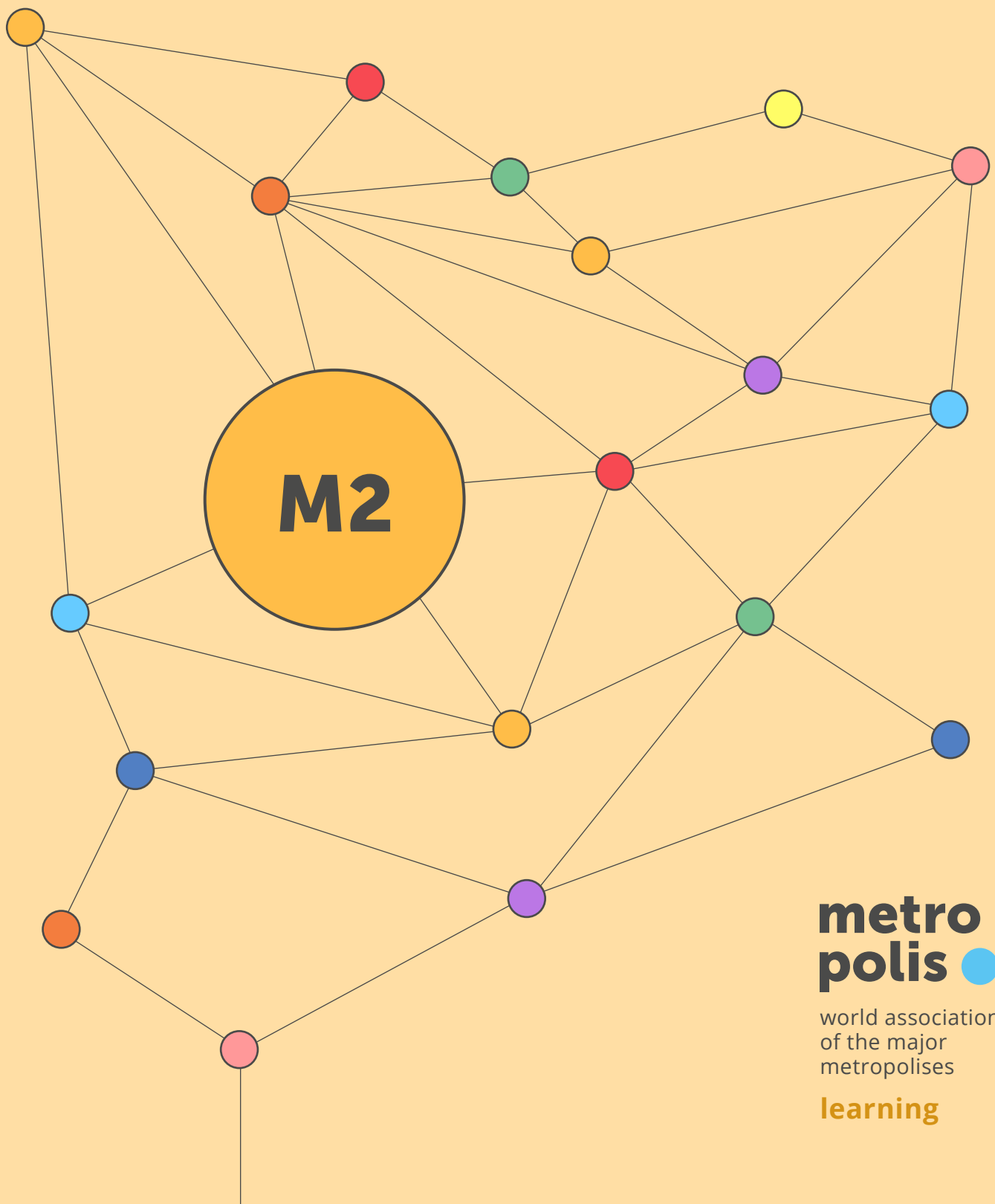


Right to metropolitan city in the framework of the NUA and the 2030 Agenda

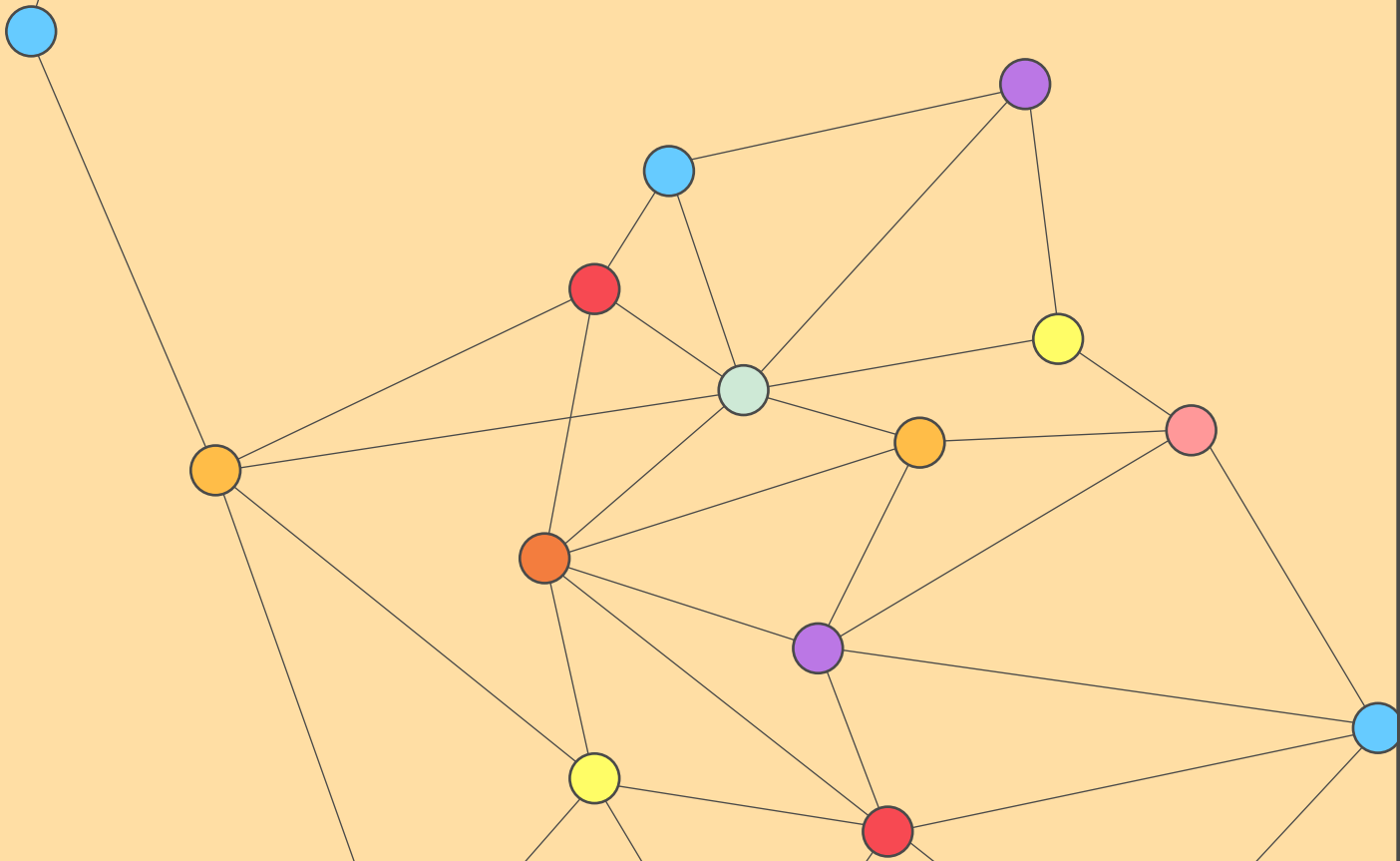


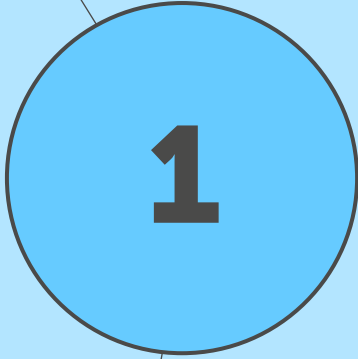
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Supported by:







The Right to the city on the metropolitan agenda

Mariela Iglesias Costa

1.1

The Right to the city as a concern of urban life

The world is increasingly urban and the consolidation of metropolises as socioeconomically meaningful spaces, exposed to the high pressures and dynamics of global capital, makes them a challenge for urban public policies. That is why, with the goal of social cohesion and sustainable development, it is necessary to reconsider the question of citizenship as a status of equality in terms of the rights and obligations of every person who inhabits a territory.

