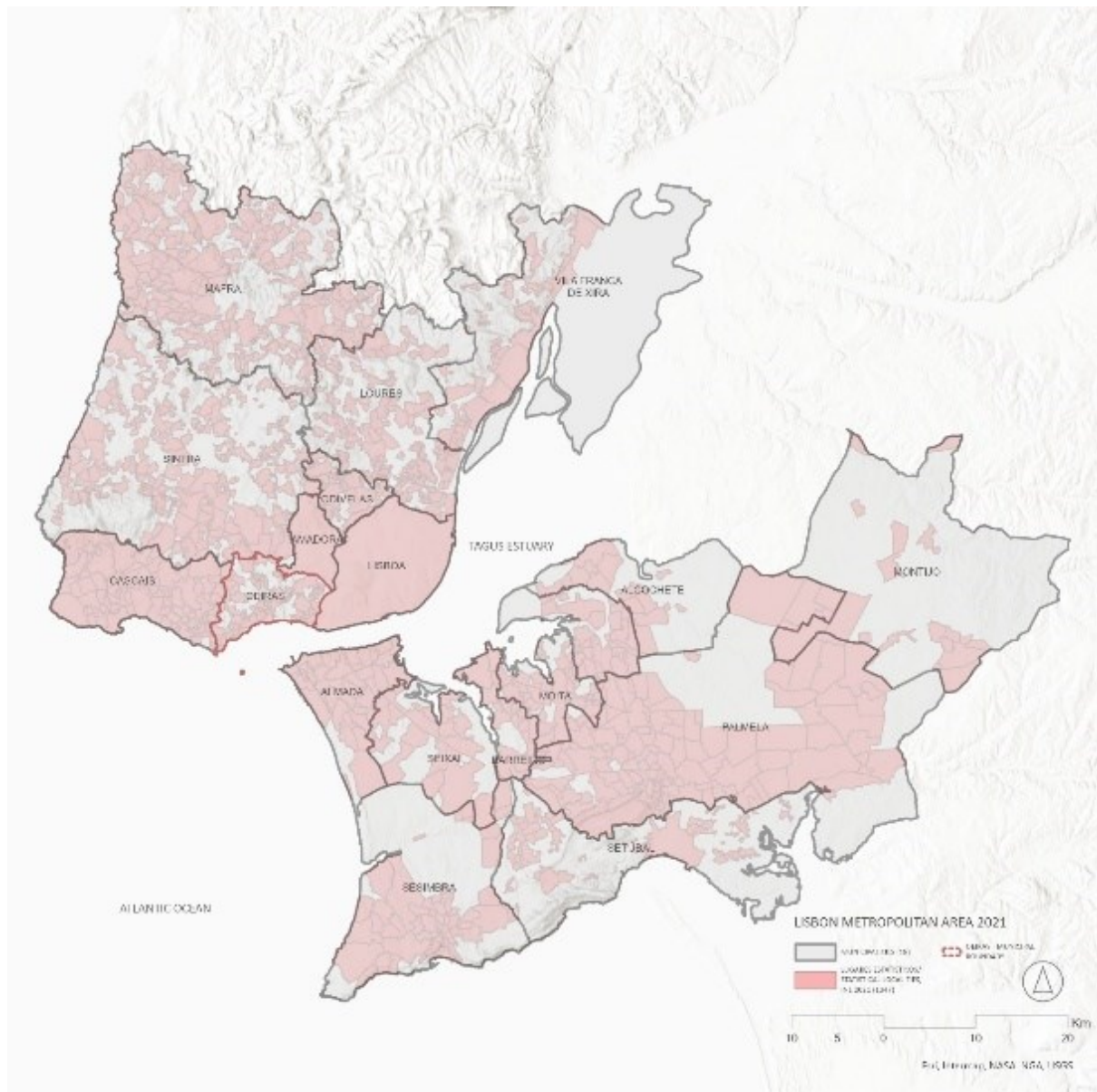


Figure 3. Lisbon metropolitan area, municipalities. Source: Own Production based on open-source datasets, accessed 14/07/2023 (INE/Statistics Portugal, n.d.)

## 4.1 Quality of life

Not long ago, well-being was an evolving concept, and WHO experts were trying to systematically frame it, allowing necessary indicators for (1) quality of life (health status, work-life balance, social connections, civic engagement and governance, environmental quality, personal security, subjective well-being) and (2) material living conditions (income and wealth, jobs and earnings, housing, GDP) (World Health Organization, Regional Office for Europe, 2013). The quality of life indicators originated with the OECD, where a more complete explanation is available (OECD, 2011). Eventually, WHO offered a tentative definition of well-being.

*Well-being exists in two dimensions, subjective and objective. It comprises an individual's life experience comparing life circumstances with social norms and values. (Proposed WHO definition of well-being, World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe, 2013: 9)*

Considering the ageing process and other concomitant societal dynamics, assessing the offer of public space and facilities and its adjustments to dynamics and environment is increasingly crucial (Guida and Carpentieri, 2021). More recently, the emergence of different social-economic discourses, particularly in the field of 'Degrowth' elaborate differently on the subject of quality of life by demanding, among other issues, GDP to be an independent indicator under different scopes (De Castro Mazarro et al., 2023). As an OECD country, Portugal is depicted in this and other reports (OECD, 2011) with a growing emphasis on well-being (cf OECD, n.d. applied to Lisbon).

