

ANEX 1: Individual Interviews

1. Interview with an advocate representing the Global alliance of NGOs for road safety.

What does "the right to the street" mean to you?

The right to the street is when people have freedom and liberty to use and utilize the street space for the purpose for which it is intended, without discriminating whether you are walking, cycling, driving, skateboarding, roll skating or using a mixed-use area.

Everyone should have the liberty and freedom to use that street safely and without any discrimination. But conversely, I also see this as human beings having the right to demand for the type of streets that work for them, where they are safe, people want something that is safe and that is accessible, that you're not struggling to use, and you're not being forced to use streets spaces that do not point to your mobility needs, for me, defines the right to the street.

Do you believe access to public streets is important for all community members? Why?

I say absolutely without a doubt, access to public streets is important to all community members, the access to streets that are spaces that connect people and goods and thereby facilitate so many things, including commerce. Then I look at social interactions connected with mobility where different members of the community are able to interact, children, adults, teenagers, without mobility, you can't have interaction because people are static and they are not moving, even after meetings, people need to move to their destinations, and this brings interaction.

When you get to design streets, plazas or any kind of public spaces they have to contribute to define not only the economic but social and cultural functions of cities and urban areas. For me it is important that we have all community members having access to the streets, maybe on a very late note that we don't want access to community members who have bad intentions the idea is that our community members are good, all of them, but of course, we don't want people with criminal intent to be part of this.

For all intents and purposes, yes, we believe that public streets should be accessible to all community members.

How important do you think public awareness and education are in promoting safety on the streets?

What role do you believe transportation plays in achieving social equity in urban environments?

In terms of equity and transportation, from my experience and from where I've come from, especially because I'm based in a low- and medium-income country. I believe in allocating resources fairly. I think that fairness is about justice, and it is also about equity, and I do believe that the global outlook is targeting low- and medium-income minority communities in the urban areas.

To promote actual equity in to invest more on active mobility is very important because again, the distances that people have to travel by walking and cycling are very long, so is needed to invest more than what is invested in vehicular transportation, there should be more conversations about transportation systems that served non-drivers, and a non-conservation of the model that was there before, that is about car driving fast.

Transportation system for equity must consider non drivers and how planning decisions affect external costs such as congestion, crash risk and pollution imposed on other people, is essential to consider this, and therefore transportation can play a very great role in promoting social equity on urban environments by making sure resources are disputed fairly and there is emphasis on those most in need and putting mobility at the core of this planning.

How can collaboration between different stakeholders (government, NGOs, civil society) be enhanced to support the rights of VRUs?

It is important to acknowledge the global plan for action for road safety 2021-2030 espouses the principle of shared responsibility, this sometimes is misconstrued by different actors to mean that we are sharing the blame, but it is more about collaboration and key actors playing their role fully.

In my advocacy work, the ultimate responsibility of keeping people safe, lies with the government, especially when vulnerable road users are concerned, therefore, the work of other non-governmental actors, whether private sector, NGOs, other corporates, multi partners, is to support the government to achieve the highest level of safety for all road users.

Now in my field NGOs, **we helped to act as the bridge between community led action and demand for safety and the national policy makers**, are those who are the eyes, the ears and the voice of the communities that we represent and therefore **we must participate meaningfully in decision making process that affect the community and therefore collaboration can be even and emphasized that it's so important that different**

actors contribute, to make sure that the government ultimate responsibility is achieved.

That way collaborations can be done and the important thing about it is that collaboration frameworks among various actors have to be defined by implementation of matrices. It can be a good way of bringing different actors together to enhance collaborative actions between different stakeholders, so that there is a defining framework to bring together people that work in a collaborative and meaningful way that will have an impact.

Are there countries, cities or initiatives that you believe are exemplary in their treatment of VRUs? What can we learn from them?

We work with different countries so I will start with 2 from Africa. The first in Mozambique, a city called [Quelimane](#), is a [port city in Mozambique](#) and is known as [the Africa Cycling City](#), this city is interesting because it demonstrates that it is possible to slow and even reverse the adoption of private motor vehicles. The municipality there stands out for creating cost effective and low carbon urban mobility systems, you find that from the mayor of the city, he's a champion of cycling.

They cycle to work, then there is low-cost cycling, that city, in terms of carbon emission and active mobility stands out very well. I would say that the ivory problem of very fast motorization and bringing cars to Africa and having so many cars is not a fashionable thing while everyone wants to own a car.

Quelimane shows that mobility is not about cars, it's about actual health and good environment, I say that's a good example and it's something that we really like supporting and the good thing is that also the government of Portugal has really help improve and promote that.

The second example is [Zambia](#), not far away from Mozambique, we have worked with them for a long time and legislation there have all these community demands, but without embedding the changes in legislation you are not able to follow up, so what Zambia did was passed a [new national law in 2019 that reduced speed in urban limits to 30 k/h starting with Lusaka City](#).

This has helped reduce speed near schools which has helped in terms of now implementing the 30K/h law, meaning infrastructure regulations, guidelines, awareness and enforcement. That shows why it is good that when this legislation is in place, then the other actors like NGOs and civil Society are able to actually hold the governments accountable by asking what has happened since the passing of the law, what are the timelines and what are they doing about it.

Is important to use accountability sort of follow up to track what the government is doing then praise the government and let them do some more, so that has also been a good example in from Zambia.

2. Interview with an academic expert

What does "the right to the street" mean to you?

So regarding the right to the street I thought about it as the possibility for people to use the space that we call street in the sense that I call it space because **I think the street is first and foremost public space** It's been designed for a specific use or multiple use and in a way, the right to the street can be summarized as a possibility to use it to spend time and to also feel safe and welcome in such a space depending the different uses that I might need to do, if it's moving with a means of transport, if it's sitting there talking to people or just doing what each one of us like to do.

I think still it can be mentioned as a right to use or to inhabit a street also inhabit it's quite an interesting thing in the sense that, people live right above streets, so I think in a way that should be considered a right to the street in the sense of to live in at ease and comfortably as much as possible in relation to that space that is used by other people, maybe for different purposes.

Do you believe access to public streets is important for all community members? Why?

Well, yes, of course I think so, and what I think really relates to the first question. I think the main reason is that it is part of the public space and **to me public means for everyone.**

Everyone who's a citizen but beyond citizenship, **everyone who lives in a certain area should be allowed and find it accessible to use such a space, so I think that's the main reason why it's so obvious and so important, justice after all means that we strive to make things accessible and to give the possibility to everyone according to their needs, to the things that we consider public.** So of course it's a bit of an ideal, but I think that's an ideal to go towards if we want to strive for justice.

How important do you think public awareness and education are in promoting safety on the streets?

I think they're really important because it relates to awareness, in this case it can be seen as a broader thing beyond informing citizens or beyond educating in educational institutions. For

example, to do things collaboratively, meaning striving for participation so when some discussion upon transportation, streets or spaces is happening I think that is creating public awareness, and that is very important.

The more we all learn from our different perspectives of citizens, individuals and community members can learn about each other's perspective and try to have spaces of discussion about that and the more we are able to empathize with each other and therefore also maybe fight or try to guarantee that broader access to safety is given to all.

Safety means different things to different people, So I think in that sense awareness need even more recognition of each other's experiences and perspective. It's very important to understand that safety and/or accessibility actually means different things for different people, I think also as a society and as professionals, we need to really try to strive to be publicly aware ourselves and how our opinions and doings shape safety for others.

What role do you believe transportation plays in achieving social equity in urban environments?

How would you define Vulnerable Road Users, and what characteristics make them particularly at risk in urban environments?

Here we go more technical, and I think, **the definition of vulnerable road users refers more to road users who are not using cars, buses or trucks, so, pedestrians, cyclists, etc. And I think it's quite morbidity framed or transportation modes frame so whether you have this kind of transportation more than vehicle you are vulnerable or not vulnerable**, and I think that makes sense, of course, and that's really important to keep in mind, but I would say from my perspective that there are also layers of vulnerability within those categories of groups and so going beyond specific situations regarding mobility there is vulnerability.

For example, in being within discriminated social groups, it could be pedestrians, cyclists and so on, around the city in different means of transport. But still, I would say to be considered vulnerable in a sense of vulnerability is in my relation to other members of society, and how is it that my needs are being considered.

There's the topic of mobility of care and all those patterns which are more ignored within mobility frameworks and I think and I said unfortunately, women aren't being seen by their partners, or carers, so for whom? This perspective should be considered, but as of now, that's a bit what's

happening, and I think that's also a vulnerability of having to use more time than the others or having to make more stops than the others going places or have to figure out their paths depending on so many different aspects.

I'm in a way not vulnerable in terms of safety, even though that could be also because maybe I am not forced to take paths that are not that safe or take longer or take me there late in the night because of time indeed, or because of other reasons.

So, it kind of interrelates a lot into making more people vulnerable than the categories that are in the definition and I think it is interesting to consider vulnerability also within those categories, more maybe with a kind of social lens, if we can call it like that. **There is more than that within the categories, people with disabilities, mobility habits, cognitive disabilities, woman, kids, elderly, those are not in that definition, and it's not a good thing, but it's really interesting and it shows how streets are framed in the sense that they're basically seen as the kind of corridor where you are allowed into only if you fall into those categories.**

So, it goes back to the first question to the right of the street or accessibility to it, and I think one of the most important things, is to kind of broaden that definition and who should be and who is considered now when we're talking about the street and mobility.

Maybe even war is mobility now maybe we go even broader, but really try to think if you just follow a couple of people who are from those categories for a few days, you will realize how more complex and more interesting and more varied mobility is for them.

What areas of research do you think are currently underexplored in relation to VRUs and mobility?

For me the topic is a bit new in the sense that I'm approaching this topic thanks to JUST STREETS and of course I've been reflecting and kind of laterally thinking about this through other projects, etc. But I don't consider myself an expert as to know where the research gaps in the domain are right now.

I would say the things that we discuss now, so, the effect of at least **questioning and broadening the perspective of what is mobility and then going towards a definition of mobility, justice** and so forth, I don't know if it's totally uncovered, but definitely the fact that we are discussing these things or the definition of vulnerable users means that some work needs to be done in that regard so I think you're tapping into a knowledge gap in the domain.

3. Interview with an academic expert

What does "the right to the street" mean to you?

OK, first of all, **sometimes we forget that streets are not only places where people move, but where people live the city.** So, we should always remember that when we consider a street, we should also shift our vision of what a street means, because the first impression that is popping your mind when I tell you street is a place full of cars. What really a street means **it's a place where people can take advantage of public soil to enjoy life, to do their routine and that doesn't mean only moving around the city but means also observing, means also fostering a social cohesion,** means maybe meeting new people, new friends or observing the diversity, that's why for me, we should shift this out of centric mindset in streets and give rights not to the streets but to the people living the streets.

Do you believe access to public streets is important for all community members? Why?

No, the answer is no, because **when we think about accessibility, we can make a place accessible for everyone by starting with the most marginalized one.** I will give you an example, when you design a kid's playground aligning with the need of kids that have disabilities you may hit the more inclusive result not only for people with disabilities but for all the kids the same, another example can be about bike lanes, when you make a bike lane align with the needs of the queer community by increasing, for example, the security of the place, Etc. You may hit more inclusive for everyone, starting from women, elderly, etc.

When we talk about justice this doesn't apply to everyone, it doesn't mean justice for all, because you always try to focus on one target group and try also to exclude the others. For example, we live in a very male centric society and bring justice means changing narratives and start to think on the needs of the people that have been neglected so far. So, for example, starting by excluding for that moment the needs of men so justice doesn't apply for everyone.

Consider for example when you design a park, you have to think about the different needs of the different users, if you wanted to combine the needs of homeless people, women, but also another aspect that doesn't imply humans that is the biodiversity that is very important in a park, you start to think of putting toilets to help supporting the homeless, then you realize that putting the toilet might be a means of justice because you are resolving a need, a service in that area, but that park becomes an environment that is more unsafe for women because it might be that homeless people

were going to do everything in this bathroom and this place doesn't become accessible anymore for women, then, to increase the security, the first thing that comes to mind it's installing a light pole to increase the level of visibility but this is against biodiversity.

Justice means in this case that you should start taking a position, taking a perspective, and I suggest most of the time it should be the most neglected one, and to you try to align with the needs of the others, but this doesn't mean that you bring justice for everyone.

How important do you think public awareness and education are in promoting safety on the streets?

For example bicycles or also walking and I think that the role of policymakers in communicating through the right words, the right benefits, because this is another barrier that most of the time the benefits of active mobility are not communicated properly and are not supported with data, we need the data that support the words of policymakers, these apply also for safety and security.

When you go on the street, car drivers don't realize that they have a car that potentially can kill a person on the street, this should be communicated, also that cyclists are not the weakest ones, that's a word we should eliminate. We are not weaker by ourselves, but by the environment built around us that have put us in a position of vulnerability that is completely different and that's why we should communicate security and safety not because we need it but because our means of transportation need it.

What role do you believe transportation plays in achieving social equity in urban environments?

Well, transportation is completely connected with social inequality, this means that it's also connected with social justice and equity. For example, most of the time, **women have a completely different travel pattern compared to men because they make multi stop patterns, shorter than men, but multi stop and most of the time they have to move, not for working reason but for care reason, that is called care mobility**, because this mobility mostly applied to women, for example, to bring kids at school to bring elderly to retiring houses, to go grocery shopping, etc., all of these are called care mobilities, and then let's talk, about the low-income people in a city, those that need to move because the system forces them to move and most of the time are longer distances than others.

The most unsafe one let's think about, for example, night workers that are most of the time forced to use the car because they don't have an environment that supports their travel by active mobility, so bringing active mobility again, and bringing active mobility means that, first of all, bringing it is not for night workers, but for people that are a threat to night workers on the street, so usually, car drivers speed very fast during the night. So, when we think about active mobility, we should also think of people that have already the privilege and we need to take them out of the car

There are many aspects, consider for example, Turin, the public transportation it's totally not just for people with disabilities, it connects most of the time the pathway used by curious but not by residents and most of the time the most poor neighborhoods are not connected and if they are connected, is only to the city center, but people living in the peripheral area and most of the time don't work in the city center, but work in other areas of the city. So, we should also connect different areas between the upper East area and the other ones.

The problem is that the transportation system has been built over time to answer to only one purpose, that is efficiency to go to work, that was the only reason to build, transportation in Italy **and most of the time has been built by men,** I mean the past Ministry of Transportation or municipal access, or incurring has always been a man in the past. This means that the transportation system that they built was to answer to their needs that is efficiency and work.

How would you define Vulnerable Road Users, and what characteristics make them particularly at risk in urban environments?

I don't like this term. I want first to breakdown your question because I don't like the word vulnerable or the user. There are not people vulnerable by them themselves, and if they exist first, I want to ask them if they feel vulnerable and I don't want to apply a label to a group, but **I feel that there are people put in a vulnerable situation, put in a marginalized situation, and these people do exist, otherwise, mobility justice wouldn't exist.**

So yes, **there are keys when we think about the streets and on the users of the streets, there are people put in vulnerable situations and that you can see easily by thinking how much space is allocated to cars, how much is allocated for cyclist and how much for pedestrians. You notice immediately that our cities are designed for cars, so the first people put in marginalized situations are pedestrians and cyclists.**

Then there are also conflicts among cyclists and pedestrians because they don't have enough space, it's like having two animals in a cage, after a point they start fighting because their situation

becomes a vulnerable one that start conflicts, among those that I'm thinking about, the conflicts between cyclists and pedestrians that are quite often, I mean they happen and then about for example, the pedestrian themselves.

When we think about the space allocated for pedestrians in Italy, it's totally not align to support the needs of people with disability, a person in a wheelchair is put in a position of vulnerability, it's not vulnerable by himself or herself, or first I would like to ask this person what he think about this label, but I think that the space allocate this person in a situation of vulnerability.

