



EQUIMOB WEBINAR

# MOBILITY MATTERS



How does unequal transport access impact participation in the city?  
How do unequal mobilities impact livelihood and access to healthcare?  
What contributes to perceptions of safety during travels?

Join us to discuss  
how unequal  
transport access  
has social and  
economic  
implications on  
everyday lives

## Save the Date

Online Seminar  
April 28, 2022

9:00 CET - 12:00 CET

- 9:00am: Welcome
- 9:10-10:10am: Session 1
- 10 minute Break
- 10:20- 11:15am: Session 2
- 11:15-11:45am: Open Discussion
- 11:45-11:50pm: Closing Remarks





## Session 1

- Transit Network and Service Planning to Improve Transit Accessibility of the transport disadvantage, **Dr. Brian Lee, University of New South Wales, Sydney**
- Transport citizenship and equitable access to public transport for older adults in Urban environments, **Prof. Dr. Ajay Bailey, Utrecht University**
- On the shapeshifting of social justice in contestations about mobility and public space: the case of the Minhocão, São Paulo, **Dr. Kim Carlotta von Schönfeld, University of Porto, Portugal**
- Mobility of older adults: Safety and risk perception of using public transport before and during COVID-19 pandemic in Bangladesh, **Dr. Selim Jahangir, Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), India**

## Session 2

- Perceptions of safety in Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur around public spaces of transit use, **Dr. Isti Hidayati, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia & Dr. ir. Wendy Tan, Wageningen University**
  - Framing safety of women in public transport: A media discourse analysis, **Seama Mowri, Utrecht University**
  - Devising gender-responsive transport policies in South Asia, **Dr. Saakshi Joshi, Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), India**
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# Abstracts

## Transit Network and Service Planning to Improve Transit Accessibility of the transport disadvantage

Dr Brian Lee, University of New South Wales, Sydney

Public transport has a key role in social sustainability by reducing social isolation and improving access to essential opportunities. The conventional approaches to transit network and service planning do not consider the social role of public transport, and attempt to maximise the cost savings of users and the operational efficiency of operators. Cost-based network design tends to allocate more transit routes and/or services to high population density areas, which brings about transport disadvantage and equity issue.

This study proposes a new approach for transit network and service planning by incorporating transit accessibility in routing and service frequency settings. Transit accessibility refers to the ease of reaching opportunities from a location by public transport. A transit need index, formulated based on selected socio-demographic variables, is considered in network design as well to benefit the transport disadvantage in reaching essential activity locations.

We tested the new method using City of Penrith as a case study. The existing bus network in the Penrith local government area in western Sydney, Australia, has 56 bus routes and 1,940 stops. Using reinforcement learning, selected numbers of existing bus routes were redesigned with new frequency settings to improve the overall transit accessibility and the accessibility of the transport disadvantage groups in the study area. As a result, the transit accessibility improved up to 17.5% and 5.9% for the most disadvantaged group and the relatively disadvantaged group, respectively.

## Abstracts

Transport citizenship and equitable access to public transport for older adults in Urban environments.

Professor Dr. Ajay Bailey, Utrecht University.

As populations age we see large groups of older adults being left-behind in their access to social, economic and cultural life. Access to transport and its equitable distribution in the cities in the Global South is largely ignored and many infrastructure and development projects take the young and the able-bodied (and often men) as the prime users of the urban services. Older adults with both visible and invisible disabilities often find it difficult to negotiate the physical and social barriers of urban transport. This invisibilization of older vulnerable groups as equal citizens needs to be challenged. In this paper, building on Lemanski's work on "infrastructural citizenship", I approach transport from the perspective of rights and obligations of the state towards all city dwellers. The application of the citizenship perspective also pushes the boundaries of examining everyday users of transport as key agents who are negotiating, circumventing and resisting the state and private transport infrastructures. In addition to the theories on citizenship in this paper I also critically unpack the role of transport and everyday mobilities in the Age-friendly cities framework and its applicability in the Global South. Using examples from the India and Bangladesh from our project I present cases where rights are ignored, physical abuse, ageism and the emerging citizen-led initiatives to reclaim public space/transport. Urban infrastructure interventions, governance and planning need to be attentive to the changing demographics and provide inclusive solutions for equitable access to various modes of transport.

## Abstracts

### On the shapeshifting of social justice in contestations about mobility and public space: the case of the Minhocão, São Paulo

Dr. Kim Carlotta von Schönfeld, Centre for Transdisciplinary Research on Culture, Space and Memory (CITCEM), University of Porto, Portugal

For decades now, dominant conceptions of time and well-being have led to a situation in which transportation is planned chiefly with regards to speed and efficiency. Questions of social justice tend to emerge only when given decisions made based on speed and efficiency are contested by those disadvantaged by those decisions. In the 1970s in São Paulo, Brazil, an elevated highway was built to connect the east and west of the centre of town, in an effort to modernize the city by facilitating movement and accessibility by private automobile. The highway was soon called 'Minhocão', or 'big worm', because of the way it twisted tightly through the urban fabric, passing right by people's apartment windows. It created high levels of air and noise pollution, devalued many of the houses and businesses on the streets below, and left big shadows underneath the structure. It provided shelter for families and individuals without housing. Its structure became famous for street-art-graffiti. Over time, contestation led to the closing of the Minhocão to cars, at first at night, then on Sundays, later during full weekends. In those times, the highway was appropriated as sorely lacking public space in the area, and as a space for various forms of non-motorised transport. However, contestants were and continue to be divided about the most socially just future of the Minhocão: should the structure remain, and serve as public space? Or should it be removed entirely? Politicians continuously avoid definitive action. A dance between options continues. This contribution outlines some of the key questions that feature in this dance, highlighting how the primacy of speed and efficiency is being challenged, but how it is not straightforward what should take the place of these priorities within a complex urban fabric. The contribution also shares insights on the dynamics of contestation between different forms of social justice that is aimed not at reaching consensus between opposing views, but at gathering strategies to win the upper hand with absent third parties that are the real decision-makers.