The quality of life indicators can be perceived by the correlation between Statistics indicators (INE/Statistics Portugal), the existing network of public facilities (CMO and Oeiras Interativa, n.d.) and results of the Survey "Viver em Queijas" (Morgado and Cunha, 2023).

### 4.1.1 Application and discussion

Queijas was one of the ten civil parishes that make up the municipality of Oeiras. It was aggregated by the administrative reorganisation of 2012/2013, and its territory was integrated into the Union of Civil Parishes of Carnaxide and Queijas. While its autonomy is identifiable by its status as Small Town (Vila) with an official perimeter (see Figure 6), for Statistics, (unless subsection data is available) the reference is the Civil Parish level.

Through the data presented below, it is possible to verify that Queijas presents an inverse population dynamic since it suffered a population decrease in the last decade and saw the ageing of its population increase.

The data presented below clearly shows that Queijas has experienced a decrease in population over the past decade, accompanied by an increase in the proportion of elderly residents.

Data reference period	Place of residence	Total resident population	Rate of change of resident population	Population Density	Youth dependency ratio	Elderly Dependency ratio
		N.º	(%)	(Inhab./km <sup>2</sup> )	N.º	N.º
2011	Portugal	10562178	1,99	114,5	22,53	28,80
	Oeiras	172120	6,16	3751,3	23,59	29,30
	Queijas	36288	18,31	4512,5	26,39	30,70
2021	Portugal	10343066	-2,07	112,15	20,21	36,79
	Oeiras	171658	-0,27	3742,27	22,92	38,88
	Carnaxide and Queijas	36079	-0,58	4095,23	25,76	35,88

Table 1: Characterisation of the study area (National, Municipal and Civil Parish levels). Source: INE, 2011 and 2021.

Data reference period	Age Groups	Number of residents			%		
		Resident Individuals	Gender		Resident Individuals	Gender	
			Male	Female		Male	Female
2011	0 to 14 years	26559	13683	12876	15%	7,95%	7,48%
	15 to 24 years	16533	8463	8070	10%	4,92%	4,69%
	25 to 64 years	96059	44269	51790	56%	25,72%	30,09%
	65 and older	32969	13722	19247	19%	7,97%	11,18%
	<b>Total</b>	172120	80137	91983	100%	46,56%	53,44%
2021	0 to 14 years	24317	12577	11740	14%	7,33%	6,84%
	15 to 24 years	17864	9167	8697	10%	5,34%	5,07%
	25 to 64 years	88229	40971	47258	51%	23,87%	27,53%
	65 and older	41248	16866	24382	24%	9,83%	14,20%
	<b>Total</b>	171658	79581	92077	100%	46,36%	53,64%

Table 2: Population living in Queijas by age group and gender. Source: INE, 2011 and 2021.

The population aged between 25 and 64 years constitutes the majority of the resident population in Queijas, while the population aged 65 and over corresponds to 56% (2011) and 51% (2021) and the population aged between 0 and 24 years corresponds to 25% (2011) and 24% (2021) of the total. In Queijas, the elderly dependency ratio (EDR) is relatively high, i.e. 35 elderly per 100 working-age individuals, having increased over the last decade.

The resident population of Queijas is predominantly adults aged between 25 and 64 years. Meanwhile, those aged 65 and older make up 56% of the population in 2011 and 51% in 2021, while individuals aged 0 to 24 account for 25% in 2011 and 24% in 2021. The elderly dependency ratio (EDR) in Queijas is relatively high, standing at 35 elderly for every 100 working-age individuals, and has seen an increase over the last decade.

Using direct observation and the results obtained from the questionnaire, following a simple random sampling (the different places and time spaces), regarding the user characterisation, it is possible to realise

that the data obtained reveals that 56.5% of the individuals are female and 43.5% are male. It is also essential to understand the age and to which main age groups the respondents belong, which activities they perform and which spaces they use in Queijas to understand the specific needs of the inhabitants by age group. The age of the user was grouped into six classes (Figure 4. Gender and age group in Queijas. Source (Morgado and Cunha, 2023).).

The respondents belonging to the sample are, in their majority, adult individuals of working age (highlighting: from 55 to 64 years old: 34.8% and over 75 years old: 21.7%) (Figure 4). However, comparing the values of the sample of respondents with the total resident population, it is possible to verify that the surveyed population is aged, the second age group with the highest percentage (21.7%). The individuals aged between 18 and 24 present a reduced percentage (4.3%). None of the respondents is under 18 years of age.