The same applies for queer people, most of the time we think that their needs for example, to support them cycling more, is straightening and fostering security and safety, but it's a completely different safety and security compared to other target groups because, for example, I don't remember which research paper, but they ask for example this community. What do you think of increasing the number of police people to increase security and safety? and the answer was mostly "I feel more unsafe with police people".

So we need to focus on specific and clustering even if it's very difficult and unethical, but by clustering people we need to understand their needs and act according to that and I don't think it's a matter of compromise, because if I design a street I don't want to reach a compromise with those people that have been already privileged over time, and that the city itself is already built by their needs.

If I want to design a street in front of a school, I don't want to reach a compromise with a white man without disability, I want to reach a compromise with other people in vulnerable situation that have been neglected.

What areas of research do you think are currently underexplored in relation to VRUs and mobility?

Well, [everything that is connected with social sciences](#), I mean so far overtime now the situation is changing, but mostly in the past and mostly in the Mediterranean countries' transportation was an engineering issue, because transportation needed to answer the question of to the problems of efficiency and going to work, they needed the people that designed streets to make it more efficient to go to work, and that was engineers.

But now we realize that to go back to the first question, [streets are more than places to move and so we need the social scientists that work on how to, for example, rebalance the needs within the](#)

streets and how to foster certain aspects and goals such as social cohesion within a city or even climate target.

I mean, I'm an environmental scientist, so I do believe that also we need climate experts and that doesn't imply only environmental engineering that they start studying for example, the environmental impact of a certain issue, but the environmental dimension is more than this, the environmental dimension implies in itself also the social perspective on that, so, this is all what we need.

People that believe that in a project focusing on streets we need a multidisciplinary team of experts, we should like breakdown completely this narrative that we need only engineers and architects, no, we need way more people, we need also citizens by themselves, I mean, if you already have identify a need and is for example a residential one, you should involve citizens living there, because you need also to foster tasks but also the empowerment of them in the design of the street.

Let's talk about experts but don't forget that the experts are not only those with academic knowledge, but also experiential knowledge and citizens are those that leave the city so we should consider also them as experts.

4. Interview with an academic expert

What does "the right to the street" mean to you?

So right in the streets for me means the facility for everyone to access the street in a safe way, in my perspective, it's not really related to a right in the street in a legal sense but is an important potential right that also implies a development from bottom to top and not the right that is included in some charter.

It's more like a potential perspective of developing something with the people that will benefit or will use it, so it also includes sort of grassroot participation in the team thing in the practical plan of this concept, it's something that is really both abstract and practical.

Do you believe access to public streets is important for all community members? Why?

Yeah, I think so, because speaking about transportation, I think that streets are now mainly conceived as a place and space in which mainly motorized forms of transport, and in a little percentage also other forms of transport move through, but if we think the street with other

perspective we can see all the space and we can think about transforming streets in places which all new community members, all people, all member of a society can pass through, but also can do other things that are not just passing through, like stay there, play and other different stuff.

How important do you think public awareness and education are in promoting safety on the streets?

I think that it's super important for safety issues, that is one of the main issues in relation to how we use the free flow, but we also have to think a little bit in a different possible way to use the street and the perspective of street as a public space, I think that is important also to promote awareness and to change a little bit of this narrative as did the conception of street as a place for transport, that is in some way problematic for me, but also I recognize that there is the need of transport.

Going back to the previous question, I think that everyone has the right to move in a safe and affordable way in the city from point A to point B, so, we have to guarantee the possibility and the right to move from one place to another in some way for everyone, not just to people that can afford the car or can afford, for example, electric cars but guarantee a public service of transport that allows to everyone to move in a way that should be affordable.

I think that the awareness of policy makers is really important, but also for example, working on the school and with children is not just about safety, because many places are programming WeChat School where People arrive there and explain how to move safely in the street with the street code, that is not enough.

What role do you believe transportation plays in achieving social equity in urban environments?

I think that's super important because if we want to leave, it becomes a necessity to be allowed to move from one place to another in an affordable way, and in many ways, for example in small cities there is no public transportation between the city and all the small town in the province, so basically everyone that wants to start moving there are limited, and I think that is super problematic also because no one questions the fact that, for example, all public money is invested to make more streets, to make wider streets, larger streets always for car and I mean the problem of equity should really go hand on hand and always be linked with the problem of what we want to really do with streets, with public transportation.

How would you define Vulnerable Road Users, and what characteristics make them particularly at risk in urban environments?

If we speak about vulnerable road users intending user as one person the definition is all the users which are not motorized, so, that are not using a car or a motorized transport, but I think that we have to once again broaden up to enlarge the definition, because there are street user that are also not using particularly the street, but for example the sidewalk.

We have to categorize many kinds of people that use the street, and there are many kinds, for example children, I had the opportunity to work with kids and learn about the experience of guiding the group of children to school using the bike and so like it's teaching them how to bike, discipline and to use a bike but also is getting them to school every day and they underlined the patience and tolerance. So, I think that this is another example of user that is not considered in the definition.

What areas of research do you think are currently underexplored in relation to VRUs and mobility?

The link between this concept in theory and in the system legal frameworks, so how is the street considered in the Italian civil law and how this definition considers the street as a place in which cars have to move and this influencing the development of concepts such as, for example, you have three or the right to speak and those influencing like the experiment and traffic policies that try to be different street and city model.

It seems that there's just a few of us who search that domain, and [it is really interesting how to connect the abstract concept to existing legal frameworks and also practice and what is the relation and what are the influences between.](#)

5. Interview with an advocate representing the European Cyclist federation (ECF)

What does "the right to the street" mean to you?

So now, we have the slogan "8 to 80 years", this means that you should be able to use the street and the city between those ages and ideally in an independent manner, so whether you're children at the age of 8 or a retired person at the age of 80 and with the abilities that you have, you should be able to use the city on your own I mean obviously it's just a slogan.

So, most parents would not feel comfortable letting their child at the age of eight go independently into the city. But I mean, if we talk about let's say cycling to school I think a child of that age should be able to cycle to school accompanied by a parent and then maybe a little bit later on age 10 or 11 or 12 depending on the circumstances the kid should be able to cycle independently too, so it's sort of what it means to me.

If I talk also in other slogans like equal access to the streets, but in a wider sense also to the city, so not just a destination going from A to B so it's not just one street or one block, one neighborhood is often the wider city that you need to have access to, and it's also about safety and protection, so obviously as a vulnerable road user you should feel safe and protected otherwise you will not walk or cycle.

So, we need to talk about speed limits, protected infrastructure where necessary traffic calming measures, these kind of things back front the intersections bike lanes, and it's about another slogan, "the freedom of movement", so as I mentioned at the beginning, you as a child, as a retired person, as a person sitting in a wheelchair you should be able to use the infrastructure of the city, so it also has an equity and inclusion aspect. Everyone should be able to participate in public life.

Do you believe access to public streets is important for all community members? Why?

It's difficult to say no to this question. I was wondering, if you are a pickup car driver or you are an Uber driver, you should have equal access to public space as a pedestrian, or should it depend on how much use you make of the public space, right?

From my perspective, I would say, okay, **every pedestrian, cyclist, and public transport user should have access to the public space, but maybe there are some limitations now.**

How important do you think public awareness and education are in promoting safety on the streets?

Again, it's difficult to say they are not important, but I don't think they are sufficient on their own, certainly with public awareness campaigns, let's take the European Mobility Week, the car free day, I think they're important, they sort of give you an impression of what's possible, but you don't change behaviors on one day, right? So, the next day, it's back to business in a way and it's again noisy because cars are everywhere, and it's been sort of the same for 20 years, it's not enough.

So, I think there are clear limitations to just having public awareness campaigns or even education, if there are no physical changes on the street, then nothing will really change beyond the timeframe of the campaign.

So if you teach kids to cycle to school or you have a bike to school campaign if it's not accompanied by safe streets to school or school streets, then it doesn't have the effect that should have, and the same with mobility education at school, is really important or when you learn to drive a car driving license, in education is really important that you learn some good practices.

Something you learn during the driving license education is how to open the door, we call it “the Dutch reach”, so you look first into the mirror, and you look over your shoulder and you open the door, and to just learn something at school or learn something in a limited environment. It's not enough, it needs to be applied throughout your entire life.

I'm not completely dismissing the idea of public awareness campaigns, right? On road safety, they say not to look at your mobile phone, but I think certainly so many crashes or collisions happen because of distraction, so you can have many billboards on the road, and you know spots on TV spots or radio spots. But if there are no sanctions, no fines, now the police need to find car drivers who look on their mobile phone, I think that works better, but it's sort of the same with maybe enforcing speed limits.

At the end of the day, it's probably fines what work best but sometimes it creates the feeling of frustration with car drivers, when there's a zone 30 and that drive 33 or 34 and then, there's a small margin that they exceed the speed limit. I think they sometimes perceive that as unfair, for example when it's night, there's nobody walking on the street, so there might be some backlashes with pushing it too much for fines as well, so I think you'd probably need to calibrate a little bit and find the right mix between education and punishment now.

What role do you believe transportation plays in achieving social equity in urban environments?

I mean, it's crucial, we know that transportation is probably the third highest share of household expenditure after housing and buying food and certainly in marginalized groups people with low incomes the share is even higher, certainly when they have a car, so **it is very important that people with low income have the chance to live in neighborhoods which are very well accessed by public transport, which should be affordable, those neighborhoods should have a good living, good walking and cycling infrastructure situation, so they**

don't need to have a car. Ideally their workplaces would be walking or cycling distance or easy to access by public transport.

Ideally, we would talk about a 15-minute city, so everything is sort of within reach, by foot, bicycle or on public transport, so it's definitely important for access to have affordable mobility. Maybe this is one of the elements where I could be critical, mobility as a right is good as a slogan but, it also can lead to consequences where we don't take any financial measures to reduce demand for transportation, what I mean is that we don't tax, for example, car driving or parking and people use it excessively more often than it's needed.

To achieve equity in urban environments, I think sometimes the discourse is also that you need to have access to your car to be able to access your workspace, right, and it's also a discourse that's often led by socialist parties where they should also have in mind the majority of the deprived neighborhoods which don't have a car in the 1st place, so it sort of a disconnection between the political discourse of certain political groups now.

How can collaboration between different stakeholders (government, NGOs, civil society) be enhanced to support the rights of VRUs?

I mean in ECF we are always for collaboration, but I think that there are limitations on the side of the NGOs because sometimes they don't have the capacity to participate in all sorts of forums.

Often NGOs depend on volunteers, so I work for the European Cyclist Federation and maybe we have 70 members. I would say maybe 15 members, or a bit more, are professional staff and the rest depends completely on volunteers, so **these people spend their evenings, their weekends engaging with public authorities, etc. There's only so much that volunteers can do to engage,** it's also a question of expertise, of understanding the process.

So, it's very difficult sometimes just in terms of transparency, in terms of process for a volunteer who doesn't work full time on the project to understand that there's clear limitations, I would say what would be really helpful is for organized NGOs to get support, and that governments should be involved with no strings attached. But generally, I think **there should be a collaborative policy designs or NGOs should be involved in stakeholder consultations** when there are projects on, but we are designing a street, building or a new bridge over a river, these kinds of things, obviously, should be involved, but I see the limitations of public participation. Certainly, in countries where there's no culture of civic engagement you see the differences between the Western part of Europe and Eastern Europe.

Are there countries, cities or initiatives that you believe are exemplary in their treatment of VRUs? What can we learn from them?

So, I would say, the city there has undergone the most impressive transformations, probably [Paris](#). Every time I travel to Paris I'm really amazed by the transformation, there's more cyclists on the street, more pedestrians so they really reallocate public space, take it away from the cars and parked cars to also create school streets also and they do it often in a radical manner. To do [this school streets](#) they close the traffic of an entire street to put in plants or trees and widen the sidewalks, if I have to mention the city, then I'm probably most impressed with Paris and what they've done in the last 10 years.

Recently I saw a tweet from a guy who's sort of an urban planner, and he had a lot of facts about how many hectares of public space have been reallocated and that was quite interesting to read, and specifically about Paris, and that's a socialist mayor that's interesting to see as well, but not all socialist mayors are the same now.

Obviously when you look for the cyclist perspective then I would need to mention the [Dutch cities](#) which have high [cycling mode](#) share, I think 60% cycling mode, maybe an interesting observation is also that sometimes pedestrians don't feel welcome in that kind of environment, so certainly when you're not used to it, you know when you're when you come as a tourist or as a foreigner into such a cycling environment, you're not used to see cycles come from all directions it can be intimidating, I've heard this from my kids, so, it works probably for the Dutch population, but maybe it doesn't work for visitors so well.

I think I'm also quite fond of Spanish cities, but I'm more as they have a good legacy of being walking cities, I think we had this presentation from [Zaragoza](#), for example as a follower city in the JUST STREETS project. I think they have a walking share of more than 50% and that sort of representative for many Spanish cities. So, you have extremely high walking shares because cities are really dense, and you can walk to most destinations.

I think the Spanish Government has taken a good approach with introducing 30 kilometers traffic speed zones on all one directional urban streets so that was definitely a good measure on traffic coming, so if I had to mention a country that maybe Spain is doing quite good work.

I think [Brussels](#) is evolving in the right direction, has been super car dominated for decades since the 50s but it's now building a network with cycling and tries to introduce circulation plans, but it's super controversial, there's a lot of backlash, the Greens lost the elections.

But in a way it has worked so you have the numbers of cycling probably have increased by the factor of 10 over the last 10 years, so it's really impressive to see the progress, but it's far from being exemplary, it needs to be further improved, but also have introduced 30 k/h, so there's default speed limits which is great, on the main roads or many main roads, it's still 50, but the concept has been turned around. So, 30 is the default, 50 is the exception, which is good, they still can go further now.

6. Interview with an advocate representing Walk21

What does "the right to the street" mean to you?

For me, the right to the street is that everyone, even if they don't drive a car, has the right to be there and the right to use the street as wanted.

Do you believe access to public streets is important for all community members? Why?

I think it has to do with the ownership of the public space, we often say that the street is for everyone, but it doesn't really happen that way. For example, for women, we don't have the same right to the city as men do. We are limited by street harassment, any type of street harassment, it could also be verbally, but we make sure that if we know that in a corner there's a group of guys that always say things to you, like construction workers, which is the usual, you avoid that corner and means that you choose to use different streets just because you know that's going to happen.

So in a way, it's removing that right to the city that we have, that right to be safe in general and also for children, the street is thought, is a really dangerous place for them. But I think in a way, we have seen many examples of how they take ownership of the street by playing on the street, closing it at times, because at the end is public space the ownership or the right to the city is there, but only for some type of road users.

The cities and the mobility systems were designed to go long distances and to go to the work district and what happens is that women because of care tasks and they do more trips on foot and so the needs are different, 50% of the population was not thought about when designing the mobility system.

For example, in terms of road safety, we did a study in Bogota where we found that if you wanted to improve the road safety for men, you had to work in arterial roads, but if you wanted to improve the road safety for women, you had to work in neighborhoods to improve the design and the

infrastructure, because more women walk and they're more at risk because they're walking in their neighborhood every day.

A book, that I can recommend called: "Urban feminism" I think clearly outlines the issue of how the cities were designed for the people that were in charge of designing the cities for all men, and they thought about fulfilling their needs and they left behind the needs of women and then it said they do every day care tasks that should be a shared responsibility, but it doesn't happen this way and until it happens, we need to think about how we start designing, not for the long distance trips, which is the whole city, but also for communities.

How important do you think public awareness and education are in promoting safety on the streets?

