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NEW CHALLENGES FOR XXI CENTURY CITIES

Global warming, ageing of population, reduction of energy consumption,
immigration flows, optimization of land use, technological innovation

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TeMA Journal was established with the primary objective of fostering and strengthening the integration between urban transformation studies and those focused on mobility governance, in all their aspects, with a view to environmental sustainability. The three issues of the 2024 volume of TeMA Journal propose articles that deal the effects of global warming, the ageing of population, the reduction of energy consumption from fossil fuels, the immigration flows from disadvantaged regions, the technological innovation and the optimization of land use.

TeMA is the Journal of Land Use, Mobility and Environment and offers papers with a unified approach to planning, mobility and environmental sustainability. With ANVUR resolution of April 2020, TeMA journal and the articles published from 2016 are included in the A category of scientific journals. The articles are included in main scientific database as Scopus (from 2023), Web of Science (from 2015) and the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). It is included in Sparc Europe Seal of Open Access Journals, and the Directory of Open Access Journals.

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Laboratory of Land Use, Mobility and Environment
DICEA - Department of Civil, Building and Environmental Engineering
University of Naples "Federico II"
Piazzale Tecchio, 80
80125 Naples

web: www.serena.unina.it/index.php/tema
e-mail: redazione.tema@unina.it

The cover image shows railway street in Hanoi, Vietnam (Source: TeMA Journal Editorial Staff).

TeMA. Journal of Land Use, Mobility and Environment offers researches, applications and contributions with a unified approach to planning and mobility and publishes original inter-disciplinary papers on the interaction of transport, land use and environment. Domains include: engineering, planning, modeling, behavior, economics, geography, regional science, sociology, architecture and design, network science and complex systems.

With ANVUR resolution of April 2020, TeMA Journal and the articles published from 2016 are included in A category of scientific journals. The articles published on TeMA are included in main international scientific database as Scopus (from 2023), Web of Science (from 2015) and the *Directory of Open Access Journals* (DOAJ). TeMA Journal has also received the *Sparc Europe Seal* for Open Access Journals released by *Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition* (SPARC Europe). TeMA is published under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License and is blind peer reviewed at least by two referees selected among high-profile scientists. TeMA has been published since 2007 and is indexed in the main bibliographical databases and it is present in the catalogues of hundreds of academic and research libraries worldwide.

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2 (2024)

Contents

189 EDITORIAL PREFACE
Rocco Papa

FOCUS

193 **Towards participatory urban planning: insights from citizens.
Results of a survey on the local effects of climate change in Parma**
Ilaria De Noia, Barbara Caselli, Astrid Kemperman, Silvia Rossetti, Peter van der Waerden

LUME (Land Use, Mobility and Environment)

213 **The 15-minute cities concept applied to a Brazilian neighbourhood:
case study of the cidade universitária Pedra Branca neighbourhood in Palhoça-SC**
Marcela Juliana Cargnin, Cintia de Castro Marino, Thaísa Leal da Silva

231 **Highlighting circular cities trends in urban planning.
A review in support of future research tendencies**
Giulia Marzani, Simona Tondelli

249 **Right-based approach to urban accessibility: analysis of user perspective**
Cihan Ercetin

265 **Managing local knowledge about NBS in spatial planning.
A group model building approach**
Stefania Santoro, Giulia Mastrodonato, Domenico Camarda

285 The relationship between walkability and landscape values in transportation.
Examination of landscape values in urban area transportation axes
Zeynep Pirselimoglu Batman, Elvan Ender Altay, Sena Şengül

309 A scoping review of urban design and planning studies on the Covid-19
pandemic and elements of the built environment
Pouria Boujari, Sarah Ghamar, Mahdi Nasirian, Fateme Ghapanchian, Mahtab Khajavi,
Atieh Ghasemi, Mohsen Bahari, Yasin Delavar, Hamideh Garrousi