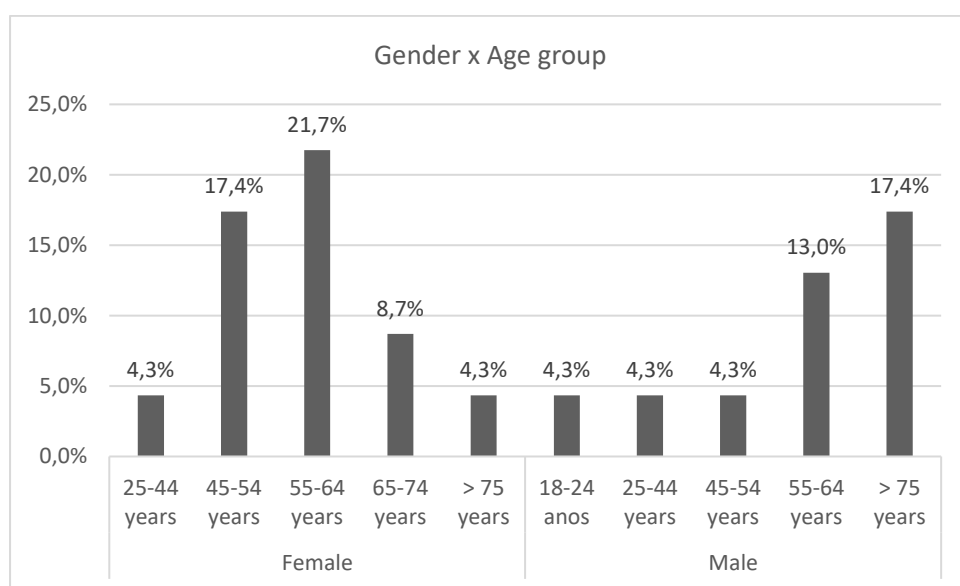


Figure 4. Gender and age group in Queijas. Source (Morgado and Cunha, 2023).

Analysing the level of education of the sample respondents, among the denominations "basic education", "high school", "professional education", "higher education (Bachelor's, Master's, Graduate)", and "PhD" (Figure 5), it is possible to verify that the great majority has a high level of education, namely higher education (69.6%), followed by high school (17.4%), which induces the high socio-economic level that this population segment holds.

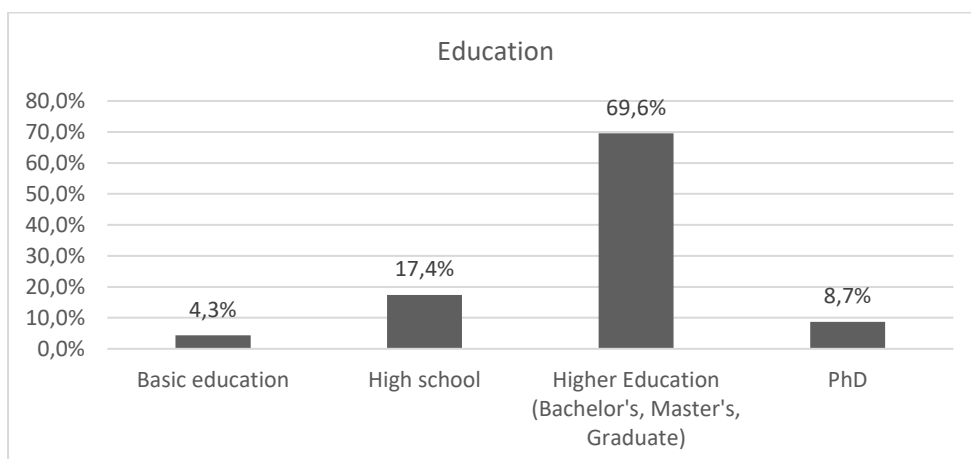


Figure 5. Education of the respondents in Queijas. Source (Morgado and Cunha, 2023).

Analysing the professional profile of the respondents, those who belong to the active population, there is a strong relationship between the education level of the individuals and the professional activity, i.e., there is a more significant presence of employees in sectors of high qualifications and services, referring to the Occupation Groups (CPP, INE, 2011) such as "specialists in intellectual and scientific activities" (CPP2)(26.1%). 8.7% of the respondents are retired / pensioners (8.7%), a value supported by the representativeness that this age group (>75 years) presents in the resident population of the parish under study. To understand the activities performed by this population, it was asked what other activities they perform in Queijas. In this sense, it was found that possibly arising from significant restrictions on daily life imposed by Covid-19, most of the working-age population between 25 and 64 years (26%) telework in Queijas.

## 4.2 Public Space and Facilities

Public space encompasses different perspectives on space (social and architectural), public (open and accessible urban spaces, but public facilities as well), as discussed so widely by authors (Carmona, 2021; Gehl, 2011; Low, 2023; Madanipour, 2023; Mehta, 2020). In this study, only green urban spaces and public facilities are considered, especially in contributing to health, thus the quality of life and as proximity elements of the urban fabric (Cunha et al., 2021). We live in Public space and represent ourselves as citizens in the collective sphere.

Urban Green Space (UGS) is defined as urban land as a set of accessible areas, designed or not, of public or private space, partially or covered by grass, trees, shrubs or other vegetation (Haas, 2021). They appear in cities in different forms and can be characterised through various attributes, such as location, size, function, quality and safety, distance from users and target audiences, and are related to landscape quality and user perception (Marques da Costa and Kállay, 2020). They can take the form of parks and gardens (also hanging and vertical gardens); meadows, woodlands, areas for landscape integration and environmental protection of roads and other urban infrastructure; slopes and hillsides covered with vegetation; green areas of cemeteries; residual agricultural and forest areas within urban spaces or susceptible to development (Cunha et al., 2021). The UGS is also called a green-water zone because urban water, such as ditches, canals, inland waterways, rivers, and riverbanks, is considered UGS (Haas, 2021).