The concept of the Right to the city is not new but remains fully current. Its origin can be traced to a classic work on urban thought, Henri Lefebvre's "Le Droit à la ville", an essay published in 1968 denouncing the crisis of everyday life in European cities in the mid-twentieth century. Lefebvre analysed the conversion of the city into a commodity while at the same time making explicit its political and transformational dimension.

The work is most likely topical because it defines the concept of the Right to the city from the liberating potential it contains. **It references the right to "create" a city as a concern of urban life. It thus focuses on the capability of the people who live in the city to transform it and for society to be transformed through it.** In this century, David Harvey, like Lefebvre, identified the seed for transformation of urban struggles in the many alternatives practices that exist in the city, since it is from them that spaces of possibility, experimentation and transformation from practice and everyday life can be generated (Harvey; 2013). Both authors give us to understand

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the Right to the city as a space struggling for definition. Speaking of the **Right to the city therefore inevitably entails a battle to define and prioritise those rights and the city overall.**

Furthermore, the Right to the city also appears to involve another of the great demands of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, i.e., the integration of struggles for production and reproduction. Today the expansion of an economic form taking shape in cities through several processes of expulsion such as gentrification, speculation, violence, poverty and precariousness is challenging everyday life and particularly impacting the lives of women. **Recognition for care work and the wealth it produces is related to the expansion of the concept of citizenship through recognition of its contribution and value-creation.** The idea of work associated to life sustainability tasks is being recovered.

From this perspective, the city focused on life sustainability can appear as an explicit and implicit issue in multiple actions, interventions and political proposals that square the struggles for true gender equality with a full urban life.

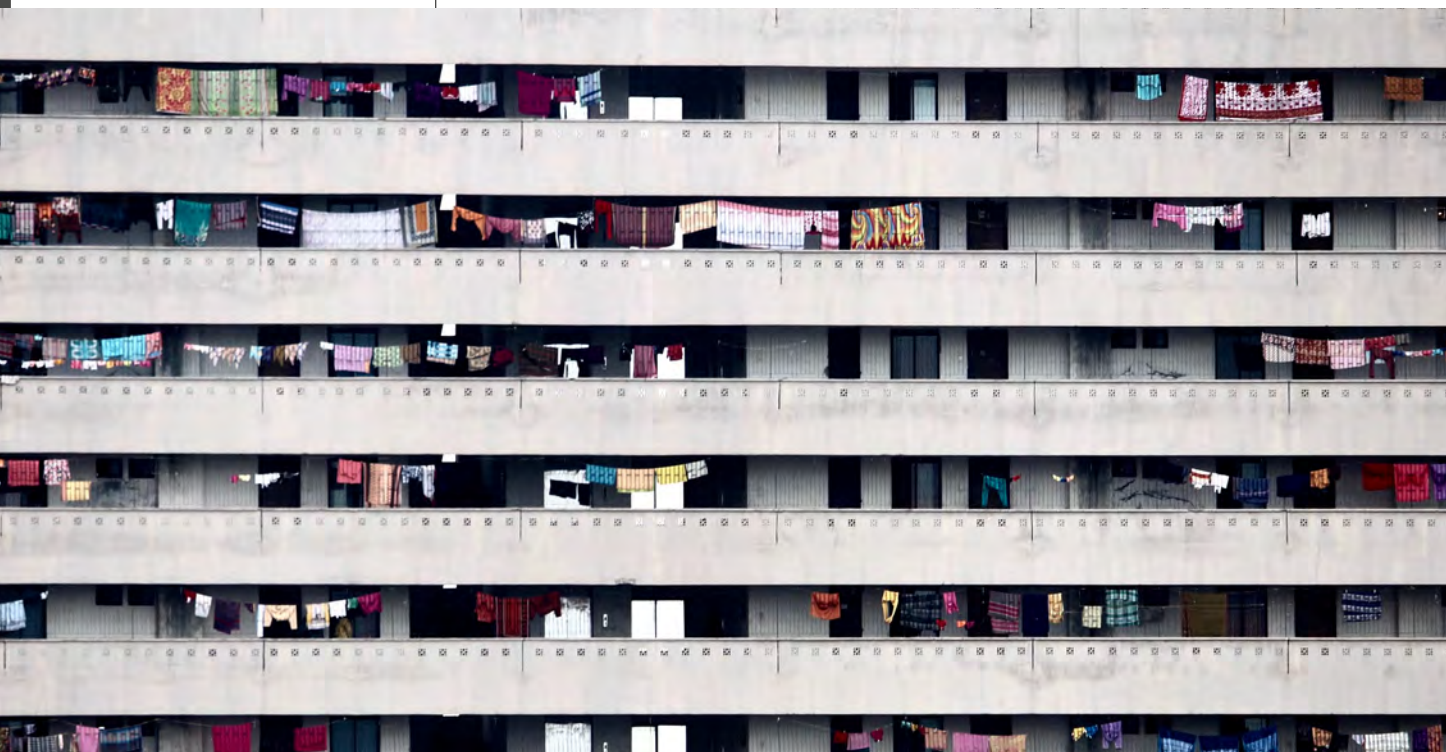


Photo by Pujohn Das on Unsplash

1.2

Why talk about the Right to the city on a metropolitan scale?

The status of Right to the city is a collective right stems from the city understood as a common good

The preamble to the World Charter for the Right to the city¹ (2004) coordinated by Habitat International Coalition (HIC) references the Right to the city through a series of points that make it possible to analyse it as a complex right, independent on other human rights, into which it is integrated in a new way of strengthening its vindication. From its reading **we can conclude that it is a human and therefore universal right**. Its status of a collective right stems from the city understood as a common good and gives legitimacy to the action and organisation of the more underprivileged and infringed sectors that live there. In this sense, it is a **territorialised right** that nods to the past, through cultural legacies, but also to engagement in the construction of a sustainable future. This explains the importance of reconsidering the **Right to the city in a metropolitan context** that reflects the current reality of urban dynamics.

Why claim the right to the metropolitan city?

- To **broaden the focus on the improvement of people's quality of life**, traditionally centred on housing and neighbourhoods, towards the **metropolitan reality** of the city that covers the peripheral, peri urban and rural environment.
- As a mechanism to protect the population owing to the acceleration of urbanisation processes.

¹ More information: <https://hic-al.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Carta-Mundial-Derecho-a-la-Ciudad.pdf>

- To generate **bottom-up structures of metropolitan governance**, with a critical and community perspective, capable of powering the improvement in quality of life from needs themselves and the expansion of real citizenship.
- To **leverage a new way of promotion, respect, defence** and realisation of civil, political, economic, social, cultural and environmental rights, guaranteed in regional and international human rights instruments.
- To assume the interdependency of the metropolitan city and **foster solidarity among the diverse contexts and experiences** that exist within a common metropolitan reality.