I think in terms of road safety, what I always preach is that **we should have safer speed limits, but not only the sign, but actually the design of the road that doesn't allow drivers to go faster, because in many cases if we don't have any police control or infrastructure, they will go as fast as they can, and the faster you go, the more dangerous it is for pedestrians and cyclists.**

I think there's many examples of how they're doing speed management in terms of infrastructure control and police control. We have a guide that we did for Bogota, which is called... and it tells you what to do in in each type of context to make sure that to coordinate the speed limit with the infrastructure, for example how you should design the street for 30 km/h. So, what we see in many cities, for example, is that we have a speed sign of 30 and then of course 4 lanes per direction, or three lanes per direction, which means the more lanes you have, the faster they will go and what we try to do is tell is that if you want 30, you should only have one lane per direction. You should have delayed width, should be this and it tells you how the roads should be designed to make sure that they comply.

In terms of safety in general, this is very interesting, I worked in a project in Colombia and the prompt was about children, why aren't children walking to school? And we thought about road safety, we need to fix road safety, and we worked in a very low income community with high index density and high crime rates, and what we found is that you have many other things that limit the use of the street, like invisible borders, gun clashes, substance abuse and also inviting children to use it, all these dangers were around for them to just walk freely every day to their school. So what we did is also work with very close with the community because at the end we need to leave this colonialist mentality of this is what needs to be done and this is what worked in my city so this is

how you should do it, because not all contexts are the same, we involved the community and they told us what works best.

According to general literature, sometimes they say, “oh, to improve the perception of safety for women, you should have more lighting” and that's not always the case, that doesn't always improve it, because it could be something else, for example robberies or a lot of people on the street.

It's a matter of understanding from where the dissatisfaction comes from and in order to address it, actually, in a conference a woman from Milan told us that they did a study, and they found that the more crowded street is, the safer it is for everyone, right? Because you have more eyes on the street. But for women in general, they said that if it's too crowded, then is not safe, it's also finding that balance. We always say, if there's people on the street, it's safe but then if it's too crowded, I don't feel safe either, so it depends on the user, their perception and how they think.

Another thing that I wanted to add is that for example, in this neighborhood that I told you, they told us that at 2:00 PM more or less, which is like time after lunch in Colombia, they usually have the what they call “la hora boba” which means no one is on the street, and then you have gang clashes and they use guns to confront each other. So what if you tell this to someone from Europe, they always ask why don't we call the police? But the police are actually not welcomed in these neighborhoods, they won't go there even if you call them.

So what we did is we involved community leaders in the project and we were also recognizing their time into the project and we sat with them and ask what are the solutions? They said, it's to have children playing on the street, and I said that sounds really dangerous, you're telling me that they have gang clashes at this time and that we should have children? And they said yes because they really respect children and when they see children, they don't confront each other.

So this is what we did, I mean we provided the public space in terms of infrastructure, but also a program to change the dynamics of the space because sometimes we think that the easiest thing to do is just to put the infrastructure and this neighborhood has this amount of public space but that doesn't mean it's public space that is actually being used properly by the community.

We had all these square meters of public space that were totally empty because they were used, by gangs and they even stored weapons like guns and stuff in some of the places, so after we changed the infrastructure with the community, we made sure to do programs that addressed the needs or likes of the community, so for example girls really like dancing there, so we had a dance school coming every Thursday.

Just to sum up, in terms of safety, it is not always about providing the infrastructure but also about understanding where satisfaction comes from and addressing that with programs or other things that are needed, it's always good to start with something that's already there, and usually many vulnerable communities already have that.

What role do you believe transportation plays in achieving social equity in urban environments?

I think that if we think about the big scale, there's not going to be a huge transformation, **we need to think about the needs of women**, a friend of mine found out that women who live in popular neighborhoods and work as housekeepers to rich families in Bogota take five hours, so they need to take the massive transport system, which is called transmilenio, but before that they need to walk for a bit and they need to take any type of bus feeder, and so between that it takes five hours a day, in Sao Paulo is 7 hours, if I'm not mistaken So it's like you need to think about everyone.

These women are waking up at 5:00 AM, you know, moving to this rich neighborhood and then going back to their homes and then picking up their children and all that, so she says that the way to make this city just is also think about them and then there are also transport uses that go long distances, but they take so much of their lives trying to get to work.

So **I think it's a matter of including not only men's needs, but women's needs in the transport system, and that's when you find other types of issues that need to be addressed to improve the transport systems for everyone**, because if you keep thinking, I just need to take them from this point to this point, you're not thinking about the last mile or the trips that they have to do in the neighborhood walking where sometimes you don't even have sidewalks.

It's also the same in the cities, what usually happens in European cities is that at the center of the city, only some people can live there, and then in the periphery you have other issues in terms of road safety you also sometimes don't find a good infrastructure or a good transport system that connects everyone, because what we've done is that we've made the price in the center of the city higher, so not everyone can live there, so it's a matter of not only thinking about those who are close to everyone, but everyone in the periphery.

To get a car also depends on the context, if you go to Latin America or Africa, they do want to get a car because it's a high-status kind of thing, so when they turn 15, the first thing they want to get

is a motorcycle. So, we wanted to analyze why, and it's very dangerous but they don't know that and in any case, that's the aim this is what they want, the motorcycle means I'm succeeding.

That mentality could only change if we really improve transportation, where it's so efficient that you don't want to get in a motorcycle and risk your life. But in any case, it's difficult with young men because they also like the risks and they have less perception of risk than women, so when they feel comfortable with the motorcycle, the speed because they think you know they don't have a good perception of risk.

How can collaboration between different stakeholders (government, NGOs, civil society) be enhanced to support the rights of VRUs?

I think to help these communities or to help people that walk and cycle, we need to start bottom up instead of top down, which is usually the case. As I said, it's not only about providing the infrastructure, for example in another latinoamerican site we found that we had a critical location in terms of road safety, we had a bicycle path and so we went there to find out, why is this a critical location if there's a bike path and we found that is close to a river bridge and at night criminals will hide under the bridge and come out to steal bikes. So what cyclists decide to do is to use the high traffic roads instead of using their infrastructure.

We have the same issue with pedestrian bridges or how we call it, anti-pedestrian bridges, so their idea of a solution, it's actually a solution for cars, so that they don't stop and can keep going as fast, and we found in that they're more dangerous for two things, one is that since it's not a proper intersection, cars don't have to stop, the speeds are higher, so everyone is at more risk and the other thing is that after 6:00 PM, people decide not to use the pedestrian bridges because they can get robbed, so they cross under the bridge and that's where you have the issue.

It's not only about providing infrastructure, but understanding if it's used and how it's used and why, in walk 21 we also talk about the satisfaction of the person that's walking or cycling, because sometimes you have everything there, but sometimes you're not even if you have reduced mobility, there could be something that you don't realize that enable them to freely, roll on the street and that could be the reason why they're not doing it, and so it's always a matter of understanding the satisfaction of the users.

Like everything else, it's always about satisfaction, but in this case, for cyclists and pedestrians who are more exposed, it should be something that we integrate into these policies and in terms of coordinating the work, as I said, bottom up, I think NGOs do a really good job in working with communities. For governments is difficult because it's not an easy process, it takes a long time

and sometimes they don't have the time to do it so I think it could be NGOs working directly with communities and feeding the government on what to do and how to change policies according to their findings, which is usually not seen this way.

Sometimes, advocates are seen as the person that is annoying that asks for too much, but we should always see it as positive criticism but sometimes we just see them let's say people from the government that always say like, "oh, they're so annoying" and it's like, well, just listen to them, they have something or they need a change, and it could be instead of taking it as a negative thing, take it as a positive thing, They are doing the work for you basically.

Another thing to consider is for example in a residential neighborhood they have a road that is two lanes, very wide and when we asked was the solution, they said, a pedestrian bridge, we're like, we cannot put a pedestrian bridge in a neighborhood and then you have to explain why and show other solutions. And another thing is that they then said, "we should put a traffic light" and traffic lights are not recommended for low-speed zones, what drivers do is that they see it's red or it's going to turn yellow, so they speed up. So you have higher speeds instead of lower speeds and you have to explain all that, because sometimes it's what they hear that the solution is, they want a traffic light and it's like, no, you could have speed humps, etc. And these are the reasons why, but again, sometimes they ask for the things they think are a solution and it's a matter of explaining why there's other, better solution.

Do you know that there are countries or cities that you believe are exemplary in their treatment of VRUs? What can we learn from them?

I mean the best examples are the [Scandinavian countries](#). I think they're the best in terms of [infrastructure](#), I still don't know how people walk there, it's so dark and rainy all the time, but they made it easier for everyone to walk and cycle so that's the way to do it.

Another example can be [Kigali in Rwanda](#), it's impressive how they achieved, also cars stop for pedestrians, which is amazing to me, but there's a lot of people driving cars, so I think in general we've seen a lot of projects.

I think we don't only have to think about how the roads are designed, which is what I just said about how we can have nice public spaces where they can go to and increase their physical activity, the mental health, because sometimes it's not only to get somewhere, sometimes you just want to go for a walk, maybe sit down and read a book. I think it is a matter of design public spaces.

7. Interview with an advocate representing the European network on independent living (ENIL)

What does "the right to the street" mean to you?

From the independent living movement perspective, we represent basically disabled people and in particular, their right to self-determination and personal assistance, and for us, the freedom of movement is somehow a crucial pillar in independent living. So, **right to street means equal and safe access to public spaces for everyone, including for disabled people, it means marginalized groups are included in public spaces, especially if they feel they can move and are free to move around, and when we think about equal access, we often think about, in our case, the lack of accessibility.**

That's the primary issue because in many cities, disabled people still don't have the freedom of movement, so if we cannot talk about the freedom of movement, we cannot really talk about equality, safety and all the other aspects related to the right to the street, and I think it's really important to say we mean often, the lack of physical accessibility. For example for wheelchair users, but we also often forget to consider other kind of accessibility, for people with intellectual or sensory disabilities, and the right to street for me it's also not on infrastructure and transport, but for example, I'm thinking about spaces that are not inclusive for children with disabilities, playgrounds and recreational spaces that are often not designed to be inclusive and accessible beside the equal access.

Another aspect related to the right to street is safety, because many disabled people don't feel safe to go out and especially streets are not safe. For example, for disabled women, they experience sexual harassment with a very higher rates compared to women without disabilities and for me, the right to street means also having large and easy to move spaces for many marginalized groups with intersecting identities like disabled people.

For women, they have the internalized idea that they have to occupy less space, and this is true for women, for disabled people who use wheelchair or other assistive devices this is something that should be considered when designing public spaces.

Finally, I think that besides safety and equality the right to the street should also be something, how can I say, enjoyable like the experience has to be good, I don't want to go out and come back home with my mental health in very bad conditions, this is another important aspect.

Do you believe access to public streets is important for all community members? Why?

Yeah, I think it's fundamental, I think it's important because it means everyone, including disabled people, have the same options, the same degree of self-determination that all the other people maybe take for granted so I think access to public streets is just right, everyone should be included.

How important do you think public awareness and education are in promoting safety on streets?

I always believe a lot in the role of raising awareness activities and education, so I think it's relevant and the most important thing is to exchange with different representative groups, disabled people, everyone who has felt like left behind in this, and another important part is also, the direct knowledge, the direct experience, so if we don't have direct experience, consult with people who have it.

Always adopting an intersectional perspective, trying to include people from that group, but also maybe with other intersectional identities, if we talk about the right to street for women, think about women of color or black women, consider also disabled people, people with different disabilities or disabled women, to adopt these perspective and talking about education it's really important to promote trainings for professionals working in urban planning for example, there are not many trainings specifically on inclusion. Many people working on urban design and urban planning, they know about urban planning, but they don't know about inclusion, so they of course forget about many groups.

What role do you believe transportation plays in achieving social equity in urban environments?

I think it's fundamental because as I said before, disabled people can feel independent and move independently around only if transport is accessible, in our case, accessibility means social equity, and of course, transport plays a crucial role if it's inclusive, accessible, affordable and takes into consideration all the different groups. I think in transportation justice means you can participate in the community, in life, all the events, it's part of social equity and it's part of citizenship.

How can collaboration between different stakeholders (government, NGOs, civil society) be enhanced to support the rights of VRUs?

I think a good example was the focus session organized by JUST STREETS. All these projects that bring together different stakeholders and organize small exchange groups with some organizations representing some interests, and some institutional actors are really important, to invite all these different speakers and stakeholders into small group and interactive sessions, because sometimes we are very focused on our own perspective.

I worked in a more institutional environment before and now I work here so you really acquire a different perspective, and I think both are essential, organizing more activities of this kind can for sure help.

Do you know about any countries, cities or initiatives that you believe are exemplary in their treatment of VRUs? What can we learn from them?

My organization participated in this project called [Trips Project](#), and their goal was to create a co design transport with and for persons with disabilities, it was executed by groups of disabled people in seven cities, which bring 2 concept together that are co design and this concept of co production is basically is a relationship where professionals and citizens share the power to design, to plan together, and also to deliver the service together.

A very important aspect of this process is that both partners have equal roles, and they can give vital contributions, so it's not just a professional consulting citizens, they co design and co create together, they were trying to this group of disabled people try to make accessible in transport accessible, more accessible in these cities, I think this is a very good practice.

At the end of this project, we indeed created this free online training on co-design, so it's really important not only for transport, but in general for cities or for whatever project you know how to include people and marginalized group in in codesign. I think that was a very successful project.

8. Interview with an academic expert

What does "the right to the street" mean to you?

For me it's about equal opportunity for well-being mostly in the broadest sense of the word, an equal opportunity to autonomy. The two things that I'm most concerned about are, mainly how well-being, not reduced to any personal health implications, mental or physical, but more of a relational notion of well-being, how it is sort of assembled in the interactions between people, material objects, spaces, natural objects.

On the other hand, I think that autonomy of different subjectivities is a key thing, obviously talking about children, elderly, disabled people, as you saw in the focus groups that we did for JUST STREETS. I think the autonomy was really a key thing for many people working with children, but also with, disabled and elderly people.

But right to the street, I don't if anyone ever used that term in academia. I wonder how you would do the translation from right to the city to the right to the street, and I think this is a key thing also in JUST STREETS, because I feel like now we are focusing a lot on the level of the street layout, sort of not on the level of the mobility system, so a translation is far from simple I think, and analytically, I mean right to the city might not be your best friend in analytical terms, when you want to interpret data and right to the street, could be actually more useful there.

Do you believe access to public streets is important for all community members? Why?

Yeah, I like the way that you put it in the way that access to the street not accessibility as in the 15-minute city concept for example, because these are two separate things.

Of course it's important I'm not an expert in the human rights declarations or anything like that, but I think there is something like a right to one's own living environment and I think it's a fundamental thing, I think this question connects back to the notion of well-being and autonomy that I discussed previously, because about becoming oneself is about being and becoming in certain environment and if you lack access to that, you're really lacking, access to who you can be, so of course and I think you mentioned the term community.

Because this is another issue, like what is a community and how we become members of a community and I think that to use that term, community members, is much more useful than using the term of the individuals or for example, road users. **When we understand people being part of a community and we also understand them in relational terms, not as atomized individuality, who have or don't have access but based on how they are, if I'm disabled as an individual, I might not have the access to the street, but if I'm disabled as part of a community of people, then I think that the setting is already much more interesting.**

How important do you think public awareness and education are in promoting safety on the streets?

For me this goes back to the notion of communities, for example, people don't quit smoking because they know it's unhealthy, It's about understanding the values of the communities and the cultural sort of social cultural structures they live in and then facilitating social learning in those communities rather than raising public awareness as you put it, so I would also learn more towards the communities and how they can learn rather than how individuals can learn.

So, if you talk about behavior change initiatives and awareness raising initiatives, I'm not a huge fan because the idea often is that we have atomized individuals, and we need to pour certain type of information in their heads or do an intervention, as **it is discussed in behavioral sciences, that's going to cause some collective change after people change individually first, but I think it's the other way around that we need the collective social learning in order to change individual behaviors.**

What role do you believe transportation plays in achieving social equity in urban environments?

