

## AutiSenCité

**Scientific coordinator: M. Piéron (CNRS, University Paris-Cité)**

**Cities are spaces in which our senses are significantly used:** traffic noise, light reflection on glass surfaces, illuminated signs, smells of the marketplace, of the plants... However, the sensorial quality of a place contributes to the well-being of the residents (stress reduction, pollutants and noise reduction...). Depending on the sensitivity and sensorial particularities of each and every one, the use of the city can be more or less enjoyable and easy. For the residents whose cerebral or sensorial functioning is atypical (neurodevelopmental disorders, neurodegenerative diseases, mental disorders or sensorial disabilities), the many sensorial stimulations make the urban environment difficult to access, limiting their autonomy and quality of life. **Around 20 to 25% of the population has an atypical sensoriality**, sometimes or throughout life. Considering the sensoriality in the urban environment is an important issue to make the city more accessible and calmer.

**Autistic people present sensorial particularities** manifested by a very high sensitivity to sensory information (hyper-sensitivity: a sound or a light can be perceived as very unpleasant, as well as generate pain, tiredness or anxiety) or a lessened sensitivity (hyposensitivity) to this information or the research of sensation (using an element of the environment to produce stimulation). They are therefore **sentinels of sensoriality**.

Also, cities have more and more adaptations making the city calmer, less noisy, with a more balanced distribution of space for plants and soft traffic in relation to buildings and vehicles. These adaptations created in priority for the environmental reasons are also helping to make urban spaces more inclusive.

Within the scope of the **transdisciplinary participatory project** “Autisencité” a consortium composed of neuroscience, psychology, geography and urbanism researchers, clinicians, autistic people and local authorities is working on creating a **methodology of sensorial evaluation of urban environment, on characterizing the impact of the sensorial environment on autistic people’s behavior** as well as on identifying the micro-adaptations and materials in public space allowing to decrease sensorial stimulations. The goal is not to suppress all sensorial information but to limit to those useful for travel and our interaction with the city. This **methodology created with autistic people**, their relatives and professionals, **is adapted to their sensorial specificities and their cognitive functioning**. It will be **useable by everyone** (local authorities, urbanists, non-profit organizations...) without previous scientific knowledge needed. To sum up, this project will **make the city calmer, clearer and therefore more accessible**.