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Participação e governança para a transição

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Participation and governance for transition
proceedings book

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A Transition Agenda to reinvent Braga

Filipa Corais¹

Introduction

Despite the growing European funding for sustainable urban mobility, Portugal has taken very few steps toward decarbonization. The mobility culture based on the use of the individual car is still very much rooted in society and therefore it is necessary to encourage reflection and mutual learning between researchers, local administration, and society in order to promote the paradigm shift towards Sustainable Urban Mobility (SUM).

The Sustainable Transitions and Transition Experiments (TE) methodology is being applied to the ongoing research (Corais, 2021) and this document summarizes of the contributions (Transition Agenda) collected in the Transition Arena created within the scope of the Braga case study.

In this Transition Agenda, it was possible to summarize the main consensuses (vision 2050 and respective transition paths) towards the desired change. However, due to its inherent dynamics, this agenda remains open and flexible to new contributions that may be presented in the following phases process regarding the development of the TE.

In this paper the theory of TE (Avelino, 2009, 2011; De Bruijne *et al.*, 2010; Loorbach *et al.*, 2020; Roorda *et al.*, 2014; Sengers *et al.*, 2019; STRN, 2010; Van

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den Bosch, 2010; Van den Bosch & Rotmans, 2008) is applied to the theme of sustainable mobility with theoretical basis in studies developed by several authors (Avelino, 2009, 2011; De Bruijne *et al.*, 2010; Loorbach *et al.*, 2020; Roorda *et al.*, 2014; Sengers *et al.*, 2019; STRN, 2010; Van den Bosch, 2010; Van den Bosch & Rotmans, 2008).

TE are guided by collective values of sustainability and base cultural change on reflection, empowerment, and mutual learning between local government, community, and researchers.

In this sense, it is argued that the necessary physical change will have to be followed by a sociocultural transition whose challenge implies the construction of a collective ideal, shared by the population and the main stakeholders, leading to the opening of new political spaces and a transformation, also, at the level of governance (Corais *et al.*, 2022).

Roorda *et al.* (2014) define 6 principles to influence transitions:

- Make room for diversity and flexibility (facing uncertainty and anticipating resistance);
- Co-create (involving multiple stakeholders in decision-making);
- Give space to agents of change (consisting of actors who are receptive to change, and who have the capacity for innovation and influence in mediation);
- Value the social and institutional learning process (the learning process of all involved, including management) as essential for reflecting and consummating social change. In this sense, being open to different perceptions of challenges and opportunities in a spirit of mutual trust it is important).

The implementation of these principles is carried out through 4 types of interventions (Roorda *et al.* 2014):

- Orientation (defining the challenge and building capacity for the transition);
- Agenda setting (consensus for sustainability);
- Activation (implementing projects and learning from them);
- Reflection (fostering a culture of reflexivity, learning, and continuous improvement).

In the TE methodology, some authors, like Roorda *et al.* (2014), propose the establishment of an incremental Transition Arena that should start, unlike other participatory processes, not by the interested agents, but by neutral agents of change. On the one hand, these agents guarantee exemption from specific

interests, and on the other hand, they have essential expertise to be pioneers of the intended change process.

The Transition Arena provides the informal and temporary space in which the 4 types/phases of intervention (orientation, agenda setting, activation, and reflection) are applied. In the Transition Arena, the change agents, through meetings, determine the foresight and reflection of an ambitious and innovative systemic change challenge and the actions of the transition agenda to be implemented in the short term, but which contemplate a long-term vision.

The Transition Agenda for the city is elaborated by a temporary group of change agents, but it is dynamic and can be reshaped and applied in parts. The consolidation and publication of the vision and sustainability agenda are the commitment factors of the different actors for the success of TE (Frantzeskaki *et al.*, 2014).

Building the capacity of transition actors is another important step to take into account in the process to increase the contribution of new transition actors and learning and reflection are the crucial tools for the TE approach (Roorda *et al.*, 2014).