These spaces perform functions of environmental protection, landscape or architectural integration, and recreation, integrating the built mass in the urban fabric and mitigating its impact. The UGS are intrinsic elements associated with better results in terms of population health, ensuring improvement in the quality of life of the population and the sustainability of urban spaces (Cunha, 2022).

Therefore, it is crucial to understand how the urban environment impacts the use and accessibility of these spaces in small towns and the significance of urban regeneration in enhancing their integration into the urban landscape, promoting well-being, and fostering healthier living conditions for the entire urban population.

#### 4.2.1 *Application and discussion*

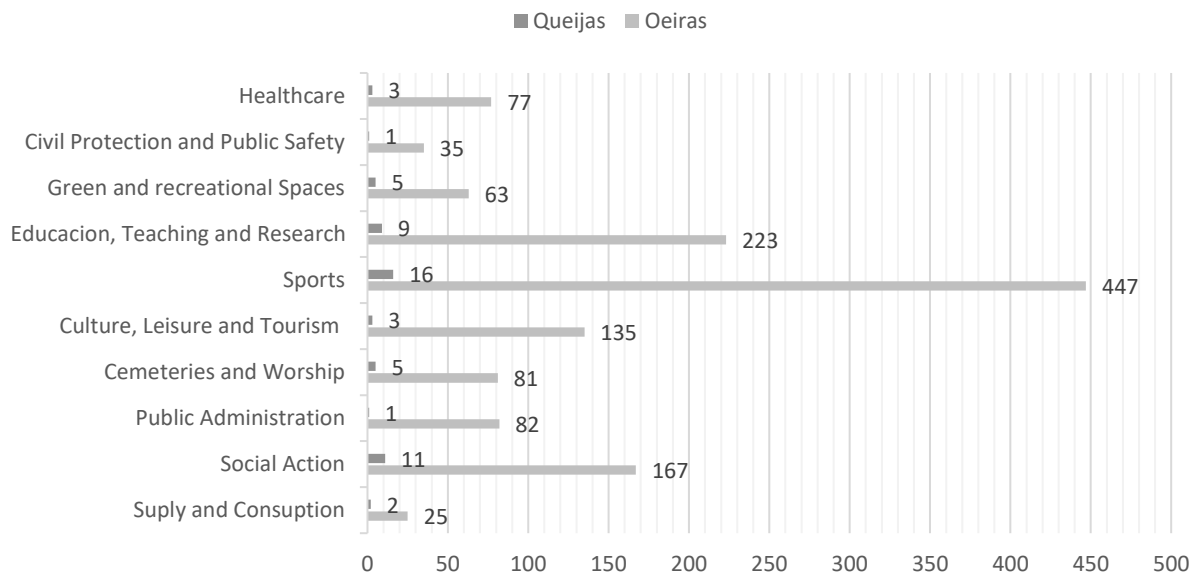
Oeiras is a wealthy municipality, with a noteworthy variety and availability of parks and gardens, including contemporary parks (e.g. Parque dos Poetas, Oeiras) and historic gardens (e.g. Quinta Real de Caxias, Caxias). Such care has also been proposed in rehabilitation processes, such as the Marquês Vineyards and the Agronomical Reserve, where a specific local variety of wine is being reintroduced. The study does not consider green spaces such as sports infrastructures (e.g. the National Stadium) or those preserved under legally binding frameworks (e.g. Serra de Carnaxide).

However, the proximity of urban green spaces with frequent management and maintenance, where the trees and other species have contributed to the increase in biodiversity, fall under the public service to the community, i.e. as a public facility (see Table 1) within the green and recreational spaces category.

Queijas showcases a variety of transformed marginal spaces, such as Largo de São Miguel, and wooded urban boundaries along its perimeter. The area also features large open spaces and pocket gardens. Recently, in line with contemporary landscape and environmental protection policies, former rural areas have been re-integrated through a process of naturalization. This involves the reintroduction of native flora and a subsequent increase in biodiversity, exemplified by the Queijas Urban Park.

With regard to the provision of public facilities, it can be noted that Queijas hosts the full range of categories present in the municipality, albeit in a modest percentage (see Table 1). Another relevant observation is that the heat map of public facilities (see Figure 6) places the higher densities within the perimeters of small towns, all of which have a historic urban nucleus. In the small towns within the metropolitan context, especially in Oeiras, a different level of public transport, mainly small buses, connects the urban centres, valuing the proximity and the primary need of the communities to access such public facilities (e.g. public administration, education, health).