339 The identification of rurality at Nuts-3 level in Turkey
Seda Özlü, Sinem Dedeoğlu Özkan, Dilek Beyazlı

REVIEW NOTES

357 Energy transition and renewable energy policies in Italy
Valerio Martinelli

363 Strategies and instruments for active mobility: a European overview
Annunziata D'Amico

373 Global warming or global warning? A review of urban practices
for adaptation to extreme heat
Stella Pennino

383 Exploring approaches and solutions for urban safety: a focus on childhood
Tonia Stiuso

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REVIEW NOTES – Urban planning literature review

Exploring approaches and solutions for urban safety: a focus on childhood

Tonia Stiuso

Department of Civil, Architectural and
Environmental Engineering
University of Naples Federico II, Naples, Italy
e-mail: tonia.stiuso@unina.it
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-2474-8138>

Abstract

Starting from the relationship between urban planning and mobility management, TeMA has gradually expanded the view of the covered topics, always remaining in the groove of rigorous scientific in-depth analysis. This section of the Journal, Review Notes, is the expression of continuously updating emerging topics concerning relationships between urban planning, mobility, and environment, through a collection of short scientific papers written by young researchers. The Review Notes are made of five parts. Each section examines a specific aspect of the broader information storage within the main interests of TeMA Journal. In particular, the Urban planning literature review section presents recent books and journals on selected topics and issues within the global scientific panorama.

For the second issue of TeMA Journal volume no. 17, this section provides a comprehensive overview of the challenges and solutions related to child-friendly safe cities, using a variety of scientific sources and practical resources to illustrate effective approaches and innovative strategies. This contribution aims to examine these challenges and the solutions proposed in the scientific literature, specifically in books, journals, and reports.

Keywords

Urban safety; Urban planning; Literature review; Children.

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1. Introduction

The safety and well-being of vulnerable people, like children, women and elders, in the urban environment is a complex challenge that requires a holistic and multidimensional approach (Stiuso, 2024), as it is influenced by multiple factors, including community violence, road safety and the condition of urban parks. Children's perceived vulnerability to the danger posed by strangers and concerns about the misbehaviour of some adolescents have contributed to the consolidation of the idea that public spaces are meant for adults. Policies that restrict children's participation in public spaces reinforce and reflect the common belief that such spaces belong to adults (Valentine, 1996). Community violence is a widespread problem, especially in urban areas, and children and adolescents are the most affected. For example, one survey found that 36% of high school students in New York City had experienced threats of physical harm in the last school year (O'Donnell et al., 2002). Children living in urban environments marked by community violence develop resilience mechanisms through family support, community resources and social relationships, demonstrating a remarkable capacity to adapt despite adversity. Road safety for children is crucial and requires safe infrastructure, educational campaigns and traffic policies that protect young pedestrians, considering that the design of safe urban spaces, where children can move freely, is fundamental to their development and well-being. However, public policies and parental concerns often limit children's autonomous mobility and independence, reflecting growing anxiety about safety, even though risks have decreased compared to the past. A paradigm shift is therefore needed to integrate children's perspectives into more balanced and inclusive safety policies, highlighting the importance of listening to their voices to develop safer communities and more effective policies (Bessell, 2015). In recent years, studies have proposed a methodological analysis that takes into account all urban characteristics, and to assess safety in urban public parks, several factors such as infrastructure, surveillance and accessibility are analysed (Gargiulo & Papa, 2021). This approach allows us to identify areas for intervention in parks and all public spaces, providing precise indications for making them safer and more welcoming (Abdelfattah, 2022). Moreover, children's perception of safety and subjective well-being varies significantly in different contexts and on different scales (home, school, neighbourhood, country). Therefore, cultural and socio-economic factors that influence perceived safety and, consequently, the way children live in the urban context should also be examined, as this is a crucial factor for the well-being of citizens. Fear of traffic is the main reason for restrictions on children's independent mobility, leading to a reduction in their play space and time spent unsupervised (Hillman et al., 1990). Freedom of movement, considered a fundamental human right (Pellicelli, 2022), is rarely recognised in national policies concerning children; it is therefore essential to listen to and value children's experiences in order to develop safe environments and allow them to grow independently, contributing to their overall development. Only in this way will it be possible to create public spaces that not only protect children, but also foster their growth and well-being (González-Carrasco et al., 2018). It should also be added that policies restricting the movement of children reflect public concerns about child safety that emerged at the beginning of the 20th century and have become increasingly widespread. As public perceptions of risk increased, local policymakers were forced to take preventive and precautionary measures to ensure the well-being and safety of their citizens (Beck, 2009).