The establishment of Reflective Governance, using monitoring and evaluation, contributes to political and social learning and the adoption of sustainability practices based on experimentation (Frantzeskaki *et al.*, 2014).

The Transition Agenda inspires the transition by defining strategies, pathways, and goals that guide the actions of different actors (Neuens *et al.*, 2013), but these elements, which guide a vision of a sustainable future, are not elaborated deterministically. Rather, they constitute evolving future scenarios, in which goals and paths guide social learning that may entail their adaptation at various moments and stages of the Transition Management process cycle (Rotmans *et al.*, 2007).

The consolidation and publication of the vision and sustainability agenda are the commitment factors of the different actors for successful transition experiences (Frantzeskaki *et al.*, 2014). The next step is to involve a wide diversity of new transition actors and collaborative networks forming new coalitions (transition experts and external facilitators) to rethink and reorient current practices and push in the political and market arena (Loorbach *et al.*). The selection of actors to be part of the transition team is made by a suggestion from other actors on the team and their participation is considered on an individual basis, in a spirit of openness

to new perspectives, and not in representation of associations or institutions to which they belong. However, the personal experiences and skills of these actors are taken into consideration, to confer diversity to the team. Transition Experiences thus aim to define a team of transition agents in a way that is oriented toward future development and not just involving stakeholders or representing a part of the population (Corais *et al.*, 2022).

At the beginning of the process, a transition team is created, with 3 to 5 members with complementary roles and competences and communication and social interaction skills. This multi-sectoral and representative team is responsible for planning and conducting the process. The articulation with political and local public administration actors, through interdepartmental meetings in the transition arena, is important both for the need for commitment and support to the process and for the synergies created for other initiatives (Corais *et al.*, 2022).

The transition team explores the local dynamics through interviews, and document searches, and prepares a system analysis, which aims to build an integrated overview of the context, and a stakeholder analysis, which aims to map the relevant actors to be involved in later phases (Roorda *et al.*, 2014).

The meetings in the Transition Arena provide concrete guidelines for cultural change that start with the systems analysis (which includes the assessment of social, economic, spatial, environmental, and ecological aspects). The shared framing of the problem and the interaction of the various perspectives and domains can be accomplished through presentations in the transition arena increasing the sense of urgency and gradual convergence into a collective commitment (Roorda *et al.*, 2014).

To illustrate the transition challenge shared and outlined in the previous phase visionary images are created of the future that is intended to be achieved with the outlined challenge.

After establishing consensus is reached on the foresight, i.e. the vision of the future, (one or more) meetings are then held to concretize the path to achieve this future through short, medium, and long-term actions. Several paths are identified and discussed and prioritized by the arena group (Corais *et al.*, 2022).

After this phase the ideas are published in the Transition Agenda, co-authored by all the transition agents, which can be materialized in the format of a book, magazine, cards, or other and in which the transition challenge, the actions, and

the visionary images developed in the transition arena that was the starting point for change are synthesized (Corais *et al.*, 2022).

The main outcomes of this approach are consensus building for a sustainable future, a drive for local change, and collective “Empowerment” (Roorda *et al.*, 2014).

Methodology

The methodology outlined was based on a prior and exhaustive literature review on this theme followed by a Focus Group (in the Transition Arena format).

The Transition Experiments concept is intrinsically associated with sustainable development, articulating it with social issues to accelerate systemic and disruptive changes. For this purpose, in addition to the involvement with local agents and the community, TE involve Neutral Change Agents who play a determinant role in the transition process by their inherent impartiality and by their high knowledge and experience in sustainability and public participation.

Thus, to promote reflection and to contribute to the learning process intrinsic to TE, in March 2022, we started the implementation phase of the Transition Arena of the Braga case study (from meso to micro-scale of the School of Music Calouste Gulbenkian neighborhood) according to the methodology presented by Roorda *et al.* (2014).