Berlin - Carl Hielt

1.3

Global agendas and Right to the city

1.3.1

2030 Agenda: the urgency of sustainable development

²United Nations General Assembly, resolution of 25 September 2015: Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. <https://undocs.org/es/A/RES/70/1>

With the aim of **bolstering universal peace** within a broader concept of freedom, the 2030 Agenda² is a document of commitment between United Nations member countries for sustainable development. It contains 17 goals and 169 comprehensive measures that combine the social, economic and environmental dimension to frame **an action plan in favour of people, the planet and posterity**, as it says.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



³ Especially in point 20 and SDG 5.

⁴ More information:
<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2019/03/gender-equality-sustainable-development-goal-5/>

⁵ Women's right to live without violence is enshrined in international agreements like the [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women \(CEDAW\)](#), particularly through its general recommendations 12 and 19 and the United Nations' Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Also of special interest is the [Montreal Declaration on Women's Safety \(2002\)](#)

Of note is the explicit commitment at the start of the document with the goal of **making human rights a reality and achieving equality between the sexes**, as well as the empowerment of women and girls. It thus assumes that the systematic incorporation of the gender perspective in implementing the Agenda is crucial.³ In relation to city management and planning, it makes special reference to the **sustainable management and development of the urban environment as a key sphere for quality of life**. It therefore establishes the need to work with authorities and local communities for community cohesion, the safety of people, innovation and employment, as well as the emergency of minimising cities' impacts on climate change.

If we look at the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) we can see the **crosscutting** character and importance they all have for **metropolitan public policies**. However, we will focus on SDG 5 and SDG 11 for the strategic importance they entail regarding the Right to the city and the construction of the metropolitan agenda.

SDG 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls⁴

The fifth goal unfolds into several more specific objectives that altogether tackle and seek to put an end to all forms of **discrimination** against women and girls. It echoes previous agreements and programmes such as the Programme of Action adopted at the International Conference on the Population and Development or the Beijing Action Plan and establishes "the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres"⁵ as one of its specific goals (goal 5.2). This includes trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation and practices such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

Eliminating these forms of violence and discrimination also involves guaranteeing **universal access to sexual and reproductive health** and reproductive rights, ensuring sufficient economic resources to prevent structural violence. From an urban perspective, it is necessary to take on all types of violence that occur in the public space and in the private and domestic sphere. The street, the home and institutions are spaces where **structural and directed gender violence** has historically been

exercised and naturalised, mainly against women and girls. Even though the problem is starting to be included on government agendas, it is still a long way from being eradicated.

A further element to emphasise is recognition for the value of **unpaid care and domestic work** by calling for public services, infrastructures and social protection policies that promote shared responsibility in the home and family. The paradigm that could be called the **city of care** entails full recognition of the value and the indispensable function of care work for life sustainability, on which the commoditised economic system also depends. The proposal is to generate urban political agendas that recognise human fragility and interdependence and that prioritise people's daily lives over market requirements⁶.

The **full and effective participation**⁷ of women and equal leadership opportunities across all decision-making levels of political, economic and public life is another of the issues addressed. **Encouraging women's access to transformation spaces** and effective power is one of the biggest challenges in all levels of public life, from recognition of community leaderships to legislative changes and different party and electoral systems. It will also be necessary, from the metropolitan perspective, to foster and ensure active engagement for different women's groups through new formats, practices and processes across each of the phases of all public policies.

SDG 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable⁸

The eleventh sustainability development goal in Agenda 2030 touches on the Right to the city as it makes explicit reference to the conditions of inclusion, safety, resiliency and sustainability that cities and human settlements should have. It emphasises the protection of poor and vulnerable people, including older persons, women, children and people with a disability. The listed **challenges** take shape in a suite of proposals relating to accessibility and mobility, quality of housing and its environment, provision of basic services and infrastructures, natural disaster prevention and reduction of environmental pollution.

⁶ More information:

Barcelona: [democratización de los cuidados](#)

Madrid: [Plan Madrid Ciudad de los Cuidados](#)

⁷ More information: [ONU](#)

[Mujeres y los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible](#)

⁸ More information:

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/es/cities/>

Rolling out mobility policies, through the expansion of safe and sustainable public transit, is among the biggest challenges facing contemporary cities

⁹ Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030

<https://www.unisdr.org/>

¹⁰ Habitat III, October 2015, Thematic Meeting: Metropolitan Areas.

Multiple challenges are proposed including ones focused on the comprehensive improvement of marginal districts and real and **universal access to safe housing** which includes a quality environment with equipment, services and accessibility. It is for this reason that rolling out mobility policies, through the expansion of **safe and sustainable public transit**, is among the biggest challenges facing contemporary cities.

It also focuses on the **protection of cultural and natural heritage** and on promoting economic, social, cultural and environmental balances between urban, peri urban and rural areas through social innovation and planning national and regional development. And it puts out a call for technical and financial assistance to **generate sustainable and resilient building in the most vulnerable areas**, following international frameworks for comprehensive disaster risk management.⁹

1.3.2

The New Urban Agenda: metropolitan scale and Right to the city

The New Urban Agenda (NUA), in its preparatory phase,¹⁰ announced the correspondence with the 2030 Agenda and in particular the fifth and eleventh sustainable development goals, from a **metropolitan approach committed to the Right to the city**. In their conception, metropolitan areas are key to promoting viable communities at different scales. The drafted document indicates action lines in relation to the eleventh sustainable development goal of the 2030 Agenda: "Making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable":

- Encourage and use **metropolitan planning** to support viable groups.
- Work from **integral and inclusive approaches**.
- Support metropolitan policies on **sustainable development**.
- Provide effective responses to **growth**.

- Foster **sustainable mobility**.
- Promote the improvement of marginal neighbourhoods and **urban revitalisation**.
- Deploy measures that ensure respect for the **rights of existing populations**.
- Introduce the **multilevel approach** to metropolitan policies (local, metropolitan, regional and state governments).

With regards gender equality, several mentions are made of principles and commitments related to the eradication of violence and discrimination against women and girls, and to the need to ensure their participation in the construction of the city through their empowerment and leadership. These areas are fully consistent with those deployed by the 2030 Agenda in its fifth sustainable development goal.



Greater Manchester - Ryan Taylor

The commitment to the Right to the city is reflected in the New Urban Agenda final document, incorporating the transfer of the guarantee or right to services as a common ideal

The commitment to the Right to the city is also reflected in the New Urban Agenda final document, incorporating the transfer of the guarantee or right to services as a common ideal and extending it to a perspective of the right to the creation of the city, as defined by Lefebvre.

"We share the ideal of a city for all, in terms of equality in the use and enjoyment of cities and human settlements, seeking to promote integration and ensure that all inhabitants, both present and future generations, without discrimination of any kind, can create cities and human settlements that are just, safe, healthy, accessible, affordable, resilient and sustainable, and live in them, in order to promote prosperity and quality of life for all. We note the efforts of some national and local governments to consecrate this ideal, known as 'the Right to the city' in its laws, political statements and charters."

Finally, the **Right to the city has definitely been included in the statements of global agendas**, but we should ask whether this leads to progress towards a fairer, more dignified and fuller urban life or, by contrast, is the institutionalisation of a liberating concept. The answer is neither automatic nor definitive. It will lie in **future practices of governments and civil societies**, in the activation of a policy that is responsible with regards its international commitments while also respectful of accumulated knowledge and strengthened from the community.



2

Towards the expansion of the Right to the city in our metropolises?

2

Towards the expansion of the Right to the city in our metropolises?