How will you define vulnerable road users and what characteristics make them particularly at risk in urban environments?

I would rather focus again on vulnerable communities, then you get an understanding of the social aspect, so **if we say that pedestrians are vulnerable road users, this sort of reasons for them being vulnerable are contingent to space and place where they live and move, but also there is subjectivity so, I don't think it's very useful as a term.**

My point of view here is always a critical realist one in the sense that like if a person is, for example disabled, she is disabled as a matter of fact, disabled. If you don't have legs, you have different ways of moving around, but also at the same time, she is disabled by the surrounding society, so the surrounding society it's rendering her disabled. I think it's always a combination of these two facts, especially when it comes to embodied mobility, especially when it comes to materialities and material spaces, it's crucial to understand how the surrounding society is disabling people or making them too childish or off a certain ethnic or background, implicitly racist government or misogynistic mobility.

Governance is sidelining women's needs, but there's always two sides to it, and I think it's best understood with the elderly, disabled people and children because they have different physical needs of movement, but then, I think it's more fruitful always to understand how the surrounding society is socially constructing them as

disable, too old, too young, too small, too fragile, whatever, to be able to move in the city.

What areas of research do you think are currently underexplored in relation to VRUs and mobility?

I'm really interested in care and how care is assembled in urban spaces, and I think there's still a lot to do on mobility research, there's a lot of stuff on [mobilities of care](#), so someone taking care of someone else's mobility, but, I think we should understand care more broadly than that, I think we should be, for example, in the gestures we should be able to understand what is a caring street what kind of social and physical infrastructures should we assemble to create care in a place, for me there's a there's definitely something to be done. I think exactly the issue with the current mobilities of care literature is that I don't know how much that part of research recognizes that if we change part of the whole environment or the whole setup, we wouldn't need so many [mobilities of care](#).

For example, bubble wrapping children and elderly people when they want to move somewhere I think it's always problematic if we, as researchers, don't think that the system should change, and point on how the system should change, which is the focus on the fact that women do a lot more mobilities of care than men, obviously that tells about some things, some injustices, but also we should focus on [how can our streets be more caring?](#) So those care duties wouldn't be thrown on the individuals, and I think the system is doing a lot to hold individuals accountable for its own shortcomings and I think mobilities of care to an extent are very good manifestation of that.

9. Interview with an advocate representing the international federation of pedestrians (IFP)

What does "the right to the street" mean to you?

I think it's about freedom to be safe and comfortable in the street for everybody, every age, every income group, every gender choice, whatever you want to be.

Do you believe access to public streets is important for all community members? Why?

Yes, because people need to move around, cities are about meeting spaces, that's why cities exist, because people need to meet for interaction, social interactions, emotional interactions, commercial interactions, and to meet, even if we meet a lot after COVID this way, with our electronic devices without using the streets, still most of the meetings are using the streets or on

the way to the meetings so the streets are fruitions places where meeting places or places where people go to meet each other. So, to participate in activities that pertain to the meeting places as well. So yes, the streets are very important.

How important do you think public awareness and education are in promoting safety on the streets?

I always say that pedestrians, for example, are not very aware of their condition, potentially because they were brought up with very bad conditions and they just accept whatever is there, that makes them very unaware of their identity as pedestrians, there is no awareness of that, is not exactly the same with cyclists, searches are very much aware of their condition as cyclists and there is many reasons for that.

Everybody's a pedestrian, so you don't tend to think of it as a minority, while cyclists, for example, tend to think of it as a minority and cyclists have all this political identity, NGOs and all that pro Cycling, you know, because they feel that they are a small minority, and they easily create cohesion for political fights.

So, awareness from the political identity aspect is quite important to understand. What are your rights as a child, as elderly, as a person with a wheelchair? I think in terms of safety, the most work that we should do in terms of awareness is with dangerous modes. So, as you note, I prefer to call dangerous modes instead of vulnerable modes or vulnerable road users, so there are some dangerous road users, and I think those should be aware of their danger. I remember for example, in Bogota being in a taxi that was watching football on the phone or in Cairo a few months ago and people were having karaoke in the taxi.

So there is a lot of awareness to be done out of respect to pedestrian, cyclists and so on. Yes, **awareness is very important, but more important than awareness is to try to change the physical space, the street should be changed so that people follow what the street is telling them to do**, of course, is not going to be fast or easy to change every street because it has been decades and decades to construct streets for speed, it needs to be a mix between awareness enforcement, change of streets and laws. So yeah, awareness is important, but it is not enough.

In IFP what we noticed it for example in countries in Latin America there is much more focus on the rights of pedestrians, to have sidewalks, to have safety, while in Europe we also fight about the rights of pedestrians but we are more focused on promotional because people are just spending too long sitting down because we have a very strong service society and we spent too long on the

computer and children don't walk to school because they are being taken by car, so it's slightly different.

What role do you believe transportation plays in achieving social equity in urban environments?

How can collaboration between different stakeholders (government, NGOs, civil society) be enhanced to support the rights of VRUs?

Yes, public participation is very important, especially if we start speaking about desirable road users instead of vulnerable road users, because it should be part of your policy that you desire that there are more people walking and cycling. So the idea of calling them desirable road users is probably a good idea, we are just vulnerable because there is dangerous modes, so probably the best way is to call that there is dangerous modes and there is desirable modes, so when dangerous modes are too dangerous, we have less desirable road uses and I think that's something that we should start changing, language.

Public participation is very important because walking is 100%, we have people from 4, 5, 6 years old to people that have 90- or 80-years old people with Alzheimer, people that are blind, people that have wheelchairs, **walking is a universal condition**, that's very important, that it's much more difficult to have public policies for everybody, even **if you do a campaign for pedestrians, you are failing because pedestrians are a very heterogeneous group because there are many types of pedestrians.**

On the other hand, if you are doing a campaign for car drivers, it's much easier because at least, they have a driving license, they can lose the driving license if they fail medical tests after a certain age, so it's a more homogeneous group, at least a little bit. Of course there are people with different education and different ages and all that, but at least there is a license to be able to be a driver, to be a cyclist or to be a walker, you don't need a license, so, to be a pedestrian it's a universal condition, and so public participation needs to be different.

You need not to just say come and talk with us, you should be more proactive, you should probably use for example random selection of groups, you choose the people you talk to so that you try to get a good perspective on all walkers, so you should not exclude children, you should not exclude elderly and for example, immigrants there is all these kind of people that are walkers and probably are not drivers.

Sometimes with drivers we put a post on the internet and say, we made this plan come over and comment or send us some comments and come to this meeting and we will discuss. I think with walkers or cyclists you need to be much more proactive, you should just go after them, invite them, use food, people can have a bit of a convivial state, which is very different from talking with drivers, that's very important and once you start listening to the people it's also very important to mix the groups, you should have like tables that have a policeman, a driver, someone in a wheelchair, an immigrant they start talking with each other to understand what are the problems of what each other has to say.

Don't do a group just with wheelchair users don't use just a group of children, you can do it in the first stage, but then mix it up, that's the most important stage is when you mix up all the groups **because they should not just say what their needs are, they should also talk with the other people to state what their needs are.** Yes, vulnerability should not be the major thing, what is very important is there is danger, so our focus should be on reducing the danger, that's probably the change that we should make to road safety it should be called “Road danger reduction”.

Are there countries or cities that you believe are exemplary in their treatment of VRUs? What can we learn from them?

[Vienna](#) is doing a very good job, I think you should look at it, they have pedestrian plan, they have, for example LGBTQ+ traffic signs like with two women or men and men. Those small symbolic things are way to say you are welcome even if you are a minority, you are welcome. We liked it, that's something that Vienna is doing quite well.

[Paris](#) is doing well for bicycling, there is a lot of cycling now, much, much more now. Most cities that are using, for example, 30 kilometers per hour speed, are doing very well because speed is the most important thing for cycling, when you slow speeds you do a lot of good things for them because you feel less in danger, you reduce the traffic because suddenly you start realizing that is probably faster to go by bike, reducing also the parking in the city center, that's something that [London](#) is doing for a very long time, that is reducing parking since the 70s.

[Amsterdam](#), for example, is not very good for walking and it's because we worked a lot on cycling, so that's something that they have to pay attention to know that walking should be the first priority for Amsterdam, but on the other hand, for example, Rotterdam is doing very well for walking and cycling, but again, has to do with the context, because in [Rotterdam](#) the city was destroyed during the Second World War, so they have much more space and wiggle room to have space for larger

siding, while Amsterdam is still a very medieval historic city where sidewalks and narrow streets, they have to stop working with them because the only way is to take away power because there's no space for cars production cycle as it they tried for a while, for decades to improve cycling, they did a very good job. Actually, walking is not very well treated.

I see for example the center of Medellin, Colombia I liked it, the use of cable cars and escalators in Medellin is very impressive, is good infrastructure for walking, the kind of walking infrastructure that we are not using that much in Europe, we should use more and use the example of Medellin. It's very good.

10. Interview with an academic expert

What does "the right to the street" mean to you?

Well, I guess **right to the street has to do with public space and how people are entitled to enjoy and take advantage of the space which belongs to everyone** and ever since we started having cars as the dominant means of transport, we've lost that, up to the point that **nowadays, if you use the expression public space, people tend to think of gardens or maybe playgrounds, maybe a square, but the road is perceived as not public space, which is crazy in my opinion and most people don't realize how much they've lost.**

Most people don't know that there was a time when citizens were trying to oppose this dominance of cars, you know, at the beginning of 1900 when the roads were taken away from people, maybe they felt that if they could have a car, they would benefit from this removal of public space, so as people managed to get more and more cars, they just gave up.

But that's what it is, and it's about all the people, especially about all the people who are not able for various reasons to use a car which are children, young people, elderly people that are not able to drive, people who cannot afford a car for economic reasons, and anyone who is not physically able to drive a car, and these are the most affected people and as a consequence the people who take care of them, which most of the time are women, the fact that women spend hours driving elderly members of the family or children around because they cannot move on the road because it's dangerous, I would say in a few words that's what right to the streets means to me.

Do you believe access to public streets is important for all community members? Why?

Yes. Again, because if part of the population has no access to the road this creates a form of injustice, but the thing is, it's an invisible form of injustice nowadays and there are many people

who are discriminated, people who suffer from some form of discrimination, and of course it's worse if it's intersectional discrimination, basically, anyone who is not a man who is white and heterosexual would be menaced by some kind of harassment on the road, depending where and what time of the day, etc.

Is against people who are using private transport cars because they do not feel safe walking or cycling or using public transport because their physical appearance. It calls for various forms of harassment and violence, and I perfectly understand, I'm not saying these people should take risks because it's important to use public transport and reduce our carbon footprint and of course it is but it is as long as you're safe.

The issue is that sometimes people defend their right to use a car because they need to use a car, instead of questioning the system that discriminates them. So instead of asking, "I want to be able to walk wherever and to take a bus without being harassed and in danger I want to be able to drive my car because it makes me feel safe, that's the issue.

I think that's one of the hardest issues to tackle because these people are already, you know, victims obviously and so they feel like they need to defend themselves and I'm perfectly fine with that, I think we need to shift their requests, the goal if you are trying to improve mobility for everyone is to make sure people understand that they need to react to these forms of injustice as citizens, by asking for policy change, rather than as consumers who are defending their right to buy and use their cars, which is the dominant frame and the dominant reaction nowadays and of course, if public transport is not efficient, that's another issue.

The dominant discussion is around public transport is not good, so public transport is only for losers who are not able to afford a private car, and you get this kind of narrative, but like in Turin for example, it is a fact that public transport is not reliable. It's not good enough and it doesn't solve many issues that can only be solved with a car in some cases.

So the problem is **you should not defend your right to use a car because public transport is not good, you should defend your right to have good public transport because you are a citizen and this is such a difficult message to get through, because people don't trust the public service in general, people don't feel like it can change, so they don't fight for that.**

They fight for their individual rights to not be taken away, they tend to identify their access to mobility as their freedom to move around, and they associated to their freedom to move around by car, so once you take their car away because you put in policies that restrict access like low

traffic neighborhoods or whatever, they will protest as if you are telling them you cannot go somewhere like physically under lockdown.

But no, the message is that you have to reduce your car use, but then of course on the other hand, public transport is a mess, the issue is that people are not asking for the alternative because they think there's no possibility, there's no way, that is a part of the problem, it is a classist attitude that I'm not taking public transport if it's for losers and for people who don't have enough money or it's dirty, it's dangerous there are immigrants there.

That's just one part of the problem, the other part of the problem is the objective fact with that public transport, most of the time is not good, not reliable, which is the reason why most people do not use public transport in the city, you have to fix the problem before you can change something, to give alternatives, it also applies for cycling paths and better conditions for pedestrians.

How important do you think public awareness and education are in promoting safety on the streets?

I think, any campaign that invites behavior change, if you don't change anything in the system and you don't address the problem in the system then is wasted money is just pretending that people in power doing something like inviting people to use their bikes now have to ask people why they are not using the bike and when you do that, most people don't do it because they feel it's not safe or their bike was stolen and they did not replace it, these are basically the reasons, so you need the space to be safer, in terms of road safety so that they're not run over, they don't fall because of the holes in the ground and all the things that the administration can deal with, and at the same time make sure bikes are not stolen.

Norton, this American historian has written great, research and he shows how the responsibility for the safety of anyone outside the car shifted from the driver to the people outside, so when cars were a new thing, it was a responsibility of people driving and then this wasn't good for the business, and so it shifted to people outside should pay attention making people aware, teaching people how to behave safely, etc.

When cycling, if the infrastructure is well constructed all the road users respect the rules, people don't want to disrespect the rules if things are well built and make sense, people will behave well.

What role do you believe transportation plays in achieving social equity in urban environments?

I think it's probably the most important thing at the end of day really, because if people cannot move around in the same way, then, injustice is kept in the system, if in order to get a good job, you need a car, then, people who cannot afford a car will never get a good job, their economic and social situation would never improve if people cannot enjoy the space. There are studies that say that democracy is getting weaker and weaker because people are not meeting and talking to one another on the street.

The importance of squares and having to share space and share ideas about society, community and belonging to a community and all that is impossible if you don't have space to do it, if you only do it in private spaces.

In the US people live in this kind of place where you have your own bubble, your own house, with your nice little garden and walls around it and you don't see your neighbors, you don't meet them because you're getting your car and you go somewhere, you don't know who they are. At the time people used online chats to begin to know people and perhaps meet at some point, that is opposite in Europe where we tend to use it as an addition to know people physically, and of course this is changing this is coming here as well, people spending more time with their online communities rather than with their neighbors.

I remember back then already we were studying how in Los Angeles there are buildings where there is no access if you're walking, you can only enter with a car underneath and then get a lift, if you walk, it's like there's no door, you cannot enter the building.

How would you define Vulnerable Road Users, and what characteristics make them particularly at risk in urban environments?

I have a problem with the expression vulnerable road users, but I don't know what to do, let's start from the fact that **the label vulnerable road users is problematic and it's a part of auto mentality it's this way of thinking from the perspective of a car and vital road users, everyone that is not using a car, everyone who is outside the car, they're not vulnerable, they're human beings and human beings are vulnerable, all of us**, because we can die, especially if we are run over by tons of metal, and dividing road users because the linguistically, once you have a label “vulnerable road user”, the implication is some road users are not vulnerable and who are the non-vulnerable road users? The ones who are inside cars, and this label, which is in theory designed to protect what they call vulnerable road users, is reinforcing the idea that being in a car is better.

If you are asked to choose between, would you want to be vulnerable or do you want to be non-vulnerable? No one, and every time I say this, people look a bit puzzled, people working in transport, people are not thinking of these linguistic aspects, people in JUST STREETS will understand perfectly what I mean, but ordinary people working for the city don't get it.