Urban safety for children mainly concerns the physical characteristics of public environments, playgrounds and schools, rather than a subjective perception of safety, which belongs more to parents or legal guardians. Indeed, children perceive an environment as unsafe not so much because of the possibility of acts of violence, but rather because of its conformation and state of decay (Carra, 2022; Mischo, 2024). It is essential to consider children's perspectives when designing spaces, not only to ensure their physical safety, but also to understand which aspects influence their perception of safety. Furthermore, creating spaces that are perceived as safe even for parents or legal guardians allows children to live with greater independence and freedom, as their movements depend largely on adult decisions.

2. Agreements and strategies developed at international level

The relevance of children's freedom of movement is a topic of growing international interest. While Article 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) recognises the right to freedom of movement as fundamental, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) gives children the right to freedom of expression and information (Articles 12 and 13), freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Article 14) and freedom of association (Article 15), freedom of movement is not addressed. At the national level, in a number of countries, policies regarding the movement of children are generally restrictive rather than facilitative. (Boetti, 2021). The lack of recognition of children's freedom of movement in international conventions is a significant gap that requires urgent attention from international organisations and governments worldwide. It is essential to adopt appropriate policies and measures to ensure adequate global well-being and development for all children, enabling them to realise their full potential and contribute meaningfully to society (Honorati & Ferraris, 2021). Some countries have adopted policies that facilitate children's freedom of movement, such as Finland, where the idea that children have the right to play freely outdoors and explore their environment is actively promoted. This perspective promotes children's cognitive and social development. In Japan, the culture of walking to school alone is widespread, which enables children to acquire autonomy and responsibility from a young age (Ruşitoru, 2023). In contrast, in countries such as the United States and Australia, restrictive policies have restricted children's freedom of movement, with negative consequences on their well-being and development. These different experiences highlight the importance of facilitative policies that allow children to explore and interact with their environment, contributing to their physical, emotional and cognitive development (Rams et al., 2022).

2.1 Sustainable Development Goals (2015)

The Agenda 2030 through its Sustainable Development Goals, highlights the vulnerability of children and the need to invest in their lives, survival and development. It commits to ensuring an educational environment that enables children to fully realise their rights and capacities (Agenda 2030). The Agenda also recognises children as agents of change, offering them a platform to fulfil their potential (Agenda 2030). The Goals call on cities to consider the interests of vulnerable groups, including children. For example, Target 11 promotes public and green spaces that foster interactions between generations and social cohesion, encouraging a sense of belonging. Specifically, Target 7 states that by 2030, governments should ensure "universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible green and public spaces, particularly for women, children, older people and people with disabilities".

2.2 New Urban Agenda (2016)

The New Urban Agenda promotes a safe, healthy and inclusive urban environment by improving road safety and involving children in dialogue with local stakeholders (The New Urban Agenda - Habitat III, 2016). The New Urban Agenda is a document that encapsulates the shared vision for a better and more sustainable urban future. It was adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito, Ecuador, on 20 October 2016 and was endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly during the sixty-eighth plenary meeting of its seventy-first session on 23 December 2016 (Child-responsive Urban Policies, Laws and Standards: A Guidance | UN-Habitat).

2.3 Habitat III Children's Charter (2016)

The New Urban Agenda is supported by the Habitat III Children's Charter, which calls for the inclusion of children in urban affairs for their well-being. This document fills a gap in urban development, providing tools for legislators, politicians, urban planners and academics to create child-sensitive urban policies and standards.