## Public Facilities By Category



**Table 3. Public Facilities by Category Municipal Level (Oeiras) and Small-Town Level (Queijas) (National, Municipal and Civil Parish levels). Open datasets, Oeiras Interativa.**

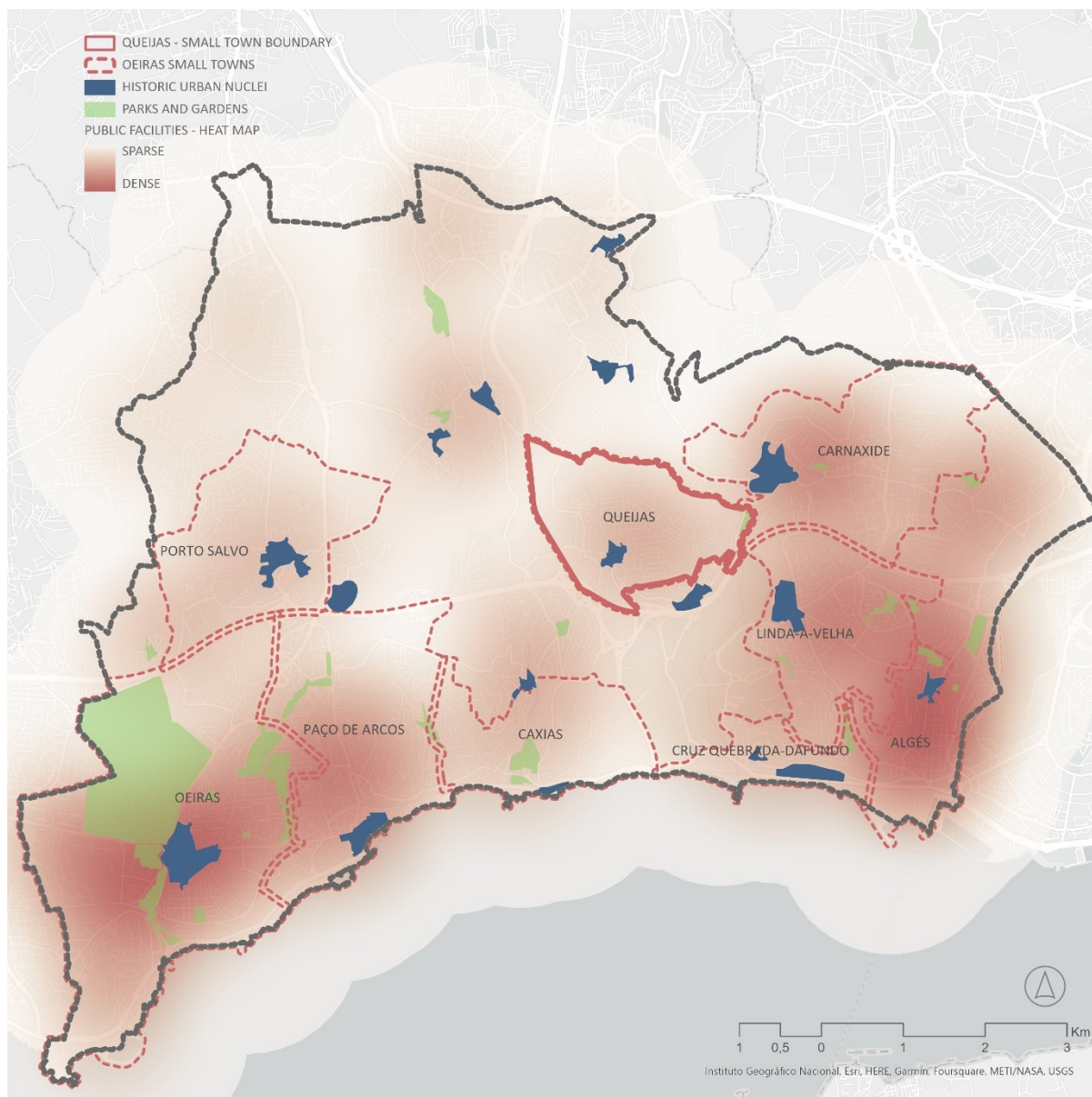


Figure 6. Public Facilities Heat Map and Gardens and Parks, Oeiras Municipality – Historic Urban Nuclei, Small Towns (Vilas) and the selected Small Town (Queijas). Source: Own Production based on open-source datasets, accessed 14/07/2023 (CMO and Oeiras Interativa, n.d.; INE/Statistics Portugal, n.d.).

### 4.3 Urban rehabilitation

Urban rehabilitation is recognized as a comprehensive intervention in the existing urban framework, where the heritage of buildings and spaces is preserved, modernized, and enhanced through rehabilitation efforts. This includes improving infrastructure systems, public facilities, and green spaces, as well as the construction, reconstruction, expansion, alteration, conservation, or demolition of structures. (Fernandes et al., 2023).

It is a fundamental concept, with an operational scope, that has been evolving since the 1970s (Roberts and Sykes, 2000; Altrock, 2018; Pultrone, 2017; Falanga and Nunes, 2021; de Paula et al., 2023). It has been allowing for active intervention tools in urban territories mostly conditioned by pre-existing human

activities and occupations, which - if approached in a comprehensive way - can bridge gaps in urban planning and design and encompass very different spatio-functional characteristics, such as environmental and ecological, socio-economic disparities, offering collaborative and flexible solutions in a world that is constantly changing.