The Transition Arena began with the invitation of pioneering agents of change considered experts in mobility and public participation. During the month of March 2022 about 4 weekly online meetings were held, in which the issues to be addressed were explored, a SWOT analysis was carried out (using the Miro tool), the consensus was reached on the future vision for 2050 and on the transition paths to follow in 2040, 2030 and today to achieve the desired future vision. The change agents also contributed with some benchmarking that could be adapted to the case study.

After the 3rd session, some pertinent notes had already been collected for the definition of the transition agenda, and in the following session, held on March 30, 2022, the Transition Arena was expanded. Thus, following the TE methodology, each transition agent established invitations in their network of contacts to join

this Transition Arena and participate with contributions, broadening the debate.¹

This Transition Arena with neutral agents of change did not specifically focus on the micro-scale but rather worked on issues universal to medium-sized (Portuguese) cities regarding the promotion of sustainable urban mobility.

After stabilizing the Transition Agenda, which is assumed to be flexible and adaptable in the following phases, the Transition Arena was initiated with the local community (held on May 21st at the School of Music Calouste Gulbenkian neighborhood), previously selecting agents of change and then empowering the remaining agents that were added to the Transition Arena. After the settlement of some consensus in this local arena, the involvement process with the local government started, in July and September 2022, following the same structure of activities tested in the Experts and Local Agents Arena and contemplating around 10 participants. The president of the parish council participated in an interview in the same format (online) of the Transition Arenas and that took place on March 07, 2022.

Finally, in September 2022, in the forum provided by the End of Summer University, organized as a partnership between the University of Minho and Braga City Hall, it was possible to gather the agents and share with all participants the results obtained in each sub-arena (Figure 1) and readjust the Transition Agenda aiming a common goal for the future of the study area.

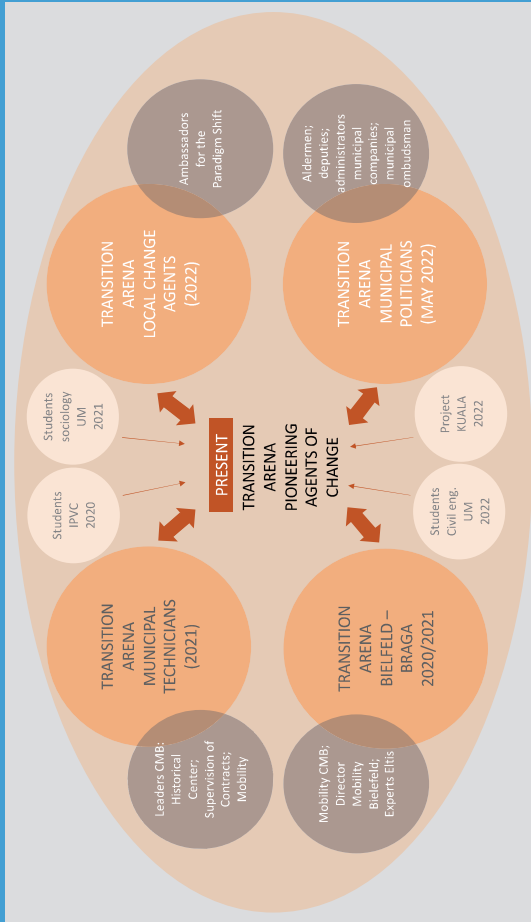
The transition agents involved in the various Transition sub-Arenas were challenged to give up institutional positions. Questions were asked about the best way to confront this issue, such as: What are the main obstacles to the change of mobility paradigm? What are the advantages of applying the TE methodology in comparison to traditional methodologies of public participation and planning?

1 The neutral transition agents invited to play a decisive role in this Transition Arena, in a first phase, were Professors: Emília Araújo (CECS- University of Minho); Mafsa Tobias (Federal University of Pará de Belém); Frederico Moura e Sá (University of Aveiro); José Carlos Mota (University of Aveiro); Ivo Oliveira (EAAD- University of Minho). At a later stage, the Transition Arena was extended to include other researchers: António Ferreira (CITTA- FEUP), Kim Schonfeld (CITTA - FEUP); Sofia Bento (UL); Patrícia Fraga (Florida Atlantic University), Marilza Tobias (Brazill); Daniel Pereira (Lab2PT - UM); Daniel CasasVallé (Future Design of Streets). As pioneer agents who provided logistical support to the researcher Filipa Corais (PhD student EAADUM); Márcia Silva (PhD in Sociology) and Tiago Silva (High Technician - Municipality of Braga).

