Promoting sustainability of transport in cities calls for a mindset change

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Promoting sustainable mobility is one of the biggest challenges for cities in the 21st century. The now published Transport in Human Scale Cities focuses on this challenge. The book is available for free download here.

The book, which originated from the Network on European Communications and Transport Activities Research (NECTAR) conference held in Helsinki in 2019, offers a fresh perspective for both practicioners and researchers. It puts the critical sustainability challenges of our time at the center and calls for a paradigm shift in the way we think about urban mobility systems.

"The need for human-scale thinking is even greater now. It is needed in an effort to understand how people move and interact in cities. Such scale is also needed for understanding the organizations that are responsible for the cities," says Assistant Professor Miloš Mladenović from Aalto University.

"When we look at mobility from a human perspective, we are better able to recognize that moving around cities is not just about moving from one place to another as quickly as possible. The experience provided by the mobility environment also plays a big role in people's choices. By developing ideas through this lens, we can support mobility that is good for both people and the planet, " adds doctoral student Elias Willberg from the University of Helsinki.

The book offers multidisciplinary perspectives on, for example, the development of urban and transport planning processes, development of responsible innovation processes, and further considerations for equity in urban mobility systems.

"The climate crisis and the corona pandemic urge transport researchers and professionals to help transform our cities away from the current car-dominance," says Karst Geurs, a professor at the University of Twente who chairs NECTAR and is one of the book's editors.

"This moment is in many ways conducive to a change in perspective. The current crises are putting pressure for a new way of organizing

urban mobility. Information to support change is becoming more accessible, as new types of materials and methods allow us to better understand people moving around the city and the diversity of their needs. Scientific work is also becoming more openly available, and our book is a testament to this. It is open to all interested from practicioners, to students and citizens, concludes Professor Tuuli Toivonen from the University of Helsinki.

Provided by Aalto University

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