In Portugal, however, there is a specific definition of urban rehabilitation. This definition is inclusive and respects local communities and existing characteristics. This legal diploma deals with several issues, one of which is the definition of urban regeneration, a kind of subtype that can only be applied in specific cases or areas where the maintenance of built areas is not possible. This allows the demolition and renovation of former activities, for example in former industrial and derelict areas or in disadvantaged self-built areas (Assembleia da República Portuguesa, 2009). Other relevant management tools include, notably, tools specific to places requiring more severe intervention (e.g. ARU - Areas for Urban Rehabilitation).

Without a specific detailed rehabilitation plan for Queijas, the Master Plan for the municipality is key. The actual need for urban rehabilitation is perceived by empty commercial spaces and unbuilt plots in the urban core, together with daily improvement works and public space management by the municipality of Oeiras. However, it is a transitional process without the power and prerogatives a Detailed Plan offers.

#### 4.3.1 Application and discussion

As in most of the municipalities of the Lisbon metropolitan area, urbanisation has been driven by the growing population arriving in the capital searching for better living conditions and jobs, which are not available on the inner continental border with Spain (Morgado, 2005). The areas corresponding to the current metropolitan areas of Lisbon and Oporto added almost 10% of the country's total population.

Between 1950 and 1980, despite different political regimes and the colonial war, urbanisation was driven by private land grants, with legal support, but not necessarily the best design for the new suburban residents. Oeiras was no different. Thus, in small towns such as Queijas, it is common to observe growth with recourse to private plot permits, mainly through detached houses.

The first and older one dates back to the 1960s and is adjacent to the historic centre. It is a set of three main streets, following a stereotypical interpretation of urban design that proposed a return to the streets and public space typologies, including cul-de-sacs and pocket spaces. Meanwhile, the number of cars had increased, while the buildings, according to the building regulations of the time, had no indoor parking and, being only three storeys high, no lifts. The streets are narrow, and the sunlight is not always the best. This is also the area where the proportion of people aged over 65 is concentrated in buildings with few mobility aids, in line with a general trend towards the obsolescence and shrinking of urban centres (Figure 7).

Queijas is a consolidated area with a core to be requalified to integrate the infrastructural and predominantly inhabited urban fabric. To this end, the requalification and valorisation of the urban fabric is envisaged in terms of the renovation of existing buildings, the improvement of accessibility and mobility conditions, and the quality of public spaces.

This area has been identified for urban rehabilitation in the Oeiras Master Plan (PDM/Plano Diretor Municipal de Oeiras). Although the buildings are difficult to adapt to current lifestyles, the increase in public facilities and the improvement of public spaces have made this area a key part of the centre of Queijas.

The public spaces are frequently maintained and cleaned, plants are pruned and watered, activities are organised and shops are moved into the formerly empty commercial spaces. (Figure 7).