And being this methodology flexible, what adaptations would you propose to its application to generating more proficient results? What is the focus of the persistent problem rooted in society? What are the intended results?

These and other questions were just a few examples to set the tone for the invited neutral agents to expose their perceptions and contributions, and for the group discussion and debate to begin.

Figure 1: Articulation scheme of the various Transition sub-Arenas, march 2022.
Source: own elaboration.



Results

The agents of change presented several contributions to the debate, highlighting the need to:

- To perceive the identity of places and collective memories using methodologies of population involvement;

- Map the routines, family times, and practices of the population and seek the justifications for not using the most sustainable modes (e.g. public transport; pedestrian mode);
- Fight resistance to change (accommodation). People have to be predisposed to change and for this to happen they have to feel that they need this change in order to improve their quality of life;
- Evaluate who has commuting movements compatible with soft modes despite using individual transport and focus awareness raising on these groups;
- Disseminate good practices of sustainable mobility and highlight the travel times compatible with the pedestrian mode in the city, to “disarm” the debate, which is still very centered in society in defense of the car;
- Evaluate in advance who is ready for the change and who is not, and look for allies who have a key role in society to influence the transition;
- Broaden the debate to everyone, including children;
- Set up a laboratory and try out the solutions beforehand, in a temporary way, with impact, with visibility, inserted in a strategy, and in a consistent way.

Considering the question about what the persistent problem rooted in society is and what are the challenges of transition to solve this problem, were registered the participations presented in table 1.

Based on this framework the transition agents defined the SWOT analysis (Figure 2) and the evaluation of the types of possible actions to solve the persistent and inherent problem of urban mobility (Table 2).

Table 1: Persistent problems and their challenges.
Source: own elaboration.

PROBLEM	CHALLENGE
Accommodation/ Inertia/ Conformism/ Resistance	Finding a motivation / stimulus in the population to promote change; Asking the population what commitments they are willing to make to promote SSM (under the motto of the social contract); Defining a target, a future situation that constitutes the population's aspiration, and directing the whole process focusing on this target; Moving from desire or sustainable attitude to action and sustainable behaviors. To go from citizen observer to citizen protagonist.
Status and false progress associated with the car - Mobility culture / Low mobility literacy Negative connotation of the pedestrian mode (time, discomfort)	Awareness raising; demonstrating the advantages of sustainable modes; communication campaigns; Breaking this prejudice that often doesn't even correspond to reality.
Tendency to consider that a certain sustainable model, in your city will not work.	Test/ Transition Experiments; provoking the population through a stimulus, finding a motivation (e.g. pandemic, economic crisis) and selling that sustainable solution.
Defense of individual interests (for the defense of the car) / Individual view	Defense of collective interests, more equitable in relation to the various modes of transport; A vision agreed upon by all (Aggregate Visions)
Precarious and car-dominated public space	Fluid and shareable public space
Fragile relationship of politics with space / policies focused on speed	Increase debate; Promote greater public participation; Policies focused on welfare
The power relations between the various actors	Aggregate the visions into a vision that everyone can agree on, not the ideal vision for everyone. Convince people that the ideal and the possible exist. Transitional measures will have to be implemented with explicitly structural goals even when they are achieved through experimental and interim measures.

Figure 2: Summary of the SWOT Analysis performed with the various change agents.
Source: own elaboration.