The following sections take a detailed look at approaches and practices on how to expand the Right to the city in metropolises from five areas central to metropolitan life:

- the **public space** as a fundamental tool to make the city
- **housing** as a right and focal point of inclusion
- **safety** as a guarantee of a full life for all people
- **mobility** as a problem and requirement of large cities
- **participation** as a way to build real citizenship



Hanoi | This Degenkamp Unsplash

2.1

The public space from a feminist perspective

Blanca Valdivia

The Right to the city takes the form of a population's access to and enjoyment of the public space, but the configuration, localisation and uses of the public space produce hierarchies and inequalities. When analysing the public space from the gender perspective, two important aspects on which to reflect arise. On the one hand, **men and women use public spaces differently**. Also, for women, having a sexualised female body and their experience of harassment and assault in the public space impact their perception of safety and forms of use. Women are not a homogenous group, either, and there are other variables that cut across gender such as ethnicity, age, functional diversity, social class and sexual identity that influence the activities and uses people make of the public space. But despite this diversity, the configuration of public spaces is linked to a few certain uses considered normative and neutral which in truth only respond to the specific experience of part of the population, i.e., men.

As a result of the sexual division of labour, spaces have been segregated along public/private lines, with productive or reproductive functions differentiated by gender. The **productive side goes hand-in-glove with public activities** while the reproductive side remains in the domestic sphere and the productive domain is prioritised over the reproductive one (Murillo, 1996). The naturalisation of care work and the identification of these tasks with women has led to its devaluation and the relegation of these activities (conceptually) to the domestic space, despite the large number of care activities that occur in the

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productive needs

public space (shopping, looking after children, accompanying older people to health centres, etc.).

The **invisibility of care** has led to urban spaces and cities being designed on the basis of productive needs rather than as a physical support for undertaking care activities which additionally, and since the Industrial Revolution, have been considered exclusively female and inherent to the domestic sphere.

This means that the **exclusion of women from the public sphere** rests on the sexual division of labour and spaces and is embodied in a configuration of spaces that focuses on male experiences and needs. The public space therefore becomes the stage where gender and social inequalities are generated and reproduced.

According to Jordi Borja (1998), the **nature of the public space is defined by its use** rather than its legal status. The public space can be assessed by the intensity and quality of the social relations it facilitates, by its power to mix up groups and behaviours and by its ability to stimulate symbolic identification, expression and cultural integration. Borja points to the importance of certain formal qualities to deliver on these relations, such as continuity of urban design and planning authority for it, generosity in its shapes, image and materials, and its adaptability to diverse uses over time.

Public space uses are directly related to the activities people perform in their daily lives. The **public space cannot be understood only as a place of transit** but must enable the development of a series of diverse activities: leisure, socialisation, play, care, community networks. That is why formal qualities such as accessibility, safety, proper furniture and pedestrian connections influence the use and enjoyment of the public space. Design elements including ramps and benches with armrests and backrests substantially boost its potential to be used and enjoyed by people with reduced mobility and their carers - who also tend to be women.

The design of
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years

Qualities for a public space from a gender perspective

There is no magic formula to designing spaces from a gender perspective; the best strategy is to **double down on the population's specific requirements** through broad and diverse engagement. However, we can indicate five qualities of public spaces that should be approached from the perspective of their design, localisation and management (Ciocoletto et al., Point 6, 2014):

Proximity. That forms part of networks of priority use of space in daily life. With connections to local stores, equipment, bus and tram stops and other **public places in a radius of five or ten minutes**, with safe and accessible routes. Localised in a consolidated urban network of housing for the existence of a population that uses the space.

Vitality. That enables the density of uses and activities with an ongoing and simultaneous presence of people and therefore **facilitating socialisation, care and mutual support**. For this, the design and its elements must enable use at different hours (lighting) and times of the year (pergolas, porches, shade), supporting daily activities with benches, vegetation, rubbish bins, signage, etc.

Diversity. That encourages social, physical and functional mixes through varied uses that respond to **people's different needs in accordance with their sex**, age, functional diversity, social class and origin. In the case of small areas able to host multiple activities, the recommendation is to generate a network of interconnected spaces of complementary uses. Elements and materials must also ensure multiple uses: benches, tables, play areas, different surfaces such as grass, sand, etc.

Autonomy. Spaces physically accessible to people with different degrees of reduced mobility, older persons, children and carers. Elements that **facilitate autonomy** are usually benches with armrests and backrests, wheelchair-friendly pavements, railings, ramps, stairs for different types of bodies and heights. Also handicapped-friendly

The names
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and safe public toilets in facilities or public spaces less than five minutes away. It is also particularly **important for women to boost the perception of safety** by means of good lighting, the elimination of barriers and correct signage. To guarantee economic accessibility, use should be free and non commercialized.

Representativeness. That conveys **real and symbolic recognition** and visibility of the entire community to value memory, social and cultural heritage equitably and the participation of people in urban decisions. Acknowledging the memory of people and groups, particularly women and BAME (Black, Asian, and minority ethnic) or non-heteronormative persons, through the names of public spaces, urban art and iconography used in signage helps change the social imagination and builds a more balanced city.

A good example of how to incorporate the gender perspective is the pilot plan in the **Mariahilf neighbourhood in Vienna**. Through a series of elements, it complies with several of the abovementioned qualities. It encourages proximity with spaces that facilitate care, play and socialisation. It responds to diversity and **promotes the autonomy of people with safe and comfortable crossings** that involved increasing traffic light times, widening footpaths and doing away with architectural barriers. It also includes elements such as mirrors and lighting that improve the perception of safety.



Seoul - Emille Victor Portenart

The right to housing in the metropolitan city

Irene Escorihuela Blasco

Lack of data is one of the main barriers to drafting social housing policies and an obstacle to planning

The **right to decent and suitable housing is a human right**¹ and is one of the cornerstones of the Right to the city. It is therefore essential to contextualise residential policies in the broader framework of the Right to the city and its multiple aspects and to consider metropolises as spaces that guarantee rights.

As regards housing at the metropolitan level, four main problems can be identified:

1

Lack of data is one of the main barriers to drafting social housing policies and an obstacle to planning in this regard. Data broken down by sex is also an indispensable element for detecting discrimination and to be able to develop gender-responsive housing policies. Furthermore, data generation must be at the metropolitan scale to be able to coordinate policies at this scale. Several observatories have been created in cities along these lines, including in Berlin, Paris and Barcelona, with the goal of preparing studies, reports and tools for the design of public policies at a supramunicipal level (Gigling, 2018). The metropolitan matrix of rental price control in Paris -related to the metropolitan observatories- proved decisive in the administrative judicial proceeding that ended with this system, finding that its implementation could not take place exclusively in the capital but had to be implemented across the whole of the Paris area, i.e., in the 412 municipalities, as provided for in the ALUR Act² (2014).

¹ The right to housing is recognised in article 25 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and article 11 of the United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

² More information: ENCADREMENT DES LOYERS : [Le tribunal administratif de Paris annule les trois arrêtés successifs du préfet de la région d'Ile-de-France qui ont fixé les loyers de référence à Paris depuis le 1er août 2015.](#)

It is necessary
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creation of a public
housing stock
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mixes and cohesion

2

Affordable housing is a fundamental part of the right to suitable housing, but its guarantee is relegated to the **private market in most cities**. The shortage of housing, along with low wages and job insecurity, entails a high economic effort, particularly for women with dependent children and for young adults, with the exclusion from the market of low-income groups. The dynamics of spatial segregation side-lines these sectors and takes their support networks away. Public policies in this area usually involve **financial aid to pay the rent** or mortgage, intermediation programmes with payment guarantees and below-market prices, allocation of public housing, residences and social organisation housing for the homeless, etc. However, since these are not coordinated from a metropolitan logic, they generate dysfunctions and inefficiencies. It is therefore necessary to approach the creation of a **public housing stock at the metropolitan level** which in turn guarantees social mixes and cohesion and to have public housing in the city. Three ideas can be considered around this point: setting aside land in the established city, the use of first refusal and pre-emptive rights, and surgical actions.