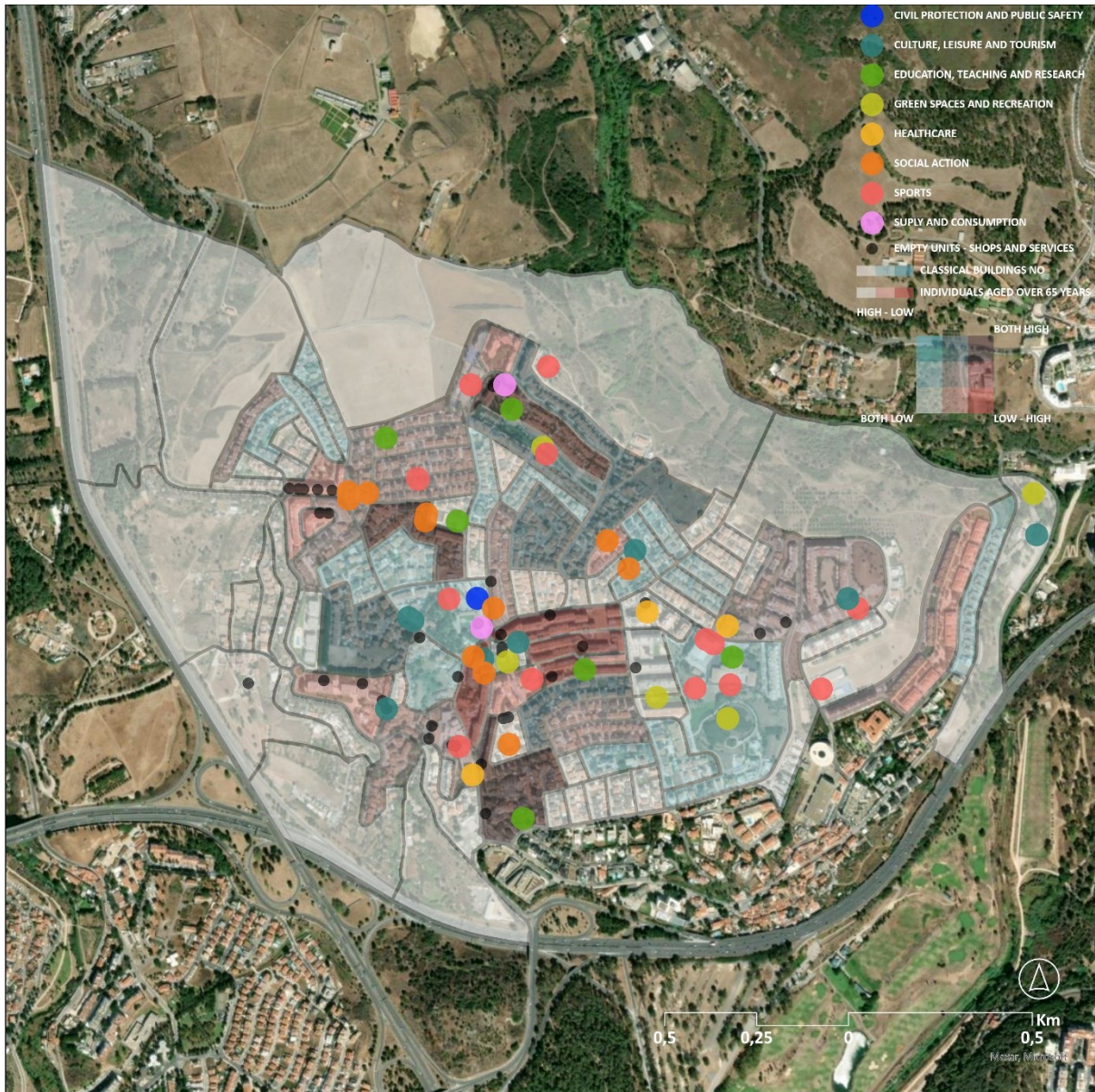


Figure 7. Queijas Bi-variation between the Number of Classical Buildings and People aged over 65 (statistic subsection level) to express the ageing process in the centre, next to the historical centre; overlap of Public Facilities, and Empty shops and services units to show functional obsolescence. Source: Own Production based on open-source datasets accessed 14/07/2023 (CMO and Oeiras Interativa, n.d.; INE/Statistics Portugal, n.d.).