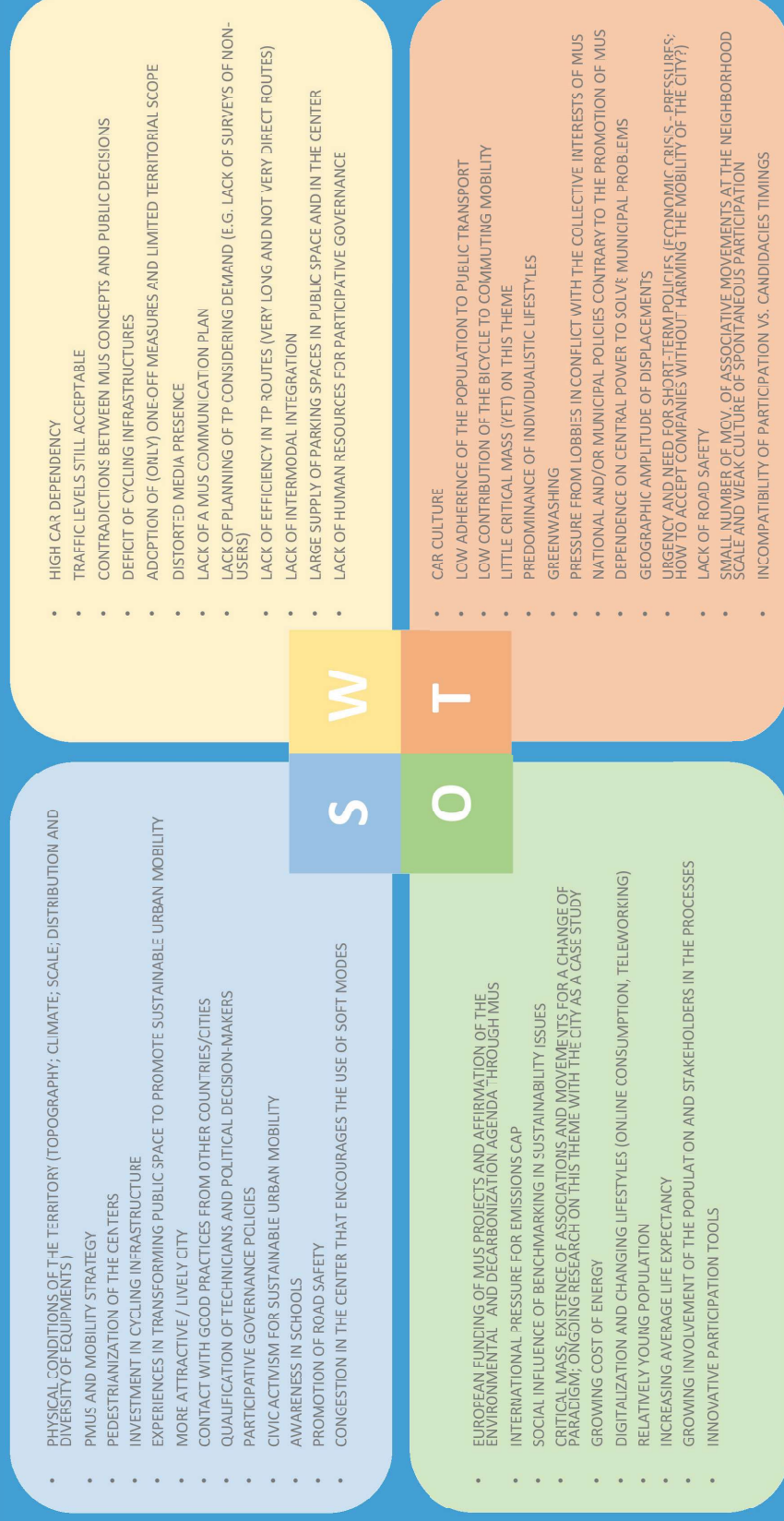


Table 2: Summary of the evaluation of the main actions to promote sustainable urban mobility and inherent change in attitudes and behaviors of the population.
Source: own elaboration.

