

Spotlight on Research: How to design safe and equitable transport systems to give access to all

24 May 2023, 09:00-10:30 | [Session outline](#)

This first Spotlight on Research brought speakers from three continents to discuss ways to design and assess transport systems that promote access in an equitable manner.

Toni Zhimomi (GIZ) presented her colleague Avni Mehta's research on identifying and understanding the access disadvantages caused by transport poverty in Gurgaon, India, where lower-income inhabitants experience multiple forms of poverty. Resolving them involves focusing on enhancing mobility options, the affordability and safety of systems, and providing the right infrastructure for active mobility.

Depty Jain (Transportation Research and Injury Prevention Centre, IIT Delhi) presented her work on measuring differences on levels of access by different modes in another Indian city where private vehicle use gives access to almost 10 times more opportunities than public transport, and 20 times more than walking. Because active and public transport are mostly used by lower-income groups (particularly women), these differences affect their economic inclusion. She argued for urban design based on mixed use to improve access and proximity to public transport.

Greg Erhardt (University of Kentucky) showcased an example of using accessibility metrics to prioritise infrastructure projects to make transport infrastructure provision more equitable. His research measured access to jobs and its monetised impacts on people's lives. It also sought to prioritise equity. As he mentioned, his research shed light on the importance of focusing on "serving people, rather than places" when thinking about measuring and improving access.

Finally, George Harris presented his work on measuring the social cost-benefit analysis (CBA) of various transport policies in Athens. His research sought to measure the environmental, road safety and congestion impacts of various policies, expanding the reach traditional reach of traditional CBA. Results highlight the high benefits of measures such as vehicle access restrictions alongside others such as improvements in shared mobility. He proposed to democratise the systematic use of social CBA in order to guide transport decision-making.

Following their presentations, researchers engaged in discussions with the audience. A first question raised the challenge of finding the right balance between complex and encompassing accessibility metrics that are easy to communicate and understand. A second sought to understand the potential for expanding presented indicators to include matters such as a "walkability" score. A third raised the issue of promoting accessibility through transport and land-use policies, as well as considering access in a wider sense, including affordability in the mix. A final question raised the issue of regulating the informal sector and its potential for improving access in the global south.

Henk Stipdonk, who moderated the session, concluded by inviting researchers and decision makers alike to attend the policy-focused session on [capturing accessibility benefits in transport planning](#).