To talk about women instead of saying women, you say the weak sex of the weak gender and once you say that all the women in the room understand, and all the men in the room still look a bit puzzled because they don't see anything wrong with that. Yes, women are weak, but it's the same thing, **so it's not that people are vulnerable is that there are dangerous cars moving around that create danger.**

People are not vulnerable, they have nothing vulnerable in themselves, so the label vulnerable is extremely problematic. Now how to change that? I don't have a solution yet and even if I had a perfect label that twists the perspective still, you know, this is official terminology it's used in published studies and so on. So, I actually hope that one of the things that will come out of this project is the attempt to change this label as it is a horizon.

But it's not easy because changing the language is never easy, we need to realize that this label is problematic, and so I think that that's part of the answer to the question. **Vulnerable users are people, people moving around, and they are made vulnerable by a technology which is dangerous**, it's destroying the planet, polluting the air and creating collisions and injuries and deaths in the name of I don't even know.

The answer to protect people and citizens in the street is to restrict car use in every possible way, slow them down physically, not with signs, but with roads that are impossible to go through or bumps or narrowing the roads and make you feel like you have to go slowly, all of these solutions have been invented have been applied.

In Utrecht they make it difficult, if you have to go from A to B there is a direct pass for people walking but cars are forced to do a zig zag, you have plenty of one-way roads and at first you think, "yeah, but this is stupid because you're polluting a lot more. You're doing a lot more kilometers instead of just going straight." the point exactly is that once you have to do all that instead of just going straight, you feel like an idiot and unless you have to carry a fridge or a sofa, you will just walk. That's it.

They narrowed the road and for cars was very narrow, so they had little walls on the side of wheels and it was just the right distance for a car and it makes you feel like you have to slow down because if you go fast your car will vibrate and that's not safe, so you feel physically so the physical

environment slows you down. Not only signs, not only things written on the ground, but physical boundaries that make sure you slow down and then people will say but then it's it doesn't make sense to use a car anymore and that's exactly the point, you should not be using your car in an if you must go like under 5 kilometers.

You have to be brave to do these changes, the thing is, the political cost, the political cost is very high. I was impressed when I was in Velo City in Leipzig, a couple of years ago, not this year, but the previous one, so in Velo City these cities are chosen because they have improved their cycling mobility in a very fortunate way and they can demonstrate it was an important change from a previous situation to a new situation and Leipzig was successful in doing these things etc. and there Mayor in that event said that he had to be under police protection for a few weeks because they had received death threats.

He continues to change things and impose things and at the end citizens realize it's good and the majority of people are actually happy, and so it's the same thing in Paris. It's the same thing all over the place, but it keeps happening again and again, so you need to be a mayor who knows what to do, who has a plan from day one, do things and keep going, you have to be brave, you have to face the threat.

You need a strong group that will support you so that it's just the opposition blathering in the background. But if you have a strong majority and you are not losing your majority because some parts of the majority are against you like in Turin, the thing is that in Turin, the party in power doesn't really feel like changing things for good, they try a few things, but they're very timid, they do something, some things are absolutely fine, but the whole group is not strongly in favor of mobility transition and this is the part you should be doing this.

What areas of research do you think are currently underexplored in relation to VRUs and mobility?

I think it's such an interdisciplinary topic that it really calls for so many disciplines and certainly my research is unexplored because I think there are maybe three or four people in the academic world that I know of that are studying [transport from a linguistic perspective](#), so how communication effects and then of course you have people like Marco Tobin Strat who is also looking into communication, but from a perspective which is a bit different because it's not a linguist. I adore his research, and I think it's extremely interesting, but I would be really happy to see more research.

It's fascinating to me because there are many people studying these changes, I'm thinking of Rachel Aldridge also Norton, who is an historian, focuses on language. They focus on how certain expressions, Norton studied, how the word jaywalks, changed the perception of who is responsible for the safety of pedestrians or like Rachel Aldridge talking about rogue cyclists and how this label creates.

So, they are looking at language and discourse related issues which are fascinating to me because they're not linguists, so people that are not linguists and dealing with transport are focusing on language and then linguists are not really focusing, because linguists usually don't know much about transport and they take it for granted, like most people do. That's certainly a part that is unexplored

I think political studies should also focus more on transport, from that perspective, it's not a dominant topic at all, in sociology, you already see quite a few people dealing with transport-related issues. From a sociological perspective, politics.

Why is society as humanity not really questioning all this, which I guess is related to the bigger question, why are we not reacting properly to the data about the climate crisis? Which is of course a very big question, but they are related. I think that the problems we have in transport are the mirror on a small scale of the problems we have related to climate crisis, it's the problem of responding individually instead of responding as a community of citizens. I see a parallel between how things do not change effectively in transport and how things do not change effectively on a totally different scale.

The two things are related because transport is what we can do on a small scale in order to solve the climate crisis on a larger scale. I recently read the book by Sadiq Khan and it's really interesting how he actually relates, you know, he puts these things into, and he has this fantastic point which is that mayors are at the right level in the hierarchy of power to do something about the climate crisis because it says nations, they're too big. I think it's fine, we should do it at every scale, but the scale of the city is a scale where you have the power of controlling a city.

A mayor can push things into specific directions, but it's practical it's not the big, unbelievably complex issues that cops deal with and all the international issues, but he can manage a city level, you know, change mobility, make sure public transport works and that's the scale where you can actually manage and I thought this was a brilliant, very positive message.

I'm more and more convinced that the answer is, as a study can say on a smaller scale like that, we need also the bigger scale, of course, but that's where you can start doing something that works

and that changes the pollution locally and it changes the mentality of a number of people, I would recommend that book.

11. Interview with a member of the municipality of the Metropolitan City of Milan.

What does the right to the street mean to you?

In the past, it was the citizen who decided how urban spaces should be used, based on principles of collectivism and sharing. For example, the agora was the central square of the Greek polis, where the political and commercial life of the city took place; an open space where citizens could meet, discuss, and socialize, without distinction (or at least with minimal distinctions) between classes and genders. Over time, this spatial concept has become increasingly standardized, and urban space has been progressively reduced, replaced by places and processes linked to capitalism—first industrial, then financial. All of this has happened without citizens having any way to participate in the decisions concerning these processes, which thus occurred without any form of participation and sharing.

Within cities, spaces were built that were no longer accessible to everyone but only to the dominant classes, pushing the less affluent classes further away from urban centers. Consider, for instance, the large urban regeneration areas in major cities: futuristic, international, but not accessible to everyone due to the enormous costs required to live there. In this way, the less privileged social classes lost their "effective citizenship" in these areas, with fewer and less well-maintained spaces available to them, and less opportunity to physically access, occupy, and use urban space. This process is evolving further, and today we are witnessing the hollowing out of central areas; housing and shared spaces are being replaced by offices, tourist facilities, and representative spaces. All this is done to meet economic and commercial demands, rather than the need to live and collectively and equitably enjoy urban space for the preservation of community and identity for both citizens and places.

Streets are predominantly designed to meet needs related to work and speed, as if the only reason for moving is—or should be—to "rush to go to work." Streets are mainly designed for the use of the average Western male, who needs to move—by car—due to economic and productive reasons, always responding to individualistic needs, no longer collectivist ones.

The right to the city and to the streets is precisely the antithetical right to the answers given by capitalist and individualistic principles; it is the right to enjoy human-scaled spaces and places where people can make contact and meet without barriers and without prejudice. The street and

the city as a whole, should allow for meeting, sharing, and the possibility of participating in public life and decisions regarding the use and modification of urban spaces and streets, based on the needs and requests of the community, and not solely the needs of economic development.

Do you believe access to public streets is important for all community members? Why?

I don't think the issue should be framed solely in terms of its importance for utilitarian purposes, which are certainly essential, but also and above all in terms of equality. The concept of community present in the question refers— in my opinion—to an egalitarian principle and cohesion. Access—and more broadly, accessibility, understood as the possibility and ability to move and travel regardless of one's conditions—is an essential element for returning spaces to free use, and is inextricably linked to the respect and protection of other human rights, which are principles that every action of ours should aim to uphold.

How important do you think public awareness and education are in promoting safety on streets?

It is certainly fundamental, but it is not enough. I believe that a complete shift in the paradigm and approach to the concept of streets and movement is necessary, as I have already mentioned in question one.

What role do you believe transportation plays in achieving social equity in urban environments?

I imagine you are specifically referring to public transport. Certainly, the proper functioning of *Transporto Pubblico Locale* (TPL), along with alternative mobility services and the consequent reduction in the use of private vehicles, plays an essential role in terms of social equity; especially when they connect the suburbs, areas with predominantly lower incomes, with urban centers where mobility systems—both public and alternative—are more facilitated. This creates an increase in disparities, fueling inequalities.

Therefore, the principles of accessible mobility—one of the goals outlined in the 2030 Agenda—can help overcome marginalization, promote social participation, and reduce inequalities.

How do you assess the involvement of VRUs in the policy-making process? What improvements could be made?

The involvement of Vulnerable Road Users is essential; however, it is necessary to reflect on the concept of vulnerability.

The Road Code defines as vulnerable those individuals most exposed to road risks, such as people with disabilities, pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers of mopeds and motorcycles. However, there are other types of vulnerability that should be considered, such as social, economic, and cultural vulnerabilities. Not everyone has the same opportunities for access to space. Therefore, the processes of involvement and co-creation must be broad and inclusive and should fall within a wide concept of participation that can make the role of the citizen central.

What role does citizen participation play in shaping policies that affect street access and safety?

The process of citizen participation in the definition of policies is essential, but unfortunately, it is still not adequately implemented today. The delegation that citizens give to politics, through the principles of representative democracy (that is, a form of democratic government in which citizens with voting rights directly elect representatives to be governed by them), leads to the belief that participating simply means voting. Therefore, there is a lack of impetus for citizen involvement in decisions that affect their lives. However, the trend is changing, also thanks to European influences, not so much in terms of choices but in the citizens' awareness of the need to have an impact and participate.

12. Interview with an advocate representing the Col.lectiu Punt 6

What does "the right to the street" mean to you?

It is the ability to decide and participate in everything that has to do with oneself, with the street, not with appropriating and using the city. So, we, who work from a feminist perspective, always work from the perspective that women still have the right to the street limited by issues of patriarchal and sexist capitalist, and colonial plasticity.

Our right to the street is fueled by different oppressions, such as gender, racism, homophobia, ableism, etc. And then sometimes the data hasn't even been analyzed. In fact, you work with active mobility, and the great walkers of this world are women, we are the ones who walk more, in greater proportion than men. So, it's hindered by factors like age, social class, migration status, abilities, etc.

Well, if we have the ability to walk to many places, especially during the day, that mobility is curtailed when it becomes night in many areas due to fear and insecurity. Moreover, when active mobility policies are made, it is not considered that despite having more sustainable mobility, we

are penalized because these mobility systems do not consider the diverse realities, and in the end we end up suffering the consequences of a mobility system that is totally unjust for women.

Do you believe access to public streets is important for all community members? Why?

Well, this is also very masked, isn't it? What does it mean 'for everyone'? Obviously, yes, for everyone, but let's analyze, who has access for what types of uses and for what kinds of activities?

I think what we cannot do with mobility policies is to create actions that end up restricting public access to people with diversity, to people who in today's world are stigmatized and discriminated against because of their condition.

So, when we talk about a feminist perspective, we talk about eliminating privileges and working so that yes, all of us, in our diversity, can make public use of the street. But eliminating privileges means that certain privileged people in society will also have to accept that their privileges have been removed, but they don't, so sometimes there are people with certain characteristics, like white men with purchasing power, who perhaps travel by car or motorcycle, who have acquired privileges that also lead to an overuse of public spaces and a privatized use of public space.

Well, if we are really working towards feminist, equitable, and just mobility, we will need to review the space occupied by this group of people and truly achieve the goal that the vast majority of the population -women, gender-diverse individuals, people experiencing homelessness, youth, elderly people, people with disabilities, etc.- can really access the street. If it were a space for children, of course, it could be designed, but first, you need to analyze that environment, that context, and embrace its complexity, right? And prioritize who the place is designed for, without trying to exclude anyone.

I say this mostly from the perspective that many people say they plan for everyone and don't. **They create mobility or public space policies that end up being classist and exclusionary, can be, homeless people, people involved in drug consumption, young people, racialized people, trans people, etc. Spaces for these people haven't been considered, instead, they end up being hostile architecture that seeks to protect private goods, not public goods.**

How important do you think public awareness and education are in promoting safety on streets?

It is very important for people to become aware of the different types of violence, especially those that are more invisible or that people don't know how to identify. But for public awareness to exist, it's important that there is sensitivity in the people in charge of developing these projects, from public policymakers and technical policymakers to those designing the spaces, because sometimes we focus on the citizens and the failure actually comes from behind, from their design idea.

So, it is very important, and that's why for us, many of these processes should be done through participation in community action from the ground up, not from the top down, and sometimes the community action part is also a way to value, on one hand, the experience, the resilience of the community and the diverse people living in that community using the spaces. On the other hand, it's also a way of thinking, not in terms of projects that really respond more to that reality, but rather to the whim of an architect who thinks their design is better than another just because they are an architect.

If they're not at the university, imagine, we should focus on changing how studies are taught and how architecture and design are done, right?

What role do you believe transportation plays in achieving social equity in urban environments?

Well, it can play a role of justice and equity, right?

If we are designing neighborhoods and communities where private transport infrastructures are primarily for private vehicles, we will be designing cities for a certain type of population with a certain social class who also have access to at least one or two vehicles, and we will be restricting the right to mobility for many people, right? So, **through the design of walkable spaces and cycling infrastructure, developed within a complete network and with public investment, and prioritizing public collective transport over private transport, these are strategies for more equitable, more just, more feminist, and more democratizing mobility.**

Of course transportation plays an important role, and if in most cities this priority does not exist for public transport and walkable environments, it's because planning is also done from a class perspective and a view that doesn't consider access and the right to mobility for people in all its complexity.

I don't know if the people who want to drive everywhere should be allowed to drive everywhere, instead, we are designing cities where we are allowing that, right? And now comes the

greenwashing with the shift to electric vehicles, before you had one type of car, now you have a Tesla or any other luxury electric car and with that discourse, they're selling the idea that they don't pollute. **I believe we need to limit mobility in motorized vehicles and really offer options for accessible, fair, and equitable mobility on foot, by bike, and via public transportation.**

How can collaboration between different stakeholders (government, NGOs, civil society) be enhanced to support the rights of VRUs?

I'll say it again, I believe **we need to focus on the community and the people who are truly experts, who are the users**, and that the role of the other agencies is also to learn from that context and put their technical knowledge at the service of the people who are, well, from that community or those users.

So, **there is an important role to take and to change the way more community-based processes are carried out, processes that value qualitative data more than quantitative data, which, of course, should all be collected and analyzed from a gender and feminist perspective**, which is not being done either and then be able to make decisions based on these elements.

Are there countries, cities or initiatives that you believe are exemplary in their treatment of VRUs? What can we learn from them?

Well, I think it's important to analyze why these situations have occurred, and yes, I know that in some cities, mobility has been prioritized, but that doesn't mean we can copy and paste initiatives everywhere. For example, in the city of [Pontevedra](#) here in Spain, a policy was implemented to prioritize active and pedestrian mobility, where at the political level, it was decided not to give the privilege of parking cars on public streets because it was a private occupation of public space.

In [Vienna](#), work has been done since the late '90s to improve infrastructure for walking, public transport, and cycling from a gender perspective, and in many other cities as well, where this gender perspective is being integrated into mobility and transport. There are many initiatives in [Latin America](#), starting from Mexico City, where a lot of work has also been done, in Santiago de Chile, Quito and Ecuador, but it also often depends on the political wave and who's making the policies.

Now Barcelona is very famous for its superblocks, but it's not all that it seems, so I am very cautious, I think the models are also contextual and must be developed according to the context and situation of each place.

13. Interview with an academic expert

What does "the right to the street" mean to you?