## Abstracts

### Mobility of older adults: Safety and risk perception of using public transport before and during COVID-19 pandemic in Bangladesh

Dr. Selim Jahangir, Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), Manipal, Karnataka.

There is heightened sense of risk and safety regarding using shared modes of transport for accessing essential activities such as workplaces, health care facilities and social events. The present study aims to investigate older adults' perceptions of risks and safety around mobility and use of public transport during and post COVID-lockdown. Thirty participants aged 60 years and above were recruited to bring out their insights of safety and risks around mobility. The participants were recruited from two socio-economically different neighbourhoods of Dhaka. The study employed different qualitative research methods such as visual surveys, in-depth interviews and field diary.

Given the lockdown situation during COVID-19 pandemic, an online survey was conducted across three cities of Bangladesh. The study found that getting in and off buses itself is unsafe due to overcrowd and behaviour of bus driver. In addition, non-motor vehicles (NMT) particularly cycle rickshaws are accident prone in chipa rasta (narrow street) of Dhaka. The design of NMT is also perceived to be unsafe as passengers risk fall when it suddenly stops. Besides, reckless driving of motorbikes and auto rickshaw in congested neighbourhoods also cause frequent accidents. Rampant pickpocketing also created unsafe environment of while travelling in shared modes. Older adults also experienced challenges to walk on the unfinished and broken footpaths that forced them to walk on main roads and pushed them at risks of being run over by speedy vehicles. Due to their risk perceptions during Covid-19 pandemic, older adults also felt that public transport is the most unsafe to use. Such unsafe and risk perceptions of using public transport impacted on their mobility pattern, health and well-being in long-term.

## Abstracts

### Perceptions of safety in Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur around public spaces of transit use

Dr. Isti Hidayati, Department of Architecture and Planning, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia.  
dr. ir. Wendy Tan, Department of Landscape Architecture and Spatial Planning, Wageningen University.

Mobility experiences of the marginalized users and vulnerable groups are rarely prioritized in transport planning, widening the physical and social barriers for them to access socioeconomic services. In cities where the transport system is built around cars and motorcycles, women, older adults, and those in extreme poverty are prone to negative perceptions of safety while travelling in public spaces. This condition poses a great challenge for equitable access to public transportation. Using cases of Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur, this study explores mobility experiences by employing (1) 383 on-street surveys to probe on different perceptions of safety and (2) walking-with-video approach to provide an objective ethnographic observation on sensory experiences while travelling and navigating public spaces. Findings from on-street surveys revealed different nuances and layers of safety: women fear of street crime, sexual harassment, and traffic accident as they often travel with children or senior family members; older adults wary of faster vehicular movement against their limited mobility; those in extreme poverty perceived their everyday mobilities as stressful since they become captive pedestrians or detoured public transport users, perpetuating time and transport poverty; and on the contrary, motorcycles and car users mostly perceive their everyday mobilities as convenient. Findings observed a variety of sensorial experiences of a diversity of users walking in what is perceived as 'unsafe and inconvenient' environment amidst uninterrupted and prioritized cars and motorcycles movement. This research concludes that consideration of mobility experiences, including perceptions of safety (especially of those marginalized and vulnerable groups who mostly have limited options of travelling in public space), should be included for achieving an equitable access.

## Abstracts

### Framing safety of women in public transport: A media discourse analysis

Seama Mowri, Department of Human Geography and Spatial Planning, Utrecht University

This study analyzes the role of print media in framing incidences of sexual violence in public transport; particularly in the context of Bangladesh, where gender-based violence is highly prevalent in the public sphere. This article uses Douglas' cultural theory to reflect on media practices and its institutional power to reframe the social problem through risk and blame attribution. We conducted a discourse analysis of 71 news articles extracted from four of the widely circulated and influential newspapers of Bangladesh. Our findings reveal that the hegemonic discourse of gender-based violence in public transport is systemic and/or primarily reliant on legal recourse. By contrast, discourses presenting sexual harassment as symptomatic of broader gender inequality is less frequent. Moreover, these media platforms belong to an assemblage of patriarchal social-power holders that collaborate with established law and order to facilitate a blame game, thereby relieving the same stakeholders of ownership and accountability. Given the power of news media in constructing meta-narratives of safety (and nudging policymakers), journalists must tread responsibly on issues of blame, women's safety and their rights to the city.

# Abstracts

## Devising gender-responsive transport policies in South Asia

Dr. Saakshi Joshi, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, India.

Prof. Sanghamitra Roy, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, India & Utrecht University

Seema Mowri, Utrecht University

Prof. Dr. Ajay Bailey, Utrecht University

Over time, the transport sector has grown more cognisant of gender differences in planning and policy. Yet, extant literature on transport shows that challenges, such as sexual harassment of women still prevail. The value of this study is its contribution towards gender-responsive transport policies with a focus on women by highlighting (a) the spectrum of barriers that prevent women's mobility across origin to destination journeys; (b) construction of safety by using interventions and tools available to them, namely technology, women-only solutions, and infrastructural design. The findings are based on data from in-depth interviews with women participants in two Indian cities- Delhi and Kolkata. Drawing from our research, key policy suggestions include framing interventions in a rights-based manner, institutionalising gender-disaggregated data to inform interventions, sensitizing institutions such as the law enforcement on gender equity and women's rights to the city. This research would be especially beneficial for regions in and beyond South Asia sharing similar contexts.