3

Emergency housing management. Although some metropolitan organisations have remits for housing or public housing companies, **emergency management is usually up to municipal spheres**. The existence of mixed teams specialising in emergency troubleshooting is a very recommendable tool, in contact both with social services and housing areas. These teams are tasked with identifying the key stakeholders involved in the emergency and intermediating to achieve a solution. They therefore liaise with the courts to delay or suspend evictions and are the link to procuring a suitable relocation in the event of the eviction going ahead. It is also necessary for formulas to **rehome people who have been evicted** be treated and coordinated at a supramunicipal level with regulations that institutionalise the circuit and criteria to be followed. It is essential to consider the **gender perspective** on this point since many emergencies involve single-parent families and require dedicated attention.

Laws limiting real estate speculation and housing business tend to be state-led and room for manoeuvre by metropolitan cities is limited

³ More information:
[Porto Maravilha Urban Operation](#)

⁴ More information:
[Germany - Berlin - Pankow Oderberger Street](#)

⁵ More information:
[The urbanization of Villa 31, an informal settlement in Buenos Aires](#)

⁶ More information:
[Heartfelt Houses / Proyecto Juan Bobo](#)

⁷ More information:
[El PEUAT, la primera regulación de ciudad para todos los alojamientos turísticos](#)

Security of tenure involves having housing to be able to develop a stable life project in. In a context of **rising property investments** in urban centres, the dangers are multiplied by the high profit margins generated by luxury and tourist housing, which entails the entry into the property market of investment funds and large enterprises in the housing “business”. Laws limiting these dynamics tend to be state-led and room for manoeuvre by metropolitan cities is limited. But there are several good practices of actions taken in particular areas, such as the case of Porto Maravilha³ in Rio de Janeiro or Oderberger Street⁴ in Berlin; in the urban improvement of informal settlements such as Villa 31⁵ in Buenos Aires and the Juan Bobo⁶ project in Medellín. Other examples of measures to regulate the property market are: Transparency and prevention of landlord harassment. London and New York city halls have run ‘**name and shame**’ campaigns to identity and publicise landlords and letting agents who engage in poor practices with the aim of protecting tenants whose buildings are bought by investment funds.

Limiting rents or tourist accommodation licences. Paris, Berlin and New York were among the first cities to do this. In Barcelona, PEUAT⁷ is a dedicated plan that draws up zones for tourist accommodation permits to distribute and balance the property pressure they generate. In force since 2017, the PEUAT is currently threatened by several judgements against it.

Fiscal measures: **penalising antisocial practices** around keeping properties empty for speculative purposes is usually up to the State. In Europe, countries like Germany, Netherlands, France, Denmark, UK and Sweden are considering penalties or even expropriation following different time periods.

Interventions in private party transactions, through the rights of first refusal and pre-emptive rights on the part of the authorities.

Information on property sale transactions in cities (ideally at a metropolitan scale) gives the authorities priority to purchase properties and obtain housing in established cities. Barcelona has included this as part of its housing protection strategy. However, some critics point to

**Emergency
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the transfer of public money into the hands of financial institutions or investment funds.

The four problems analysed are starting points regarding the adoption of a metropolitan logic. While **data harvesting and compilation continues to move forwards**, thanks to the impetus of several metropolitan housing observatories, the introduction of limits on the private sector has been taken up in some cities. But **emergency management and measures** around increasing the public housing stock today respond to mainly municipal perspectives. In each case it will depend on the type of metropolitan government that exists, its powers, level of coordination and organisations created for this purpose.

In short, coordination between cities, the standardisation of circuits and protocols and the design of metropolitan tools open up opportunities to cover the **right to housing** which are worth putting into practice. Without losing sight of the fact that the guarantee of the right to housing in metropolitan cities depends to a large extent on funding and supramunicipal regulations, the **local dimension is key to protecting citizens' rights**.



Barcelona, Example - Habler López

2.3

The right to urban security from the gender perspective

Sara Ortiz Escalante

One of the elements that **most limits women's Right to the city** has been male violence and the perception of insecurity when moving between the public and private continuum. Feminist urbanism considers doing away with the separation between the public/productive sphere and the private/reproductive sphere as key since it follows patriarchal and capitalist structures and defines limits and barriers around which spaces women own. These are dichotomies establishing that the public space is hegemonically male, excluding women or "blaming" them for being there. They also reproduce the **false idea that the private space of the home is the safest place for women** and the public space is a place of fear, even though most violence against women is perpetrated by a person known to them in the private space.

The public/private dichotomy is used to control, exclude and suppress sex and gender differences, preserving heteropatriarchal power structures

This false dichotomy is, furthermore, ethnocentric, as it makes little sense in contexts of informal settlements where the concept of "home", related to a private space physically and socially separated from the public space, does not exist. The **gender division of spaces is also oppressive for transgender people** since it forces them to respond to hegemonic expectations of what is expected of a gender in a space. In short, the **public/private dichotomy** is used to control, exclude and suppress sex and gender differences, preserving heteropatriarchal power structures.

The perception
of security in
the analysis makes
it possible to
build awareness
around the way
that fear limits
women's freedom
and mobility

⁸ More information:
[CDMX, Ciudad Segura
y Amigable para Mujeres y
Niñas \(Programa de Mediano
Plazo\).](#)

Urban security from the gender perspective

The feminist movement and feminist research has been committed since the 1970s to the physical planning of the environment accompanied by social and economic elements. Women's (in)security in cities and the everyday environment has been analysed, specifying what is understood by gender violence and the **perception of fear and safety**, with the aim of moving past just crimes and violence punishable by law. Including the perception of fear enables, for example, the study of street sexual harassment, a noncriminalised type of violence but one which impacts women's access and right to the public space. Despite this, **safety in cities continues to focus solely on what is defined as violence by the law** to the detriment of all the other types of violence which, depending on the context, are neither banned nor penalised.

Fear and safety have references and meanings conditioned by the difference that exists between the type of violence people can experience depending on their sex, gender, age, origin, etc., and this also directly impacts different perceptions. It is posited on **gender power relations** which are also expressed in spaces and reproduced in daily living practices through hegemonic, dual and heteropatriarchal processes of socialisation that define women as vulnerable and men as strong and aggressive. The perception of fear in women is marked by the violence directed at their sexualised bodies and goes a long way to determining how we experience the different domestic, community and public spaces. For all these reasons, including the perception of security in the analysis makes it possible to **build awareness** around the way that fear limits women's freedom and mobility and to respond to this, mainly in night-time activities in leisure and work environments, with special attention to journeys and the use of certain spaces.

One example is the **Safe and Friendly City for Women and Girls Programme**⁸ in Mexico City, which incorporates a security perception as an integral public policy. Based on diagnoses with gender perspectives, it is developed as a medium-term plan that departs from reactive responses to embrace a series of elements that **strengthen women's Right to the city**.

Cities have also
created hotlines
to report violence
against women
and girls in
the public space

Many cities have also created **hotlines to report violence** against women and girls in the public space. In **Bamako**⁹ there is a direct phone line to the police which activates services around complaints made. The **Kolkata** police offer a similar service with their Women's Helpline¹⁰. In **Ulsan**¹¹ the police also provide a fast connection for emergencies (in English) and promote the use of location tracking apps for taxi services. **Guayaquil** has the "¡Amiga, ya no estás sola!" ("Friend, You're Not Alone!") initiative, in which an ordinance was harnessed to introduce measures to put an end to violence against women and girls in the urban public space. The policy includes **several types of response and support services for survivors of violence**, such as hotlines staffed by local security teams, legal assistance, mobile clinics, hospitals and health centres.