It focuses on methodologies, data collection, participation and involvement of children. The document is structured as follows: Chapter I introduces the context, purpose and child rights-based approach. Chapter II discusses regulatory standards and policies, emphasising children's participation as a human right. It presents the legal obligations of authorities to facilitate children's participation in urban decision-making processes. Chapter III focuses on urban planning and social services. Chapter IV provides examples of national and sub-national urban policies, demonstrating how to integrate children's rights into legislation. Finally, the paper concludes with recommendations for child-friendly urban policies, laws and standards (Children's Assembly and Charter - Historic First at United Nations Habitat III Conference, 2016).

2.4 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)

The right of children to express opinions, be heard and have their needs considered is fundamental, not a privilege. This right, along with non-discrimination, survival, development and the best interests of the child, is enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Article 12 establishes two rights: to express a point of view and to have it taken into account. Children have the right to influence decision-making and their views must be considered in policies. Age and maturity guide the weight of their opinions but should not limit them. The involvement of children in decision-making processes is a key outcome of the Convention.

2.5 Child-Centred Urban Resilience Framework: a tool for inclusive city planning (2020)

The CCURF adopts an urban systems vision, aligning human and children's rights and gender-sensitive approaches with urban development, and promoting children as agents of resilience. It is divided into four strategic areas:

- Improving the lives of children by ensuring access to basic services, decent work and protection for their survival and development.
- Involve the community in the protection and promotion of human and children's rights, with emphasis on safety and security, especially for girls.
- Create safe spaces for children, providing accessible and gender-sensitive infrastructure and information.
- Promoting the integration of children in urban management and planning.

The CCURF combines research and expertise, including Plan International's work with IIED and Arup's work supported by the Rockefeller Foundation on the Cities Resilience Index.

Tools such as the Cities Resilience Index, UNISDR's 'The TEN Essentials for Making Cities Resilient' and UN Habitat's 'City Resilience Profiling Tool' provide guidelines for urban resilience, but a solution was needed for organisations working with the poor and vulnerable. Each community is unique, so the CCURF helps understand urban dynamics, stakeholders and areas of intervention to maximise impact (Communications & Communications, 2020).

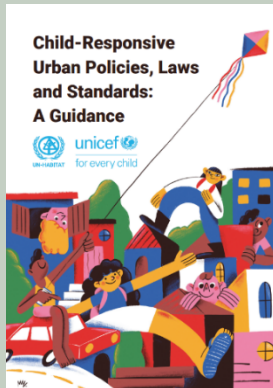
3. Best practices and strategies

This study collects strategies, international agreements, guides and best practices for integrating children's rights into urban policies relating to their safety. By putting children's needs at the center and listening to them, we demonstrate that the services designed for them become more effective, promoting safe and inclusive urban environments.

It is of great importance to integrate children's rights into urban policies and legislation, improving access to quality infrastructure and healthy living spaces for all. However, the lack of disaggregated data on children in urban areas, together with the scarcity of resources to collect child-focused data, limits the ability to monitor

policies and budgets, and to hold governments accountable for respecting children's rights. It is therefore necessary to analyse current urban policies and strategies adopted at the international level to address the issue more thoroughly and to reduce urban inequalities and improve urban safety for children.

Child-Responsive Urban Policies, Laws and Standards: A Guidance



Principal author: Anna Kvashuk
Contributors: Anne Amin, Rongedzayi Fambasayi, Samuel Njuguna, John Omwamba, Remy Sietchiping
Publisher: UN-Habitat and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
Retrieved from: <https://unhabitat.org/child-responsive-urban-policies-laws-and-standards-a-guidance>

This guide, jointly developed by UN-Habitat and UNICEF, addresses the challenge of poor integration of children's rights into urban policies and legislation, hindering the development of sustainable and inclusive urban spaces. Currently, more than half of the world's two billion children are between 10 and 18 years old and can participate in decision-making processes. However, current urban laws, policies and practices do not allow children to influence the issues that affect them (growing up, learning and playing).

The guide demonstrates that by putting children's issues at the centre and listening to them, services designed to meet their needs become more effective and efficient. It also provides lessons learned from UN-Habitat and UNICEF, recommending the direct participation of children in urban planning processes, not just as observers. The guide also addresses child-responsive standards in areas such as housing, road safety and public spaces, with examples of good practice from different countries to include and consider children and their needs in national urban policies.