HIGH VALUE

- THE PRESENCE OF CHILDREN IN RADIO PROGRAMS AND TRANSITION EXPERIMENTS;
- CREATE A CITY MOBILITY COMMISSION;
- INCREASE ENFORCEMENT OF ILLEGAL PARKING ON SIDEWALKS AND INTEGRATE COMPANIES IN THE TRANSITION EXPERIMENTS AND PROMOTE GREATER AWARENESS;
- DEVELOP APPLICATIONS THAT ENCOURAGE WALKING AND THE EXPERIENCE AND USE OF SUSTAINABLE MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION WITH ADVANTAGES AND GAMIFICATION FOR THE CITIZEN;
- SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ORGANIZED TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE URBAN MOBILITY (PT; CYCLING, WALKING)
- INTEGRATE PERFORMING AND PERFORMING ARTS PROCESSES IN PUBLIC SPACE AIMED AT THE TRANSITION TO MAINSTREAMSUM;
- CLOSE STREETS DURING THE WEEKEND IN AN EXPERIMENTAL WAY
- ENHANCEMENT OF PUBLIC SPACE (BENCHES, SOCIALIZING SPOTS, STREET FURNITURE, DRINKING FOUNTAINS)
- ALTERNATE CIRCULATION OF EVEN AND ODD LICENSE PLATES
- PROMOTE BICYCLE TRAINS IN SCHOOL AND BUSINESS COMMUNITIES
- LIMITS ON VEHICLE CIRCULATION IN THE HISTORIC CENTER

DO IT NOW

- DECARBONIZE
- IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR SOFT MODES
- PROMOTE CAR-SHARING
- ENSURING SAFE ROUTES FOR CHILDREN
- MAKING PUBLIC TRANSPORT MORE EFFICIENT AND ENCOURAGING THE USE OF PT
- CREATE DEDICATED BUS CHANNELS
- PARK & RIDE WITH SUSTAINABLE AND ECONOMICAL CONNECTIONS TO THE CENTER

DO IT NEXT

- RECLAIM THE SPACE OCCUPIED BY THE CAR AS PUBLIC SPACE FOR URBAN LIVING
- CONDITION/LIMIT THE CAR - INCREASE PEDESTRIAN ZONE; CLOSE STREETS IN THE URBAN HULL;
- SHARED BICYCLE NETWORK
- PARKING MANAGEMENT - REMOVE PUBLIC PARKING
- RETHINK PLANNING - RESIDENCE AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT AREAS
- INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF MOBILITY POLICY INTEGRATING SOCIAL ISSUES

LOW EFFORT

- TRANSLATE ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE ON THIS TOPIC TO DIVERSE AUDIENCES, INCLUDING CHILDREN, THE ELDERLY, AND NON-PORTUGUESE-SPEAKING MIGRANTS
- OPEN THE DOORS OF SCHOOLS TO PROMOTE A MORE CONTINUOUS USE OF OUTDOOR SPACES. IT CAN ALSO BE DONE IN OTHER FACILITIES
- INTENSE COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS WITH THE MEDIA ON THE SUBJECT/OTHER FORMS AND DYNAMICS OF INFORMATION AND INVOLVEMENT
- AWARENESS AND SENSITIZATION POLICIES (EX: COVID EXPERIENCE)

DO IT IF/ WHEN THERE'S TIME

- **Actions to avoid:**
- BEING AFRAID OF CHANGE
- ADOPTING SUCCESSFUL MODELS FROM ELSEWHERE WITHOUT AN IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.
- CLASSIFYING PROJECTS AS INNOVATIVE WHEN IN FACT THEY ARE NOT
- DIGITALIZATION WITHOUT DIAGNOSIS AND IMPACT ANALYSIS
- ACTIONS WITHOUT DISSEMINATION AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE POPULATION
- **DON'T DO IT**
- HIRING PROFESSIONALS AND COMPANIES THAT ALREADY KNOW "WHAT TO DO" AND THAT DON'T CARE ABOUT THE INVOLVEMENT WITH THE PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY
- LACK OF PLANNING OF OBJECTIVES
- DOING AND UNDOING