Practical contributions of feminism to tackling urban security

Methodologies and tools to analyse safe and inclusive environments, such as women's safety audits, have been around since the 1970s. Canadian feminists have long been at the forefront of this area and their work gave rise to the **Montreal Six Principles of Urban Planning for Safe Cities**:

- 1 Know where you are and where you are going.
- 2 See and be seen.
- 3 Hear and be heard.
- 4 Be able to escape and get help.
- 5 Live in a clean and friendly environment.
- 6 Act together.

Features of safe environments can derive from the Col·lectiu.6 redefinition of these principles:

Visible: Make it possible **to see all elements and people** in the environment and locate potential ways out in a risk situation. Generate symbolic and social visibility of women as active subjects.

Monitored: There is informal monitoring exercised among equals, in a joint and nonauthoritative fashion that meets the **acceptance of "care"**.

⁹ More information:
[Hotline helps prevent gender-based violence in Mali](#)

¹⁰ More information:
[Kolkata Police](#)

¹¹ More information:
[Ulsan Awareness and Safety Night 2015](#)

¹² More information:

[Covered Foot Overbridges
Unsafe for Women](#)

¹³ More information:

[Fighting Violence Against
Women: Making Seoul a Safer
City for Women Project](#)

- **Signposted:** Non-sexist iconography and diverse and clear markings (visual, acoustic and tactile) that aid an understanding of the city and its structure.
- **Equipped:** With elements and infrastructure that support daily living activities at an accessible distance and time. **Guarantee of a diversity** of people using the public spaces.
- **Vital:** With a presence of people, diversity of activities, it facilitates meetings and mutual aid through multifunctional environments.
- **Community:** Based on designs that encourage the **socialisation** of people in an equal fashion, exchange and social cohesion.

In relation to prevention and urban design, of note is the case of **Hyderabad**, where urban furniture elements were removed to enhance visibility and safety. Underground and aboveground passageways were better lit in **Mashhad** and a guide to safe urbanism¹² drafted in **Montreal**. The **Seoul** Solution¹³ is another example.



Amiga ya no estás sola - Municipalidad de Guayaquil

One example
of an action is the
night-time
“on-demand stops”
for women, aimed
at preventing
assaults on women
when they get off
a bus in-between
established stops
in order to cut
the journey to their
destination on foot

¹⁴ More information:
[Red Mujer y Hábitat
de América Latina](#)

¹⁵ More information:
[Feminist, Women, Safety,
Rights, Training, Helpline,
Ending Violence Against
Women, EVAW, Delhi, India](#)

Urban safety audits with a gender perspective

Urban safety audits analyse people’s security, particularly around the social, physical and functional aspects that condition the perception of security in the public space, applying a gender perspective. They entail joint work between technical personnel, women’s organisations, other civil society organisations and people working on the ground. The audit is developed by applying participatory and feminist tools and methods, with exploratory marches being one of the most-used techniques. These marches consist of crossing a specific neighbourhood with a group of women. As well as being a diagnosis tool, it is also **a form of empowerment** since it showcases the local women’s knowledge while valuing their engagement in the design and transformation of their districts.

Urban safety audits have been conducted in many cities around the world since the 1990s: Barcelona, Bogotá, Mexico City, Montreal, New Delhi and Rosario, among many others. Tools have been adapted to different contexts and put into practice by the Latin American Women and Habitat Network¹⁴ which develops projects for safe cities for women. In India, the Jagori¹⁵ organisation also implemented urban security audits in New Delhi. Kalpana Viswanath leveraged the experience accumulated with the work in Jagori to create **SafetiPin**, an app available in English and Spanish used to conduct security audits by mobile phone. SafetiPin is used in different cities in India as well as Bogotá, Quito and, recently, Johannesburg.

One example of an action is the night-time “**on-demand stops**” for women, aimed at preventing assaults on women when they get off a bus in-between established stops in order **to cut the journey to their destination on foot**. In short, the challenge for institutions involves incorporating a broad view of safety, from a feminist perspective that tackles differentiated insights and which pivots away from the public/private dichotomy. But the implementation of methods analysing the problem of violence on a multi-scale level -body, home, neighbourhood, city and territory- is encouraging. **Urban safety audits** applied to housing are a step forward in this regard.

2.4

The right to metropolitan mobility

Nel·la Saborit

The Right to the city applied to mobility gives us a new way of understanding and designing urban transport infrastructure and services. Considered as a right, **mobility must be addressed by the public authorities more as a basic service than an added value** in the territorial planning of our cities.

The right to mobility and cities

The right to mobility must be interpreted in a context in which economic, energy, water and soil resources are limited. These limits, however, should be combined with the design of universally accessible, safe and sustainable transit networks and systems, which means **designing for the least visible link in the chain** - in this case, women, children, older persons and those with reduced mobility or sensory capabilities.

Furthermore, motorised private mobility is one of the means of transport that consumes the most resources per person in urban and metropolitan environments and which is the least accessible for social groups with a higher rate of vulnerability. The **profile of a private vehicle user is an adult male** in paid work without care responsibilities or any special physical or sensory need. With regards his mobility pattern, it is characterised by being point-to-point, i.e., from home to work to leisure point and home. By contrast, the profile of the public or nonmotorised (bicycle and foot) **public transport user is more diverse**: women, children, older people and groups with different needs. Their journeys are usually shorter but more complex and radial, linked to care tasks and mainly assumed by women.

The right to mobility must be interpreted in a context in which economic, energy, water and soil resources are limited

Inclusive design must integrate metropolitan routes that respond to the unpaid reproductive or care work mainly taken on by women

Analysing travel patterns from a gender perspective has shown that these vary in line with the **gender roles attributed to men and women in the social structure**. It is therefore essential to analyse the reasons for the movements, their features, space-time place and the users of the different transport modes. In this regard, inclusive design must **integrate metropolitan routes** that respond to the unpaid reproductive or care work mainly taken on by women (household management, care and education of dependents, etc.).

