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Wilfred Lau is Arup Fellow and a Director of Arup, the global planning and engineering consultant. He has led Arup's consulting activities across East Asia for 15 years. He is a board member of Arup East Asia Region Board and was Chief Executive of Arup Vietnam 2008 to 2017. He was Arup Global Transport Planning Leader from 2001 to 2016.

Mr Lau was the Chairman of the Association of Consulting Engineers of Hong Kong and has represented the consulting industry on committees and expert panels. He is a Fellow of Institution of Civil Engineers, UK; Fellow of Hong Kong Institution of Engineers; Fellow of Chartered Institute of Logistic and Transport Hong Kong; Registered Professional Engineer of Hong Kong and member of Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design.

In recent years, Mr Lau focuses on development of cities and new towns in Asia, advising governments on development and delivery of future generation of cities. He developed the smart green resilient philosophy and is author of the book "Smart Green Resilient".

Adapting cities to ageing societies

In Europe, ageing is one of the greatest economic and social challenges that OECD countries are facing, representing a radical demographic shift comparable to the industrial revolution. Can European cities respond to this change and deliver appropriate solutions? "Shaping ageing cities" is an Arup research providing a comparative overview of the structure of 10 selected European cities in response to the growth of our elderly population. The research revealed a complexity of geographies, relations, and processes that each of these cities is experiencing. A deep dive, focusing on Milan illustrates the human scale and the lives of older people in urban contexts which is crucial in understanding the vulnerabilities and opportunities around old age of both societal and the physical environment.

East-Asia is ageing rapidly. While Western solutions rely heavily on its developed institutional and communal services, the context of Asian cities requires a different approach that is more suitable to its culture and its unique built environment. The unprecedented nature of the transition means that earlier experiences of the advanced economies can provide only limited guidance and East Asia will need to develop its own response to this demographic shift.

The comparatively higher density and less ground-based residential care-homes along with lower average income of the elderly and the rapid urban development are impacting the daily life of the elderly in East Asian cities. Against such a cultural and contextual background, Arup is currently conducting another research that aims to develop a framework of approaches to adapt the East Asian built environment to an ageing society. The ideas presented in this research will focus on the aspects related to the built environment, such as mobility, living environment, and social life of elderly living in East Asian Cities.

This talk will provide insight of the European research and will also provide some initial findings of the current research of four East Asian cities.