This is a challenging question because theoretically we know that this starts from Harvey, this idea of it, and it goes towards Susan Feinstein and then all these discussions about it but I think at the basis of it is that everyone who wants to have access to the street or wants to use the space that we have in the street should have the ability to do so, and I'm using the word ability in the sense of ability and capability to do so because there are many people who claim that they should be able to use the street, but they are often unable to do so. There are many people who should be able to use the street, but due to choices that we have made in our policies in the way that we have built our cities, they might not have the ability to use the streets.

The way that southern European cities have designed their streets is not exactly the most welcoming places for people who are older or people with children or people with a visual handicap, or people who are otherwise able, I think in theory, we want to make this everyone but I also think the reality is that we somehow have managed to not make it accessible for everyone and you can turn this around to also more able bodied users because as a woman, if you are traveling through the night in different parts of town and at different times of the year, your right to the streets is severely diminished.

The street and something I'm very concerned about, I feel that we should stop pretending that transport policy is for everyone, particularly when it doesn't, and to try to actually make it possible for more people than we currently do, I am not naive enough to think that it is for everyone or it can be for everyone at the same time, because of course there are trade-offs that you need to anticipate but I think that we can at least try.

Do you believe access to public streets is important for all community members? Why?

Yes. If we think about the street as one of the branches towards public space, and democratic space, then yes, definitely we need to do so, and there are two ways to talk about this, or at least there are two ways I'm thinking about this, one is of course I can be where I need to be or I want

to be at any time of the day regardless of my condition or my capability, that is part of this democratic promise that you have, mobility as a right is number six of human rights.

Then there's the other option which is that having access to streets means also having access to places and facilities and we know very much from a planning and urban design point of view is that when you hamper people's access to facilities such as schools or healthcare or even communal spaces where they can interact with each other, you also diminish the opportunity for social mobility to grow or to develop as a persons, and that has huge impact on community itself because if you don't have people who are able to be the best versions of themselves, they cannot also contribute effectively to the community.

So the first one is more about a space discussion in the sense that if you don't have the space, how can people meet?, How can people interact?, How can people have any form of meaningful relationship with someone other than people in their immediate family? and the second one being if you restrict people's access to important facilities, even if it's green space, open air, you name it, you are severely handicapping the individual members that might contribute to the community.

It's very sad, **we need to prioritize the things that are really essential for community life** and I think one of the qualifiers I'm going to tell you is that even though I work a lot in transportation, I am not a transportation planner by trade, I teach a lot about transportation planning, but I am an architect, urban designer and a planner.

Because I came from practice and I used to do a lot of traffic circulation master plans for large areas, hospitals, neighborhoods and I got very frustrated with the fact that **of course there's the engineering aspect to it but at the end of the day these places are not for robots, these are for people, so why are we pretending that we can predict and simulate everything like it's for robots.**

I know Gil Peñalosa because he runs this organization called 8 to 80 cities and I think that is also some of these principles that we find important, which is that a city is not just for a fit 45 year old white man, It is for everybody from 8 year old to 80 or at least it should be that way, I think that is very much the kind of discussion that we are also very supportive of on the project that we do.

One of the things that annoys me the most is people will be saying things like “but you know, there's no way that you can make everybody happy” and that's an assumption, we don't, of course we can't make everybody happy, but we should at least make it fair enough for people to participate and let them be able to participate in the process itself, right? because if we talk about justice, there's many different forms of justice.

We've been very good at working at a distributive type of justice, which is okay on the road, we must have so much space for cars and there's so much space for people and distributing resources, every neighborhood shouldn't take more than 45 minutes to reach a healthcare or school. But we are not so good at doing the more compensatory recognition based on justice, which is, all the people who have been disadvantaged for a very long time, are they able to feedback into the current cycle? How often do we have vulnerable groups being part of the policy making decisions in order to help? We must restore some of the wrongs that we have done as people, we are trying at least.

How important do you think public awareness and education are in promoting safety on the streets?

I think it's very important, but I want to be very careful of the fact that it is often only that right that people say that. Oh, okay, if we educate people, then they will be good about it. Maybe that's one part of the deal, let me give you an example of what I mean, so I work with students dealing with street harassment in the Netherlands, particularly in the city of Amsterdam, this is a huge problem and for the longest time, all they sort of did about it was to put out nice posters that said, "oh, you know, you shouldn't" or "this is bad", and I'm like, "yeah, great" but we need to actually do something about it.

A lot of these posters were also about how women should keep themselves safe but that's a double edged sword because technically you are blaming the women or putting the responsibility on them for not being safe, whereas the problem is really not the women not being safe is the fact that street harassment exists and that there are people who partake in street harassment with no fear, and there are no consequences, and also parts of the city are designed in such a way that it makes it possible.

I do believe that education awareness is very important, but it has to target the right level with the right audience, and it shouldn't be a stand-alone thing, it should be something that a company's actual action because it's very easy to say, "Let's make a campaign about awareness" and don't get further. Is very easy to just blame someone for it, and we see also these actions where they say, "we're going to build these trains for women only where they can be in", and I don't think that's the issue. I don't think the issue is that the women need to be alone in the train. I mean, it's nice, but you know it's not the issue here, so it is a bit weird that we think that way.

What role do you believe transportation plays in achieving social equity in urban environments?

Again, I refer to how I discussed whether or not access to the streets also plays a role in community and in democracy in general. Equity, if we want to describe it, I will view it from a more social mobility point of view. I work a lot in Southeast Asian countries also and what we're seeing is that there's large parts of the population that do not get access to important aspects of society, everything ranging from basic healthcare to specialized health care, I'm talking about gynecologists all the way to midwifery to seeing a General practitioner to going to the hospital for a surgeon simply because they cannot access it, not because it's not there, but they cannot get to it in time.

I have a paper that shows in parts of Jakarta where they are able to access primary schools maybe also kindergartens, but they find it very difficult to go to higher levels of education like secondary schools, college universities and I wonder what you're effectively doing is you're handicapping a huge population percentage from not having a good quality of life, medically speaking, to have further access to further education that they can do.

I'm not talking like "oh, they have to travel 30 minutes to go to university", I'm saying that they have to change six buses travel and two hours to get to university, which for a family where the income level isn't so high it's unaffordable, so even if the child is able to study at that level, they will eventually be discouraged to seek other modes of employment to keep their family afloat so that destroys any options.

Well, first of all, it decreases equity if we believe the equity should be the same across the board, it also destroys any option they have of improving the situation, so you not only make the situation like by don't give them the plus, but you also take away the ability of this generation and the next generation of moving forward.

So, it's a very insidious problem, which we're not so aware of and that we can play a huge role in, but we somehow don't exercise this option.

We're seeing much more in larger metropolitan cities and situation we have almost like a 2 level society, people who are able to live close to their work and people who are not and it seems that the more labor intensive jobs also tend to fall to those who are not, so they have to travel a further distances to come into the city to do the work and if we don't even consider money, let's think in terms of the time, everyone has to spend per day.

The three tenets of making a transportation choice are time, cost and effort, even if we don't consider cost, let's say public transport is free, the time and effort they would have to take means that they don't have the same time and effort to do other things in their life, whether it's caretaking, self-improvement or exercise for health, in any case, it's leading to a very weird and broken-down society.

How would you define Vulnerable Road Users, and what characteristics make them particularly at risk in urban environments?

The transport plan engineering definition is that basically anyone who is not covered in the metal object like not the car using is a VRU, so anyone who is not in a car who is not in a vehicle who is on street.

I think it's a little bit more nuanced than that, I think it's a bit of an illusion to say that people in a car are not vulnerable, so if I were to redefine it, **I would consider vulnerable road user, anyone who has less than the normal threshold of access or guarantee of safety or the ability to exercise their rights and participate in society.**

Then whoever think that minimum threshold is, that's a strategic reason, I think that if we make the case that **everyone can be a vulnerable road user, everyone can be subjected to vulnerability at one point in time**, you can also break your leg and not be able to drive your car and suddenly you are a vulnerable road user, everybody has the ability to be one.

From a policy planning design point of view, I would like to say that the ethics of care approach here is very important, a feminist lens of ethics of care, which is that the most vulnerable, the most fragile ones, should be the one that we should be taking action and making policy for simply from the assumption that if we take care of the least able to in society, we are able to create a much better general the situation for the rest.

So that would be sort of my redefinition of what that is, I would first say no, everyone can be one, not just people who are not in cars and if we have to do something about it, we focus on the ones who are least able to take care of themselves.

What areas of research do you think are currently underexplored in relation to VRUs and mobility?

The thing that I think we don't know enough about is, how those voices can be heard in an impactful way, what kind of roles they can take, how transport policies can take these roles into account and, we don't actually look at the **intersectionality of these vulnerable road users.**

When I say intersectionality, I mean that often we say, “oh, we have to make the pavement more smooth for wheelchair user” to have a lower curb but we also have to place the rough surface tone so that the people who are visually unable are able to feel the surfaces but if you consider someone who is an older woman who cannot see very well, who sometimes needs to use like one of those pushing walking aids this combination is not a good combination because they don't see very well and the surface makes it impossible for the walking it to push, and you know, it's not a great improvement, they can only walk in a very small part of the road.

We're not considering this sort of like multi situations, in medicine is called comorbidities maybe we need to have comorbidities for mobilities where someone can be a little bit of everything and engineering itself will not solve those issues.

Maybe we need to wonder, why we need to have a lower curve, like maybe the car shouldn't go so fast, A lot of our attention is spent on how we change the current car based situation to make it acceptable, I think we need to rethink it to say that we say, wait, what is the ideal baseline we want to have and then reconsider what role cars have in it.

So, if you want to transfer this to more like design guidelines, what I'm saying is that we don't know enough about these people and their intersectionalities to come up with design guidelines to work for them, not as an afterthought, but as a sort of core target group.

14. Interview with a member of the municipality of Braga, Portugal

What does "the right to the street" mean to you?

On one hand it means that everyone, including people with disabilities, the elderly, and children, have the right to use public space without limitations or barriers, freely and safely, on the other hand, that everyone has the right to decide on the conditions of that space and on what the attributes of that space should be.

In this sense, when I think of the ‘right to the street’ and the ‘right to the city’ I think of two concepts that are fundamental: spatial justice and social inclusion. To understand the ‘right to the street’ or the ‘right to the city’, on one hand, the guarantee of equitable access to urban space, and on the other, the ability of communities to influence and participate in decisions that affect their spaces. That's why I'm emphasizing here an issue that I think is pressing: the democratization of public participation in the creation of fairer and more equitable spaces.

Particularly in relation to the ‘right to the street’ **this right goes beyond the possibility of moving around the streets. In fact, it must encompass the right to appropriate**

public spaces as places to meet and socialize. To this end, the issue of accessibility is fundamental, particularly for people with disabilities, children, the elderly and other communities considered marginalized, but also thinking of the streets as spaces where people can express their opinions, claim rights and take part in social movements without fear of repression. The 'right to the street' also implies being able to guarantee safe and functional movement on foot, by bicycle or by public transport.

The 'Right to the City' is a broader concept, it doesn't just involve access to public space, but the right of communities to shape and participate in the development and organization of the city itself. This right implies that people have an active voice in decisions, involving the structure and dynamics of the city, from urban planning to social and environmental policies. This concept emphasizes issues related to public participation, as I already mentioned, Social and Spatial Justice and the importance of the city meeting the needs of all social classes, combating inequalities and promoting fair access to essential services such as health, education and transport.

Finally, in terms of sustainability and quality of life, the right to the city also involves a commitment to sustainability and the creation of healthy environments for all, namely related to green areas, leisure facilities and adequate living conditions.

Do you believe access to public streets is important for all community members? Why?

I would say that access to public space is fundamental as public space is the prime space for the democratic expression of society, it is in public space that we manifest and express ourselves, that we fight for our rights. These spaces are, by nature, places for social interaction and coexistence and therefore play a central role in promoting the quality of life of communities and democratizing the city.

I would highlight diversity, this is a fundamental aspect when we think about access to public space for all community members, in other words, **public space is the place where people of different classes, ages and social, cultural and economic conditions should feel equal. To achieve this, it is important that these spaces are accessible and inclusive, promoting daily use and contributing to a more sustainable and active lifestyle. This can even influence a change in lifestyles, helping to reduce isolation and promote collective well-being.** This feeling of inclusion undoubtedly leads to an increased sense of belonging to the place, **when communities feel part of the space, they tend to create a sense of**

belonging, which increases their interest in participation and involvement in creating safe and just spaces.

In this sense it is fundamental to think about the possibilities of space in an emancipatory project of society, based on increases in liberty and equality, in other words, justice through space.

I can conclude this answer by emphasizing the essential role of public space as a meeting place for the community, where social ties are created and strengthened. It's about promoting interaction between neighbors, the development of a sense of community and the shaping of a social network capable of making cities safer and fairer.

How important do you think public awareness and education are in promoting safety on the streets?

I believe that the question of safety on the streets requires first and foremost an understanding of the ideal relationship between individuals and their habitat, the conflicts and the possibilities of cohabitation. In what concerns public policy, I believe that only concertation and political legitimacy can lead to just choices, in other words, urbanism needs to be a political activity.

It's important to remember that safety doesn't depend exclusively on infrastructure or the constant presence of security forces, although these factors are undoubtedly relevant, safety on the streets is also a reflection of the practices and behaviors that each individual adopts. We therefore believe that public awareness plays a crucial role.

When people are informed about the dangers and consequences of certain behaviors regarding their mobility choices, they become more aware of the impact of their actions on collective safety and well-being. Well-structured awareness campaigns can encourage citizens to adopt safer attitudes, promoting urban coexistence that respects the diversity of users of public roads and spaces.

In addition, I'd like to emphasize the role of safety education, the municipality of Braga has carried out several activities in schools, as they play a fundamental role in teaching children and young people about the importance of safe behavior when using public spaces. But I would like to stress that, although **we think this is important to make children more aware of the road safe problem, we need to be careful not to reinforce parents' fears about the dangers of using public spaces.** We are currently seeing a decrease not only in the number of children but also in the number of elderly people on the streets, which is why the evaluation and impact of this type of action must be duly considered.

What role do you believe transportation plays in achieving social equity in urban environments?

Transport plays a crucial role in promoting social equity in urban environments, on one hand, it facilitates access to employment, education, health services, leisure and culture, in this sense, we see quality public transport not just as a service, but as a necessity. In fact, it plays a fundamental role in the quality of life of communities, but above all in guaranteeing access to certain goods and services. We're talking about the role of transport in social inclusion, especially for groups that might otherwise have their mobility restricted, such as citizens in low-income situations, the elderly, young people and people with reduced mobility, among others. Therefore, **we believe that an efficient and accessible transport system allows these populations to access opportunities and resources on equal terms, thus promoting greater social cohesion.**

It is therefore understood that urban transport is an essential pillar of social equity, promoting integration, inclusion and quality of life. **By providing mobility for all, regardless of economic conditions or geographical location, public transport contributes to a fairer and more inclusive urban society.** This geographical issue is also very relevant, particularly in the case of people who live far from city centers, usually people with fewer economic resources, who have to travel longer distances between their homes and their jobs, health services, schools, etc. quality transport helps to reduce inequalities and consequently increase fairness in terms of access to space.

How do you assess the involvement of VRUs in the policy-making process? What improvements could be made?

VRUs participation in political decision-making and public policymaking has been gaining recognition but still faces many challenges in reaching an effective and inclusive level. **The political decision-making process is still dominated by perspectives centered on individual motorized transport, which continues to be privileged over soft mobility and the needs of VRUs.** This view is reflected in the allocation of resources to car-oriented projects, for example, the creation of car parks, to the detriment of creating safer and more accessible spaces for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport users.

