**Looking Back, Looking Forward: Ideas for addressing RQ4.2 from team Sweden**

*The basic idea*

We quite like the basic idea, the way it is presented in the proposal. That is, to study the gendered distribution of living conditions and resources in the coming birth cohorts of older adults in Europe and Canada and compare it to the situation of previous cohorts at the same ages (e.g., ages 50-65).

It is true that we cannot predict the future from the past in the sense that we can never be sure that it is the same things that will matter in the same way in the future. Nevertheless, we think that this exercise could give some important clues as to what may present challenges for the coming cohorts of older adults in terms of functional independence and care (e.g., obesity, living alone).

If we decide to take this route, we think that the two main challenges are to find suitable data and a suitable analytical strategy – in order to make the results reliable and meaningful

*Data*

As this is essentially a descriptive study, it is of great importance that we have data that is representative of the target populations. Thus, representative sampling and high response rates are crucial. Moreover, in order to compare cohorts at the same ages, we need data that encompasses repeated cross-sectional waves. Do we have access to data that lives up to these criteria? For which countries?

*Ramping it up a bit*

One risk with this approach is that it easily becomes a comparison across cohorts of extensive laundry lists of variables. Some may remain stable; some may change a little in one direction while others change a little in another direction. This might make it difficult to get a helicopter view of the situation and – in the end – to come up with concise and meaningful conclusions.

This is not an easy issue to solve, and it requires some serious thinking and discussion. One way of doing it could be to use some kind of data-driven method to find clusters or classes of individuals in the data that share common features. As a second step, we could then explore to what extent the probability of belonging to these different classes/clusters vary by sex.