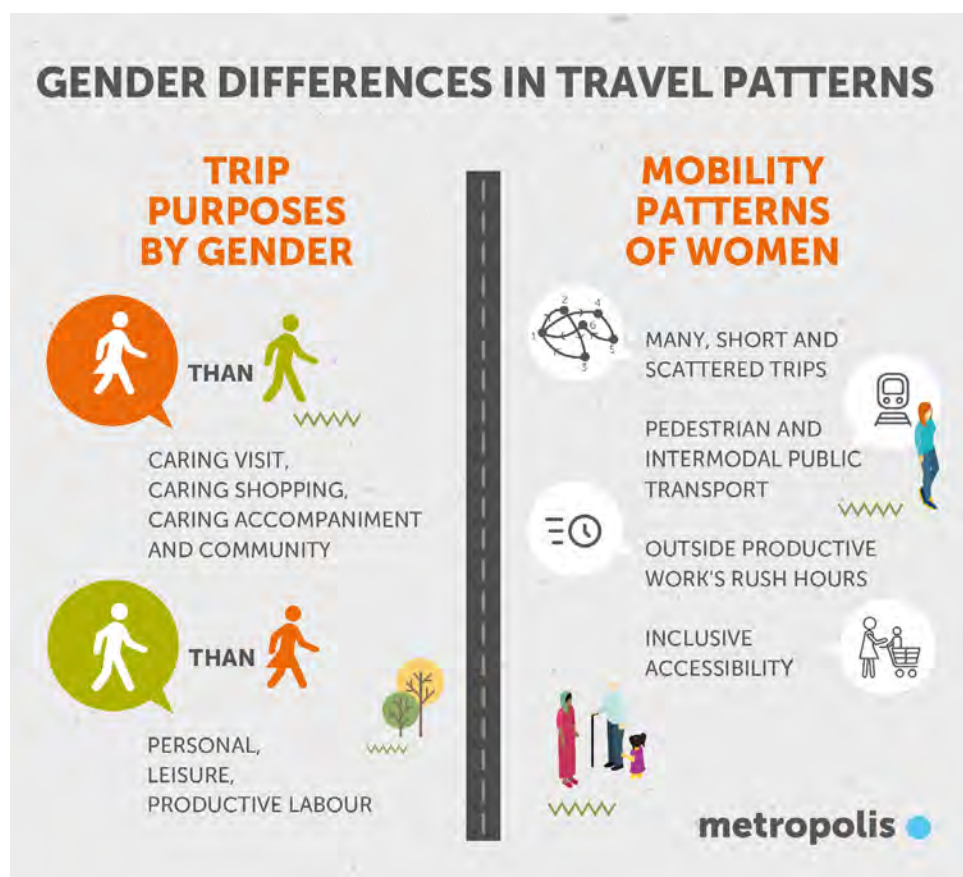


Figure 1. Transport modes and travel patterns by gender
 Source: metropolis.org

The optimal pyramid when designing streets with the right to universal mobility is one which prioritises non motorised transport, cyclists and pedestrians, and values public transport over private

Thus, the optimal pyramid when designing streets with the **right to universal mobility** is one which prioritises non motorised transport, cyclists and pedestrians, and values public transport over private. If we plot the scheme to be followed in this new type of planning and compare it against the infrastructure and energy-efficiency cost per kilometre and user transported, we obtain the following result:

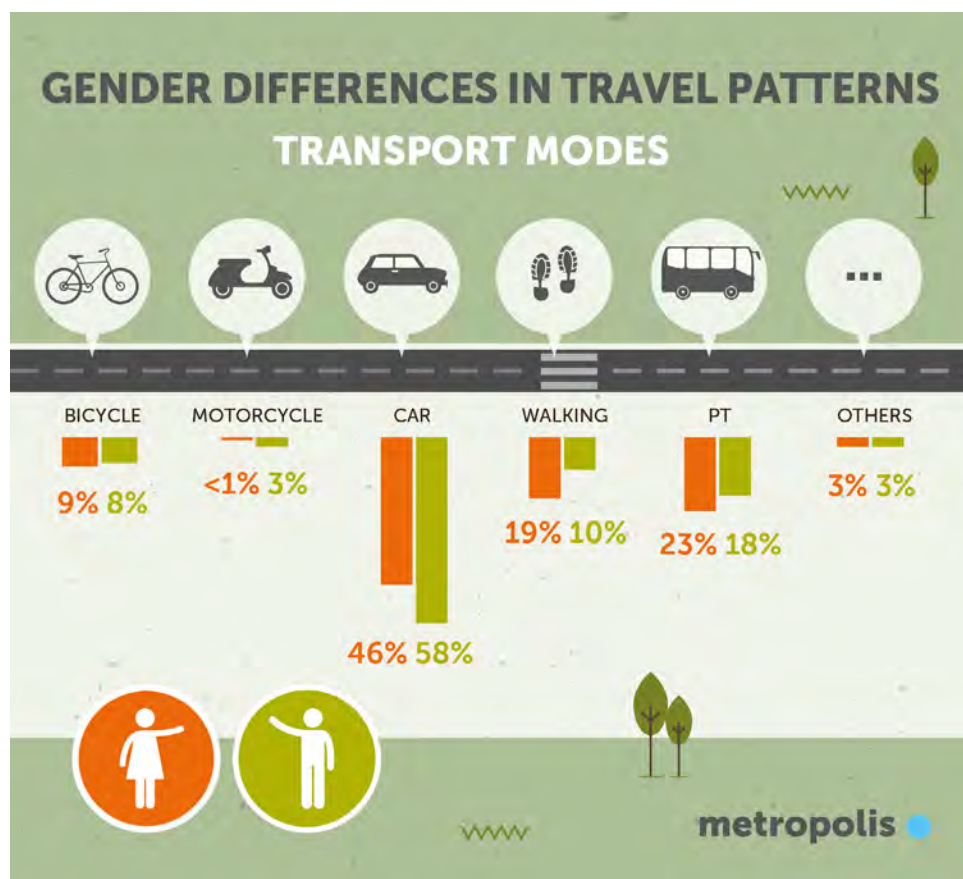


Figure 2. Relationship between infrastructure cost and energy efficiency
Source: Iglesias, M.; Valdivia, B.; Escorihuela, J.; Ortiz, S.; Saborit, N.; Roco, J. (2018)

This new approach to conceiving mobility relates and solves **five of the basic parameters that define the right to mobility**: universal access, safety, resilience, cost efficiency and reduced contribution to climate change: sustainability of the model.

A further point to consider for the true exercise of the Right to the city by women is the **guarantee of safety**, which includes “feeling safe”. Without this perspective as an accessibility criterion it is impossible to exercise the Right to the city in a balanced way.

**Integrating
mobile and
tracking
technology in
services will
be one of the
biggest challenges
for mobility**

¹⁶ More information:

[Marrakesh: Ciudad Segura y Amigable Para Todos | ONU Mujeres – Sede](#)

¹⁷ More information:

[Public Transport | Safe Delhi | Safe Delhi Campaign](#)

¹⁸ More information:

[A safe bus journey to Promote Safer Public Transport for Women and Girls](#)

¹⁹ More information:

[Gender and Public transport, Kathmandu](#)

²⁰ More information:

[Safety and public space: Mapping metropolitan gender policies](#)

Examples of initiatives that contribute to this area include the cities of Hanoi, Marrakesh¹⁶ and New Delhi,¹⁷ which offer training to transit system workers to identify situations of sexual harassment and be able to respond. Jakarta¹⁸ has taken a different approach: it has chosen to recruit women as BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) drivers, delivering positive results in two areas. On the one hand, it boosts female employment, and on the other it shores up their safety on buses. Kathmandu, for its part, published the *2010 Public Transport Code of Conduct*¹⁹ which offers protection from the harassment faced by women, older persons and the disabled.

Another case of note is Toronto²⁰ which, through its #ThisIsWhere campaign, raises awareness around the sexual harassment and assaults that take place on public transport. The SafeTTC App provides Toronto Transit Commission users with a way to report harassment, security problems and suspect activities, providing detailed reports on incidents and situations observed in the transit system, whether in a vehicle, on a station or at a bus or tram stop.

Challenges and obstacles for implementing the right to Mobility

Integrating mobile and tracking technology in services will be one of the **biggest challenges for mobility** in coming years. It involves the real-time combination of users' requirements with transport lines and services. However, these uses must be matched by a data protection policy on the part of the authorities, with the aim of **securing the transparency and legal security of the people**, mainly women, children and service users where the cooperative (or informal) economy is involved.

Another important challenge is to **guarantee the right to mobility** (pedestrian and on public transport) of women and groups with **specific requirements**. It is necessary to consider design elements in stations and vehicles that ensure accessibility for people with reduced mobility or limited sensory capabilities, e.g., ramps and lifts, the rehabilitation of convoys, inclusive signalling and information services with acoustic possibilities.

In the case of women, this right is conditioned by the **differentiated perception of safety**. Good road and station lighting, mobile apps to warn against assault and flexible night-time service stops are just some of the initiatives being taken to respond to this need.