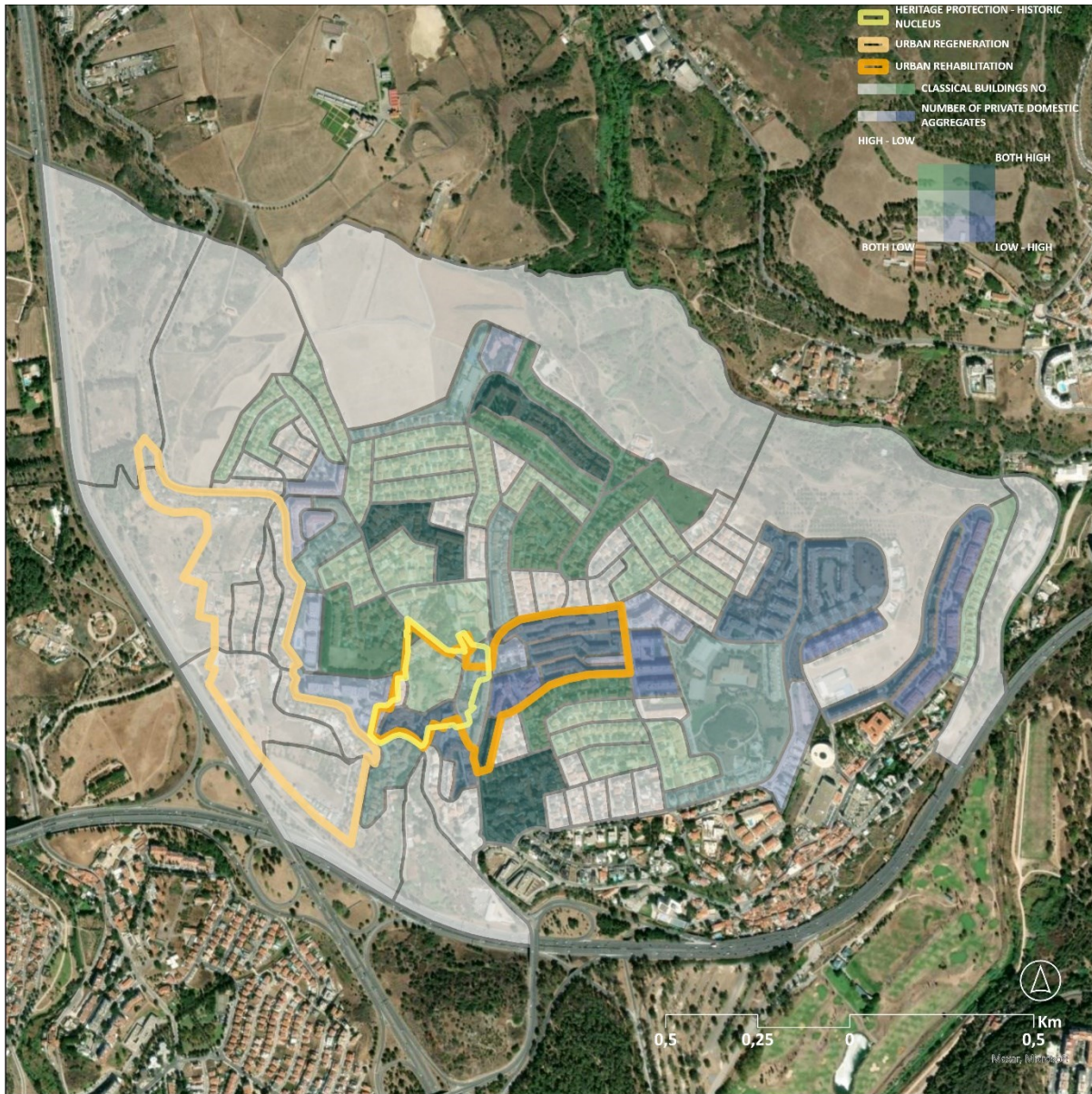


Figure 8. Queijas Bi-variation between the Number of Classical Buildings and People and Number of Private Domestic Aggregates (statistic subsection level) to express densities of households per building next to the historical centre; overlap of practical Urban Planning classes: Heritage Protection (DPGU-Departamento de Planeamento e Gestão Urbanística/CMO and Sector do Património Construído/CMO, 1999) and Classes Urban Rehabilitation and Urban Regeneration (Departamento de Ordenamento do Território e Planeamento Urbano - Divisão de Ordenamento do Território, 2023). Source: Own Production based on open-source datasets, accessed 14/07/2023 (CMO and Oeiras Interativa, n.d.; INE/Statistics Portugal, n.d.).

A master plan for a municipality is a complex, ever-changing set of inter-operational fields of action that converge around two main goals: (1) the protection of sensitive areas (hydrography, military, infrastructure and environment, to name a few), which is made explicit in the Constraint Plans (correlated with the regulation and numerous expert reports); (2) the management of changes and improvements in the territory, which is primarily expressed in the Spatial and Urban Plans (also correlated with the regulation and numerous expert reports). Municipal Master Plans comply with a range of legislation and are binding (Assembleia da República Portuguesa, 2009, 2014, 2015). As Local Plans they must interact with higher-level plans, such as sectoral and regional plans, and with lower-level plans, such as development and detailed plans or, in the case of approved systematic urban renewal, the possibility of independent plans of specific urban design units. This is the case of Oeiras and its Master Plan. This master plan shows a land-use management profile (adapted to national recommendations), with a few urban development and detailed plans, and UOPGs (operational planning and management units).

This is the case of Queijas, which is part of the UOPG North (Norte)<sup>i</sup> (Departamento de Ordenamento do Território e Planeamento Urbano - Divisão de Ordenamento do Território, 2023). Environment and public space still work as separate dimensions and could start entailing an articulate and integrated approach to the territory, even if the municipality explains, and well, how vital these goals are in all urban planning stances, especially under the scope of urban rehabilitation.

## 5 Conclusions

Aligned with existing literature on how nature supports and preserves health, the results of this study suggest that natural elements and green spaces significantly contribute to the well-being of urban populations, thereby enhancing the quality of life. Accessibility to public spaces, particularly urban green areas, plays a crucial role in mitigating health and overall well-being disparities among citizens. Both the quantity and, more importantly, the quality of these natural elements and green spaces are vital for well-being, reflecting the intention to improve life quality.

Urban rehabilitation refers to plans and activities to improve neighbourhoods and suburbs in a state of disrepair (Fernandes et al., 2023). In this sense, urban rehabilitation (and regeneration, when performing deeper social, economic and built environment changes) can catalyse the implementation of more green spaces, creating a more attractive and accessible link for residents and visitors to Queijas. By improving the aesthetics and functionality of these spaces, regeneration projects can increase the attractiveness of urban areas (Olajide and Lawanson, 2022) and strengthen local identity.

The focus on urban regeneration in differentiated areas, as a way of transforming public space and improving infrastructure, should stimulate public-private interest in regeneration and enhance the diverse experiences in Queijas.

Nevertheless, the territorial management tools are not yet flexible enough to bridge the different natures of the territory, as they are still built on dichotomies (urban, environmental, infrastructures, facilities), instead of establishing an integrated approach to the whole social-economic-urban architecture.

Although Oeiras is a wealthy and privileged municipality and a leader in innovation, disparities are crucial to overcome, and there is still room for improvement, possibly in the interplay between quality of life, public space and urban regeneration.

## Acknowledgements

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<sup>i</sup> «Article 30. 3 - The consolidated areas integrate the infrastructured and predominantly occupied urban fabrics, in which the conservation and rehabilitation of the existing building is favoured, as well as those that, less than 5 ha, are presented as interstitial areas of consolidated central spaces, suitable for the realization of new buildings that ensure the functional and environmental qualification of the urban environment. 4 - The consolidated areas to be requalified integrate the infrastructured and predominantly occupied urban fabrics, in which the requalification and valorisation of the urban fabric is intended, with regard to the existing building, the conditions of accessibility and mobility and the quality of the public space.» and «Article 50 Objectives The UOPG Norte aims to achieve the following objectives: a) Promote the urbanity matrix of the areas of the former urban agglomerations of Queijas, Valejas, Queluz de Baixo, Tercena and part of Barcarena, enabling them to accommodate specialised uses and functions, which stimulate social and territorial interaction and integration; g) Requalify the consolidated urban areas of the neighbourhoods built in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, through specific programmes or implementation units, giving particular relevance to the approach of public space and urban image as strategic factors of cohesion, with the aim of promoting their transformation into central spaces; h) Promote the regeneration of areas generically occupied without administrative control.» (own transl.)(CMO, 2022)