As part of the Braga municipality's experience in promoting VRUs participation in the political decision-making process and in drawing up public policies, the following elements stand out as very relevant:

- Conducting regular co-creation processes with communities, ensuring the greatest possible diversity of citizens, pedestrians, public transport users, motorists, cyclists, people of different age groups, people with reduced mobility, migrants, so that they can participate and express their concerns. This possibility of allowing communities to participate in the co-creation of projects makes it possible to respond to their needs and to involve them in and accept the whole process. Through these co-creation processes, there is an intrinsic process of mutual learning between the participants, researchers, and technicians from the municipality.

In these learning processes there is an exchange of experiences that allows reflection and sometimes putting oneself in the other person's shoes, which results in greater acceptance of proposals, particularly those that involve a change in behavior and attitudes. These have been some of the experiences we have come across.

- Another fundamental element has been the empowerment of governance, through the participation of governance in these co-creation processes, but also in other activities such as workshops and collaborations with civil society, it has made it possible to promote greater awareness of the importance of an inclusive and accessible city.
- We also consider the implementation of social impact studies to be relevant, as it can guarantee a diagnosis of the needs of the various users of public space. This is not yet a practice, but it could facilitate decision-making.

In my view, these measures are fundamental to a more democratic and inclusive decision-making process, where the needs of VRUs are treated as a priority in building a safer and more accessible urban environment.

What role does citizen participation play in shaping policies that affect street access and safety?

Citizen participation is/should be crucial in shaping policies that affect street access and safety, I could refer to what we are trying to do in Braga, since we are very aware of the challenges related to the implementation of accessibility policies. In the municipality of Braga, we are developing an innovative participatory process based on a multi-level engagement and a transdisciplinary approach.

Through the SUMP, Braga is making urban mobility more inclusive in an innovative way, not only through the work carried out at the level of public participation, but also through the bottom-up approaches related with the previous referring initiatives.

Braga enhances urban mobility inclusivity by partnering with organizations for mobility challenged individuals and actively engaging the community through public discussions. We have regular meetings with the several organizations that represent people with all kinds of disabilities. More recently, I could highlight the process of participation and co-creation that we have been developing as part of the project of D. Pedro V street, in close proximity to the resident community.

Since 2017, the municipality of Braga, in collaboration with the University of Minho, has implemented the Urban Innovation Lab within the Mobility Department. As a result of this partnership, we have implemented several research-action techniques in schools to promote sustainable mobility, such as interviews, focus groups, awareness raising actions, surveys, collaborative workshops.

15. Interview with a member of the Cross River Partnership (CRP) working at London Westminster

What does "the right to the street" mean to you?

So I think the right to the streets and by extension to the city means that when anyone occupies, at least in an urban setting, a space, they have right to all of the public areas of the space, and by having a right, that means the ability to get to from point A to point B without having to go through unnecessary steps to get there, there should be a reasonable way for a person to get from point A to point B.

At least within the public spaces of that city, for example, a person shouldn't have to take a one-hour bus ride to get from point A to point B when they could just as easily cycle and take a lot less time. Take half the time, but they can't cycle because the infrastructure isn't in place, or the traffic patterns don't allow it so that they are forced to go through a more rigorous way to get there.

And by extension I would say that there's not just from within the locality but to within a wider space. Everyone should have the ability to move around the city within reason to live a full life and I think that plays into a lot of things, such as mental health, general well-being and I forget what the expression is, but sort of our rights as people to fill the space we're in.

Another big problem with transport, at least to looking at it from a London context and that's not just because I think in the first part of the question, I answered from a spatial context, but there's also very much the time context and here we have what we call the night time economy and how that's impacted by the lack of good transport systems at night and that very much limits what a

person can do, how long they can do it and then of course, there's also the dangers as well as the inconvenience of moving at night.

**Do you believe access to public streets is important for all community members?
Why?**

I think it lies in the question itself, which is that it's all community members or community is made-up of the people in it and that diverse experience or individual lives, everyone has their own life and their own experience and they all have a right to a public space and by creating streets that are accessible to all members of a community, you create a space that is reflective of the community.

I also think that by making that effort to make a space open to everyone even if the space isn't suitable for everyone, at least understanding that that space isn't quite right means that there will be continued conversations and then so again reducing that marginality and pulling everyone into a space creates well, an equitable process where everyone is given the opportunity to speak and say yes, this is right for me or this is not right for me.

Some, perspectives will be valid, for example a person who is wheelchair bound, who says, "I can't cross to the other side of the street because the drop from the curb to the road and then getting back onto the curb on the other side of the street" and that's a valid concern that one should definitely try to account for as supposed to someone who says, "well, there's nowhere for me to park my car because I like to park my car in front of my house" never mind that there is a parking lot at the end of the street, hat's only a 2 minute walk from where they live, but understanding these different viewpoints at least means that the city planners have a chance to create a space that balances all of these different perspectives. You can't please everybody, but you can at least justify why you've done what you've done having heard all of the voices.

In a site visit here, in London, we went to a school street, one of the residents was handing out flyers because he doesn't like the school street, he said that it's a problem because emergency vehicles can't come down the street and we explained that emergency vehicles can come down the street and that before we put the school street in place, we actually checked with emergency services to make sure that it was compliant and their vehicles could get down, but he just doesn't like that he can't drive easily down the street anymore and so he said that the Council was lying and they never talked to emergency vehicles, and so there's some people who you can't please.

But the fact of the matter is that he can still drive to his residence, he can't drive up the road he would have to drive around and so basically drive down to another street, come up and then come

back up the block to get to his street but he can still do it and it only adds to maybe 3 minutes to his driving but we can't please everyone.

I think the hardest part of community engagement is making sure that you're talking to everyone, but I think that's a good example of understanding that someone may not be happy with the situation, but at least that person still has an alternative and hasn't been stopped entirely from doing what they want to do.

How important do you think public awareness and education are in promoting safety on the streets?

I think education and public awareness are important, I do think that people should at least be given heads up or be made aware that a change to how they move is coming and also give them the opportunity to understand why that's where the education is, but I also know that people don't pay attention to things they don't have to pay attention to.

We can go ahead and send out all of the emails in the world, invite them to come to all of the meetings in the world and not everyone will come. It's asked if you can force people to come to these things. So, I think that it's really important, I think it comes down to people experiencing things to understand how it impacts them and how it could work for them, etc. I would say education's important, but I think it's how knowledge is shared that's even more important.

So for example understanding that people may not have come to the community engagement meeting, they may not have read the flyer that came through their door, they may not have read the e-mail if they were to suddenly find themselves in a completely new situation where, for example, a road that only yesterday was a two way road and now suddenly they find themselves stuck because that road is now a one way and worse it's a one way in the opposite direction from where they want to go.

Is there a way to sort of almost automatically pass on key information to them at that point that they understand why they're in this situation now, and if there isn't, is there a way for them to easily get access to the information as in for example, our contact at the place of the street school, he said that the sort of your way finding tools like Google Maps, Waze, City Mapper, so all of these apps that you would use for directions to get from point A to point B, they don't automatically update.

So, where the school street is now closed, some of these apps shows that you can still drive through the street and it's all until the driver gets there and sees no cars down

the street that they have to then kind of figure a way around it. So it's things like that, how in sync are you with how in sync are the local authorities or the city planners with various tools out there that can at least raise awareness so that people don't find themselves inconvenienced.

When you consider that, for example, Google Maps, that is a private organization, how quickly is this information being shared with hopefully the cause? Again, Google has hundreds of thousands of employees, so how do you know that you're talking to the right team at Google? And so that they can make changes immediately.

What role do you believe transportation plays in achieving social equity in urban environments?

I think if there are barriers in place, one cannot achieve, in terms of moving around, social equity, people need to have, within reason, the ability to get from point A to point B, whether it's for work purposes, for health purposes and I think that's important because again, if I go back to say, for example, Lagos in Nigeria, that's a city that I definitely can think of problems, sometimes you have to get across town to get to a hospital but when you don't have good infrastructure in place, forget getting to a hospital in time to treat an emergency.

How are emergency vehicles supposed to get from point A to point B to give treatment? It's not unusual when there's a fire for the building to burn down, not because the fire truck didn't come, but because the fire truck could not get there in time to put out the fire. So again, all of these things in terms of not just the mode of transport but also the infrastructure to allow these different modes of transport and help all these different civic organizations, as well as the individual perform to their highest capacity, I think it's absolutely important for equity.

I know that when people say social mobility, they talk about moving up on a social scale. But if you focus, I don't think there can be social mobility without sustainable mobility in all centers in all senses, of what sustainability could mean, not only just being green, but also something that lasts a long time or lasts in perpetuity, really, and that functions to serve the needs of everyone.

How do you assess the involvement of VRUs in the policy-making process? What improvements could be made?

I would say it's important if you're going to create discrete policies that address everyone's needs, they are as much a part of society. My thing with vulnerable road users or any special group of

people is always how to make sure that you can reach them for engagement, for co-creation, for feedback, I do think that they're important, but we don't work on policy at CRP.

If I think about design instead of policy making, that's definitely one where we're still struggling with because again, it's very much, how do I know that I'm reaching enough people when it comes to vulnerable road users? and if I look at the second part, which is what improvements could be made, probably at least from the CRP perspective, probably I would say keeping register of organizations or associations that are specifically for these different road users so that we have a diverse a group as possible to engage when that time comes. I mean, **right now we are working with organizations that work with vulnerable road users, but it's not the same thing, that's a middleman and I think it would be better to work with them more directly.**

What role does citizen participation play in shaping policies that affect street access and safety?

I would say it's key, if you're going to create a space that definitely addresses everyone's access and their safety, you need to understand what their experience is, and so in that sense, citizen participation is important because nobody realizes that they do it, but we almost always think from our perspective **and it's very hard to put yourself in someone else's shoes**, it's not until you hear those other voices that you go “Ah, yes, I had not considered this point” and yes, a lot of people have sort of like a list of checkpoints that they will mark up and say that's been addressed, that's been addressed, but it's never enough, **there's always going to be something that hasn't been considered or something that has to be changed for that particular situation.**

16. Interview with an academic expert

What does "the right to the street" mean to you?

For me, the right to the street means that all kinds of people should be able to move through the space of the streets and feel some degree of safety and capacity to be able to move and to get to where they need to go. The right to the street has changed, I guess historically it's changed through time, and it doesn't exist necessarily as a written legal law, right? But I think of it as a kind of social practice and a practice of being in a public space together and as technologies and modes of transportation have changed over time, it's made less safe for vulnerable users to exercise their right to the street.

Yes, and in a way **the right to the city sometimes refers to the built environment, a right to housing and to water and electricity and infrastructure. Whereas the right to the**

street is both, it's about mobility and it's about citizenship and participation in the city, because if you don't have a right to the street, you're also unable to assemble as a political voice of people who come together as a public, **so it's public space and it's a public sphere of participation.**

Do you believe access to public streets is important for all community members? Why?

Yes and no. I mean, yes, it's important to have the opportunity to exercise that access, I don't think it means everybody all the time has to be outside on the streets. I mean, there's other things people do, other places where they may be and live and do things and that's interesting.

To me, access means the potential to access to not just our physical infrastructures, but our social hierarchies and social systems in the historically and continuing today have excluded different types of people from access to the street or to the public space in different ways.

I think one of the trends at the moment is towards what they call “complete streets” and the design of them, we call it complete streets in the US and I think in other countries also, I don't know the translation into Spanish or Italian, but it's meant to ensure that all different kinds of users, whether they're pedestrians or cyclists, or public transit or cars or people in wheelchairs are able to use that physical space of the street to that the street design itself is complete for kind of a universal design perspective. What's interesting is sometimes that it involves separation of different kinds of traffic, separate cars, from transit, from bike lanes, from pavements for pedestrians, but in other cases it might involve a flat level space with a slow enough speed limit that some of these different users actually have to mix together.

Yes, and I think it's sometimes hard for Americans who are so used to a car dominated street to imagine how that will work. Like they just can't envision it and so until you go somewhere and actually feel like how it works, you feel how the cars slow down and how the bikes and the people pass each other and kind of move in and out, it's hard to imagine it until you've actually done it, it's an embodied experience.

Many of our grocery stores are completely surrounded by huge parking lots, I mean, they're completely designed for access by car and in a funny way, if you spoke to maybe someone in a very automobile dependent and dominated society and you said what is the right to the street, they might think it just meant cars have a right to the street like they would think it had to do with driving and freedom.

How important do you think public awareness and education are in promoting safety on the streets?

I think public awareness and education are extremely important because so much comes down to the kind of cultural cues that we use when we're moving around, whether you're driving or biking or walking. There's communication happening with people and between people and vehicles and between people and the infrastructure and it's all based on an education system, whether formal communication and education or informal. So, we all formally have to get driver's licenses, and we have to go through these training.

When you are learning to walk like children, maybe if they learn to walk around in an urban area, their parents educate them and tell them what to do and what not to do, adult people just get a lot of messages about that from safety campaigns or things like that and as we've changed the infrastructure and tried to put in better, at least recently, the trend has been to try to put in better pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure. What we found is it requires a new kind of education of drivers about what is going on, let them know what and how to interact with those.

If we have separated bike lanes and if we have pedestrian crossings, when do they have to stop? What do they have to look for? If they're turning right or turning left, and a lot of the new infrastructure requires that kind of campaign around it. We have a very high rate of car crashes in the US, a very high rate of deaths of cyclists and of pedestrians compared to other countries, and so a lot of the campaign safety campaigns around that have to do with recognizing the fatalities and the injuries and the danger of our streets, and it's become so normalized that all these car crashes happen all the time and it's just become background, and so there's a lot of effort that has to be put into making people actually stop and pay attention to that and change their behavior.

I mean it's one thing on the highways and whatever, when you're already at talking about high speeds and the highways that are above 50 mph, they would generally exclude bikes or pedestrians from being there, but for urban streets, the key thing is that there's a huge difference, they need to be 25 mph or less, is said to protect pedestrians and bicyclists, and we often have these say, like 30 mph zones in cities but if you slow down a little in the dense area to 20 or 25, that would make a huge difference. But if you're in a 30 mile per hour zone and you speed up a little to like 40 that's going to cause much worse crashes especially when you crash with vulnerable users, and so we need that kind of education around the marginal difference between 25 and 40 mph.

A lot of it has to do with the street design and the infrastructure design, because **there's this idea called “road diet” if you have a very wide road it tends to make people feel**

comfortable driving faster and they think they can and that it's okay to drive faster, and as you narrow the road and bump out different kinds of pedestrian crossing curves or public transit areas, or even the bike lanes it makes drivers slow down because it's a more complex and narrower situation, so part of the fault in the US is that we've designed the roads for a wider throughput of traffic and that makes people go faster.

What role do you believe transportation plays in achieving social equity in urban environments?

Yeah, transportation is hugely important for social equity, in particular through its combination with land use planning and where things are located, especially peripheral informal settlements, they're not well connected to the transportation system, and so, for people to be able to get to jobs and access the right to the city, transportation is crucial.

The investment in infrastructure and making it work so people of all socioeconomic levels can move through the space of the city is really important to promote equity. So when you look at public transit of course is the key for large numbers of people to be able to move around the city, **the design and the layout of those public transit projects, the funding of them, but also the relationship of the public transit to the more informal or popular collective transit modes is really important for planning to pay attention to, because as you build these new public infrastructures, it affects property prices, it affects the spatial layout of the city.**

There has also been really important research on mobilities with a gender perspective, including in Colombia, in Bogota and that happens in other cities too and the question of gender. Well, in intersection of gender and class and in some cases racial or ethnic identities is crucial to the whole question of transportation equity in cities, because it's often the domestic workers and women's productive work, like caretaking work that is not accounted for in transportation planning.

How would you define Vulnerable Road Users, and what characteristics make them particularly at risk in urban environments?