Ghent: a child and youth-friendly city (Most Child and Youth-friendly City in Flanders, 2015)

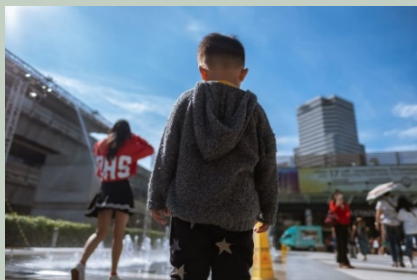


Authors/Editors: Moïra Phuong Van de Poël
Internally proofread by Aditi Partha
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The vision and action plan for 'Ghent: a Child and Youth Friendly City' aims to create a comprehensive and inclusive urban environment where young people can thrive. All aspects of city life, such as education, mobility, urban

planning, health, environment and sports, must take into account the needs of children, including those from vulnerable families. The active participation of children is essential to stimulate their creativity and sense of responsibility. The plan recognises the ongoing challenges and promotes continuous collaboration between sectors and stakeholders, with new approaches to ensure a sustainable and just future for the young citizens of Ghent.

Children in urban areas



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This article discusses the challenges children face in urban environments, including malnutrition, health inequities, unbalanced educational opportunities, air pollution and vehicular traffic, and violent and abusive

environments. It explores inequalities in access to health and education services and the risk of violence. It proposes actions to improve the living conditions of urban children, such as improving employment opportunities, addressing malnutrition, improving air quality and mobilising the community against violence. The article emphasises the importance of targeted policies and global cooperation to ensure a safe and healthy environment for urban children.

Child-friendly Integrated Public Spaces in Jakarta, Indonesia (Aji et al., 2016)



Authors/Editors: Maira Phuong Van de Poel

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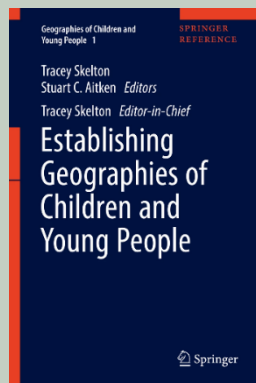
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Retrieved from: <https://cities4children.org/blog/safe-area-based-facilities-for-urban-children-in-disadvantaged-settings/>

This research focuses on the study child-friendly integrated public spaces (RPTRA) in Kembangan district, West Jakarta. The method used combines qualitative data from interviews and observations with quantitative data from questionnaires. The study

shows that RPTRAs, like parks, are mainly used by residents of densely populated areas. The availability of facilities, facilitated accessibility and the role of parents are crucial for children's attendance at RPTRAs. Despite meeting the general needs of children well, RPTRAs fail to develop adequately in relation to the evolving needs of their users, due to the diversity of functions and limited land availability. This study aims to evaluate the location, role and functions of RPTRAs in residential areas and propose ideal criteria for these spaces in the urban context.

Establishing Geographies of Children and Young People (Skelton & Aitken, 2019)



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Publisher: Springer Singapore

Publication year: 2019

Book series: Geographies of Children and Young People

ISBN code: 978-981-287-040-7

Retrieved from: https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-981-4585-88-0_27-1?fromPaywallRec=false

The chapter 'Establishing Geographies of Children and Young People' opens the first volume of Springer's 'Geographies of Children and Young People' collection. It explores the philosophical and theoretical debates that have shaped the geography of children and young people, citing theorists such as Bourdieu, Darwin and Spinoza. Key concepts such as 'development' and 'participation' and themes such as child, childhood, youth and intergenerationality are analysed. Disciplinary approaches examine political, educational,

emotional, affective and spatial geographies, as well as religiosity. The book establishes a basis for understanding the intersections between traditional disciplinary approaches, showing the diversity of young people's lives around the world.

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Author's profile

Tonia Stiuso

She is an engineer and research fellow at the Department of Civil, Architectural and Environmental Engineering at the University of Naples Federico II. Her research currently focuses on the theme of urban sustainability, in particular the study of gender inequalities and adaptation to climate change.