On-demand stops²¹: Public transport at night

These initiatives seek to **reduce the risk of assault in journeys by foot from bus stop to point of destination** by enabling beneficiary groups, particularly women and children, to ask the bus driver to let them off somewhere closer to where they are going so they spend as little time as possible walking to their final destination. Users tell the driver the point along the bus route closest to their final destination so the driver can assess a **safe place nearby to pull over**. This system is used in several cities, including Paris, Montreal, Toronto, Brasilia and Istanbul. It also operates informally in other regions, where it is a regular feature of night transport lines.

There are several women-only public transit initiatives to reduce assaults, such as reserving carriages or buses for the exclusive use of women



"Travelling alone at night: between stops, for the safety of women in the city." Service offered solely for women travelling alone, available on all bus routes.

There are several other women-only public transit initiatives to reduce assaults, such as reserving carriages or buses for the exclusive use of women. This happens in Mashhad, Belo Horizonte, Canton, Kuala Lumpur, Medellín, Tehran, Zhengzhou, Shenzhen, Mexico City, Dubai, Kolkata and New Delhi. However, they are not definitively

²¹ More information: [Safety and public space: Mapping metropolitan gender policies](#)

recommended measures since they target a specific point in the journey and put the focus of the problem on the assaulted party rather than the offender. This means that, by segregating women, men are free to occupy the rest of the public space.

Quito: the gender approach applied to the development of transport infrastructure

Quito has approved a series of public policies to end sexual violence on public transport. After **redesigning bus stops to ensure women's safety**, it will also include the gender perspective in the construction of the new **Quito** metro. Gender training has been provided to the municipal transport company, the public works company, the metropolitan police and other municipal personnel. The strategy also aims to **change user behaviour with the public transport system**. Men and women, victims and witnesses of sexual violence on public transport, are asked to report their experiences by sending a message over the **"Bájale al Acoso"**²² app. This enables the real-time reporting of an episode of violence and triggers an alarm on the means of transport. The possibilities that this reporting measure offers also gives rise to social penalties and the denormalisation of discriminatory practices.

Urban planning must step up to the growth in mobility for reasons of work: the rise in population density in some areas and densification in use of a single territory are key tools for reducing the number of movements

When it comes to stating the most pressing obstacles, we should mention the exponential growth in personal travel for reasons of work and the **need to electrify transportation** to improve the air in cities and reduce climate change. Urban planning must step up to the growth in mobility for reasons of work: the **rise in population density** in some areas and densification in use of a single territory are key tools for **reducing the number of movements**.

²² More information:
[Bájale al Acoso](#).

2.5

Cities by and for all

Josefina Roco

What city and for who?

Urban planning is a powerful tool with two sides to it. At the same time as city environments produce and are the product of social, political, economic and historical interactions that reflect and nourish not-always-equal power relations, they are also places of dispute and reunion. They are inhabited, **living places permanently** being given new meaning by their social function and the **creative potential of interpersonal bonds**.

The conceptual triad of the conceived, perceived and lived space established by Lefebvre (1973) is interesting for **expanding on the interrelationships** between urban design, its functions, purposes and destinations. If the conceived space is related to experts, scientists and planners, with signs, standards and planning codes, the perceived space is related to the material experience, daily realities, the uses of time, production and social reproduction, and the lived space to the imagination and the symbolic within people's material existence.

If design is approached from the notion of "top down" conceived space, **planning can become an instrument of continuity** of the global order, functional for the development of the capital market, investments and commerce. When the city's social function is prioritised, the ideas of perceived and lived space become important, related to the daily experiences and realities of the people who make and inhabit the cities.

If design is approached from the notion of "top down" conceived space, planning can become an instrument of continuity of the global order

Participatory
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Participatory designs in the metropolitan sphere: features, phases and purposes

Participatory urbanism distorts the concepts of urbanism and urban planning that see the city as a homogenous and static whole. It emerges as **a tool for delivering on urban projects and realities** not made from a single point of view but which at the same time as they are capable of resolving different postures also expressly contain and promote the cultural, social, gender and generational diversity of the men and women who live in them. Far from being a textbook method, it is a brace of approach methodologies for **improving the habitat** by means of interdisciplinary and multi stakeholder processes.

The roots of this approach lie in the **participatory action** research (PAR) methodology and qualitative/comprehensive paradigm principles, from which we seek to reach out to people to learn the daily requirements of their experiences and perceptions in (and with) the city, in line with the routes and journeys they take, the uses of equipment and infrastructure, accessibility and the use of this equipment and infrastructure according to diversities (gender, age, functional diversity, social class, etc.) and the different feelings they experience around safety, convenience, encounters and interrelations.

The methodology used is habitually variable and flexible but generally speaking the phases comprising participatory design are:

- **Data collection** on the place/space/territory and community where the work is going to be done.
- **Participatory diagnosis**, where the needs, expectations, potential and limitations of the territory/space and the community and its inhabitants are collected.
- **Participatory design**, as a proposal to implement the greatest possible number of elements detected/identified in the diagnosis and embody them in a dedicated plan.

As a common goal, the different designs or processes of participatory urbanism seek a fairer distribution and to ensure access to and enjoyment of the city in equal conditions for all

Participatory authority, shared by means of consortiums of different social organisations or from the public administration, which implements projects and, together with the different agencies in the territory, realises the phases of development, periodic evaluation and readjustments.

Reinventing the city

Urban morphology, itineraries and transport, leisure and consumer requirements often respond to the productivist ideal that prioritises accumulation, profit and speculation and which has the white, bourgeois, wage-earning, heteronormative man with no functional diversity and in good health as its central subject. It thereby falls into a **false equality** which leads to a simplification of services that standardises needs and renders social sectors and realities with greater shortfalls invisible.

As a common goal, the different designs or processes of participatory urbanism seek a **fairer distribution and to ensure access to and enjoyment of the city in equal conditions for all**. Incorporating bottom-up approaches related to marginalised communities in design processes or the drafting of urban policies is one way to promote a more inclusive city model. To that end the city is planned from daily experiences, with special interest in local equipment, transport, safety and the development of conditions for the autonomy of all people.

One example is the “**equality spaces**” created by Madrid City Council which operates as a safe forum for discussion on gender roles. Women are invited to share their knowledge, opinions and proposals. Barcelona facilitates partnerships between women’s groups and other City Council areas and departments as part of its “**Gender Justice Plan**”.

Getting cities to
put life at the heart
is one of the big
challenges we face

Cordoba: equal opportunities for women Plan

In the Argentinean city of Córdoba, the Equal opportunities for women Plan²³ drives the implementation of a participatory process that makes it possible to define joint policies and actions between the city, public and private agents and civil society. The plan takes a comprehensive approach to raising awareness around questions of gender and representation, condemning sexual violence in the city and ensuring the presence of women in decision-making in urban social and economic development policies.

Getting cities to put **life at the heart** is one of the big challenges we face. It entails assuming interdependence and not prioritising people's multiple life requirements and expectations. The conditions of possibility of the future city: feminist, ecological, interdependent, caring and charitable, will not be constructed unilaterally from the offices of specialists and technicians but from the lives and experiences of the city of diverse people - women, children, the elderly, those who experience the city from functional diversity, migrants and the poor. **This is the challenge and the great opportunity for participatory urbanism.** It is a long road to begin the collective journey on: that of reinventing cities **from and for all people.**

²³ More information:

[Equal Opportunities Plan for women in the city of Córdoba](#)

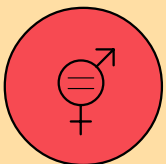
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**GENDER
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**SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES**
SDG 11



**PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS**
SDG 16

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