It's interesting, I have not actually used that term in my own work because I'm not quite like a transportation researcher, and in the field of mobility studies, we haven't really like picked up on that term, so honestly, I don't have, a specific definition of it, I don't use it, I don't define it perse and I wonder why, but I think **in some ways I think of all road users as vulnerable in some way, and then we take different measures to try to protect ourselves against vulnerabilities.**

One of the reasons many people resort to driving cars, I mean, there's a lot of reasons, but one of the reasons is that they say they feel safer in a car, they feel less vulnerable and they say, "well, the streets are dangerous out there and so I need this big car to protect me or my family" it's definitely for families and for people with children, and the self-justification of why they get certain kinds of cars, it's often about a sense of safety and it's funny that in making ourselves less vulnerable, what we do is externalize the danger and we make others more vulnerable.

I think that's probably why I never use the term vulnerable road users because in my head, I'm already thinking of it as situational.

What areas of research do you think are currently underexplored in relation to VRUs and mobility?

It's hard to say what's unexplored, there's things that are emerging areas of research, one of them is, I'm on the board of a group called the Global Network for Popular Transportation, and it used to be called what we call [informal transportation](#), but all the different kinds of, collective vans and informal taxis and how people in the peripheries get rides but also in many cities that's actually the predominant form of mobility, whether it's taxis or motorcycles or minivans or little buses or whatever, and so there's a growing field of research around that and how does it get integrated into a more equitable transport system and urban planning.

In some cities of the US there's the formal licensed taxi driver system, but then there were things called dollar cabs and those were just informal and so there's questions around like legality and illegality, formality and informality, regulation and deregulation and then there's a question here in many places about whether these informal platform network services like Uber and Lyft, whether they should be treated as formal employees and have minimum wage and rights and do the right to unionize or to make collective negotiations, but they're treated as independent contractors.

That's in a whole emerging area of research, I think around the relations between these new platform services, shared services, public services and their regulation and licensing.

The other area that's interesting is [children's mobilities](#), along with care like it's part of the sort of conversation around care mobilities, but children's right to the city and children's mobilities have also been taken up in some of the more feminist research on mobilities.

17. Interview with a member of the municipality of Riga

What does "the right to the street" mean to you?

For me, it means that everyone has access to a public space, but that's not always the case as you know, especially I can refer to my city, we have river flowing to Riga through the city and the waterfront is kind of an attractive area, I think that should be available for everyone, but it's also common that real estate developers start building residential properties and then it can happen that the access is not open for others except the residents that buy floors there and I think that's the wrong approach.

Because that can lead to the city being closed and to people and more specifically, the areas that would be the most desirable to spend time in, and I've seen that elsewhere as well. For example, in Dubai, where you cannot access the waterfront because it's practically all privatized, private houses are built along the coast and other people cannot access that, I really think that's the wrong approach.

I mean we could think of rooftops for example, that's also an attractive space, and shopping malls sometimes do it that you can access the rooftop and just chill there, but that also could be privatized as well. So, I mean, **the space in the city could be street, it could be like a square, it could be a building as well, you know, or space in the building.**

Do you believe access to public streets is important for all community members? Why?

Yes, of course, it's definitely important. Why? Because everyone has a right to move around the city and if that is not the case, then access to services and different kinds of leisure activities is not there and then that doesn't make sense anymore. I guess it is important because everyone has the right to move around and the right to have the same access to services and activities.

How important do you think public awareness and education are in promoting safety on the streets?

That's an interesting question because safety can be looked at from different angles. I think one part of is the safety that infrastructure provides, if the sidewalk is wide enough, if the allowed speed is not like crazy high, so traffic calming measures are there, if the pavement is smooth without holes in it, so you would not trip.

That is one dimension, but then safety is also. I mean, do you feel safe that no one will rob you and stuff like that, so I think the second angle is a bit more complex it also the society and like social issues in the society, but also the way that the city is built because the urban form can influence the actual safety, for example if there are windows facing the street, or if it's just a really

long concrete wall that has no doors, no windows, that's a different story, this is the other dimension, public awareness and education, I mean, I honestly don't really see how. This is a topic that should be talked about for sure, but I think it's more related to the way that the street is designed, and the urban space is designed and that's the job of professionals together with society, of course, in that way maybe we can say that public awareness matters.

What role do you believe transportation plays in achieving social equity in urban environments?

I think it plays a really big role because for example, if a space is mainly devoted to private cars, then people who are better off financially have access to the space and maybe it's not as attractive, safe or accessible to other potential road users and public transport is really important here as well as having the chance to move around by walking or micro mobility vehicles.

I think transportation is one of the biggest things, for example, **if we have a perfectly safe road infrastructure and it's attractive** as well and so on, **but it's not accessible to people, for it's location, for example, is somewhere remote or where public transport is not going and the only way to access the place is by car, then social equity is not really there.** So yeah, I think transportation is really important as space itself.

How do you assess the involvement of VRUs in the policy-making process? What improvements could be made?

If this question refers to the municipality where I work, I personally don't have any experience with this type of thing, I haven't been involved in it and I also haven't specifically seen this happening. I'm not saying it never happens, that would be a lie, probably, but from my experience I haven't. The infrastructure is not as appropriate for disabled people in wheelchairs, you don't see them on the streets almost at all, I could argue with different reasons for that, but one big reason for sure is the physical infrastructure.

These people don't feel comfortable moving around also, in winter months with snow and ice where it's another layer of complexity there because in shops some of the door frames are too narrow for a wheelchair to go through it, so there are a lot of issues here, so I argue of course that vulnerable road users are important, they should be involved in policy making process.

I mean, people in wheelchairs are not the only ones being vulnerable. It's also old people, of course, and children. For old people, you see them, of course they move around, but sometimes as the infrastructure is not fit for their needs. For example, green light signals to cross the street

are sometimes very short, so for us if we cross, we should be quick. So I imagine that older people who cannot walk as fast don't manage to cross it in time and that causes a lot of stress.

In my personal opinion, in my city this should be really improved, depending on the place is not horrible, maybe city center is a bit better but for example, we have an Old Town and it's covered in cobblestones, so imagine how you would move around there, this is a big problem, even for mothers with children, but the issue is this conflict between accessibility and the place being appropriate for all users and the cultural heritage where people who are in charge of protecting and dealing with cultural heritage, they are really not willing to compromise, which I think shouldn't be an issue, this is a problem within the municipality, we should be on the same page and we should have a common goal, but that's not the case.

So yeah, and I think like for example, my colleague is involved right now in transportation thematical plan development for historical city Centre, which is not only the Old Town but the area around it as well and there they have community engagement events.

Honestly, **I don't see a big focus on vulnerable user groups and the improvements could be, when we are doing community engagement activities, when we are developing plans or concepts or just doing research about a specific topic that we could target specific groups, not just inviting whoever comes, but being more mindful about who we invite.** We just, for example, search for different organizations and we reach out to them specifically and we make sure that someone comes and I'm not sure that effort is there really. But then again, I cannot speak about all projects because some of them might have done that percentage of the threshold that you need to reach in this community engagement activities so that different user groups arrive, making sure it happens.

What role does citizen participation play in shaping policies that affect street access and safety?

I can answer again specifically from our context, JUST STREETS project in Riga, I'm quite sure that this is the first initiative that even looks at pedestrians and touches the topic that we are discussing here because until now, we never really had one, not that we don't think it's important, but we never had this focus on pedestrians and the safety of the road, and I mean safety for other users than drivers and I think that's a starting point for sure.

But the context is a bit complicated because we work in a city development department and I work in mobility planning, so we are in charge of developing strategies, planning documents, but there is another department within the municipality that is basically traffic department they're called

something like mobility and public space department, but the name is not really reflecting their actual work, they change recently and I think the previous one was traffic department which really hits the spot but they are in charge of building the infrastructure and physically bringing projects to life so now, we have [issues on collaboration](#).

Within JUST STREETS project we have to collaborate with them, they are the ones who will approve traffic organization changes, for example, they will be the ones to approve the visual markings on the on the road, like to change the markings to introduce bike lanes or for example to take away the unused space and market to allow children to be there or draw something on, they are in charge of that part as well.

We have to get their approval basically for what we want to do and that is not impossible, but these people are really technically minded, they follow procedures that have been there for 20 years and they are really busy dealing with daily tasks like fixing roads and making sure that the traffic lights work and sometimes their mindset is not directed towards some kind of changes, like innovation, they're more like the status quo kind of people and because of their technical mindset, sometimes it's hard for them to understand the point of planning and more strategic ideas and plan so this communication is difficult.

To go back to your question, citizen participation is important in order to improve the safety on the streets, but actually, like the safety on the streets, a big part of it falls into this traffic department work and that's why I'm pretty sure that they don't involve citizens at all, they don't make projects like that, they're working in how solve problems but not thinking on the bigger picture.

That's why colleagues from my department from the architects' office write guidelines for different types of streets, and that's also a good step forward. I believe that the way that street space should be designed should be based on the intensity of use and the location of the street and characteristics. So, we are hoping that these guidelines will be considered by this traffic department once they've renovated the street or built new ones.

Now in the JUST STREETS project we want to also think about what we can do with the streets that are not being renovated, what we can do with small-scale interventions, this is something that maybe we have more power over because the other department that they come in when the street needs to be renovated.

I think here [education is important and maybe this project will also help us communicate with that department](#). Maybe we can explain to them tactical urbanism, the importance of having this

procedure and so that we have more freedom to intervene in streets that are not undergoing reconstruction and make them more attractive for people and potentially safer.

18. Interview with a member of the team at Mobiel 21

What does "the right to the street" mean to you?

The right to streets or to the city, in my experience and my colleagues, it means more safety in public space for everyone, especially for vulnerable groups like children, young people, women, elderly and also pedestrians, and cyclists. This can be about road safety or social safety in public space and it means also that we should be given some more space because the streets and public space is very focused on the car, the car dominates the public space in Belgium and I think that balance should be a little bit rebalanced so that there is also enough space for pedestrians and cyclists and public transport for example.

I think that's the right to the street, that every mode from pedestrians to cyclists should have enough space, physical space and the focus is on these vulnerable road users and especially in cyclists and pedestrians on these more vulnerable groups like children and elderly and people in wheelchair, these kinds of groups.

Do you believe access to public streets is important for all community members? Why?

We certainly believe that's important and also believe that's not the case yet today, like I already explained. I think it's a bit the same in Italy, the public space is now very focused on cars, cars are very dominated in the public space whether they are driven or stand still.

I think there is some progress needed there and I think this is important. I was thinking of two reasons, first of all, we want this model shift in Belgium, the model split of 50/50, so 50% of sustainable travels, being on foot by bike or public transport and the other 50% is by car for 2030 and I think only by giving enough physical space for pedestrians, for cyclists in our public space can help to achieve these goals. So I think that's a good reason to do this, to make it more safe for these vulnerable groups on the street.

That's the first reason, and I think another reason is in Belgium and everywhere we're growing, we're with a lot of people, so, we have to fit more densely, smaller houses and closer to each other because there's just not enough space and it's very important to keep the open space open and nature also so I think public space will become an extension of our homes because we need to have more of these places, can be our garden but in public and people will use this to play to, to

be, to talk with others, to meet neighbors, for example, especially because there's not enough space and we will grow.

I think public space is very important, and it's important that everyone has a place in this public space for social cohesion and this is not only good for the safety of a neighborhood, is good for mental health, it is good for everything, these two reasons are quite important, we should give more access to vulnerable groups.

How important do you think public awareness and education are in promoting safety on streets?

We believe it's very important and that's why we have made it our core business, the power of information awareness education is very important, besides safe infrastructure, we also need these things, and we believe these two things are giving good infrastructure which goes hand in hand with education awareness and then you also have enforcement, but it's not something that we work on. We really believe you have the infrastructure on one hand, and then the education and the awareness on the other and we have a lot of expertise in these areas.

A good example of this is our cycling school, so a couple of colleagues of mine teach people how to ride a bike and we can invest in good safe cycling infrastructure, something that is happening which is very good, but people also need to know how to ride a bike, so these skills, this is kind of the educational part.

Another example of things we do at Mobiel 21 is a lot of participation processes, so when local governments make a sustainable urban mobility plan (SUMP) we help them talk with people and on how to implement the ideas of the citizens into this plan and how we can translate this, and this is important to get these ideas in the plan, but also to teach and to help citizens understand why certain decisions are made and why certain solutions work or not work or in which context it does work or doesn't work and why. **This also helps to make them understand more why certain solutions or decisions are made and it's very important to take them along in this process, we believe.**

It's not always easy to get citizens participation, and it's mostly the same type of people, we work on how we can access this or how can we implement ideas of people that are less interested in these kinds of workshops because it's mainly men over 50. That's something that we are looking for on how to do and it's a search that will keep going on because we're not there yet.

What role do you believe transportation plays in achieving social equity in urban environments?

We really believe that mobility system and how this is planned and policy decisions play in a very important role in social equality or social equity because mobility policy choices can make it harder for people to move around or to get to places and we talk a lot about mobility poverty, which is the phenomenon where people don't get to the places they need to be.

For example, here in Belgium they made some budget cuts in the public transport system they cancelled some lines for example and people don't get where they have to be with the public transport. So they will go by car and if they don't have a car or can't pay for a car or pay a lot to have a car, then they can't get where they need to be. So overall, they use a lot of time to get somewhere, this is what we call mobility poverty, and, for example, good public transport there is very important and the same for the things I already told you about the car dominating public space.

So that pedestrians just have to deal with the leftovers of the street, and this is also creating an imbalance and it's also not equal and accessibility of footpaths, for example, is very important for people in wheelchairs or with strollers, it's in all these layers of mobility policy where we have to make this shift for social equality, we really believe that transportation plays a big role and we tell it every day.

How can collaboration between different stakeholders (government, NGOs, civil society) be enhanced to support the rights of VRUs?

I think sharing is very important, there are some conferences where we just share knowledge between local governments and NGOs. For example, I went to a day on pedestrians Friday in Ghent where they made this big policy plan for pedestrians. It was very interesting to see how they do it in Ghent to hear about outputs, to hear about different local governments and what they can share in between themselves and then also in the consultancy. So, I think that's quite important to do these days and to share information because we don't have the big answer to everything, we have to look it up and test it and learn from each other.

Then also something I believe is very important to talk with residents, with citizens to get their input and their insights because we're not the same, we don't look at the same things. For example, someone in a wheelchair has a totally different view on things than we do, I think that's very important or at least what we try to do first, talk with them and do some research, try to capture these things and bring it back to politicians and government and also do this participation

moments, processes or workshops where we really talk with these residents and try to get their proposals in the SUMPs and vice versa. So, I think that's very important.

For example, we have a project in the small municipality where there were elections 2 months ago, so now there's a new government in the municipality and we had some proposals worked out with the residents last year, and now we're going to show them again to politicians and the citizens will explain why, etc. And in this way, I think they can go in dialogue, and they can learn from each other and hopefully they will implement it, so I think these kind of moments are very important and that's what we try to do to help collaborate, I hope.

Are there countries, cities or initiatives that you believe are exemplary in their treatment of VRUs? What can we learn from them?

[Ghent](#) is a good example because they have this pedestrian policy plan which is quite new, they for example, also have someone employed to monitor pedestrian flows purely on the data of pedestrians, so that's quite cool that there's someone dedicated on this task, they also have a transport poverty plan, it's the only city in Belgium I know of that have this, and someone dedicated to work on solutions for transport poverty.

Leuven, Ghent and also Mechelen, they have a couple of new circulation plans which give more space to cyclists and so these are quite good examples of how to do it, but it's not always easy, as citizens are not always happy with this. In the beginning, I have to give this time. These are a couple of good initiatives in these cities.

And then you have the Netherlands where there's a lot of space for pedestrians and cyclists where we can learn a lot from in [Copenhagen](#), for example.

And I heard from my colleague, he's quite good for public transport so for public transport, it's quite functional in [Zurich in Switzerland](#), apparently, it's very accessible the public transport over there.