LOW VALUE

As the main strategic objectives for the consolidation of Vision 2050, the transition agents listed the following:

- Humanize the city and promote soft modes
- Promote universal accessibility
- Reduce car use, and speeds and promote Safety
- Develop land use planning integrated with Mobility policies
- Promote the 15 minutes city and foresee Proximity to Commerce
- Promote public transport efficiency and effective intermodality
- Reduce public parking and introduce parking pricing
- Promote Decarbonization
- Control noise
- Promote a new Mobility Culture and Increase MUS education
- Promoting Inclusive Governance
- Define a communication strategy

They also presented secondary objectives:

- Reduce the use of simplistic (if technologically advanced) technological solutions to solve complex problems
- Define Park & Ride at city gates
- Rethink access to city-center schools

Finally, the transition agents defined, based on a desired future vision for 2050, the transition paths to be taken in 2040, 2030, and today (Table 3).

> Table 3: Vision of the future and its transition paths.
Source: own elaboration.

VISION 2050	TRANSITION PATHS	
	2040	2030
Human-centric City / Happy City		2022
- Walkable City - Inclusive city, focused on quality of life - More interactive community in the Public Space - Leisure environment for socializing - Identifying needs of the elderly population for the future - An ecological city - Revolutionize governance at all levels to reflect new values regarding symbiotic prosperity between people and environment, with equity and solidarity - Drastic reduction of parking needs - Participatory assemblies		- Revision of the city's normative instruments (PDM and PMUS) with public participation and in the direction of sustainability - Investing in urban infrastructure - Proximity services in the neighborhoods - Invest in public transportation, bicycle, and pedestrian use - Predictable and cheap transport system, fast and with high frequency - Free urban public transportation and tight parking constraints - Flexible school transportation, adapted to schedules and family needs - Encouraging intermodality - Investment in educating citizens, including children for the actions to come - Use of public space for an activity/fair/show/film/lecture viewing
Walkable city of sociability and ecology	- Modal split: pedestrian 40%; cycling 20%; Public Transport (PT) 30%; Private Car 10%.	- Radio program aimed at the mobility issue (involving children/families) - Listening to children about the organization of social space - Schools/curriculum programs that integrate regular (not exceptional) activities in nature - Deep research on the city that has been done in the last 40 years - Clarify enabling criteria for urban growth operations - Effective control/protection of permeable soil - Dissemination of information about the impact and alternatives of car use in parking areas/parks

Final considerations

The End-of-Summer University and other events (e.g. workshops, focus groups, interviews, public presentations) were used to expand the Transition Arena and to adapt and/or complement the contents of the Transition Agenda (which is a flexible document).

Despite the persistence and dominance of the use of the car, verified in the main daily movements, in Portugal, the realization of the various Transition Sub-Arenas revealed the great consensus that exists among the agents involved (not only at the level of the experts invited to the Transition Arena, but also at the level of the local agents of society and local government) regarding the current mobility problems, the vision of the future and the needs to achieve that vision. This shows that, at least at the level of attitudes, there is already a substantial change in society and in the city's politicians toward awareness of the need to promote sustainable urban mobility. This is a decisive phase for changing mobility behavior as well.

The diffusion of the Transition Agenda and the gradual empowerment of the whole society (using ambassadors for this transition) towards more sustainable mobility habits will be a crucial phase for the change from the current regime (unsustainable to the sustainable regime).

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Catarina Sales Oliveira é professora auxiliar da Universidade da Beira Interior (UBI) e investigadora do CIES-IUL (Centro de Investigação e Estudos em Sociologia). Os seus interesses de pesquisa são a mobilidade, transportes e desigualdade; género, cidadania e empoderamento por meio das artes. Desenvolveu estas especializações através de vários projetos de investigação europeus multidisciplinares como RESISTANCE (sobre coletivos indígenas de mulheres), EMECS (sobre impactos da Covid19 em trabalhadores destacados) ou SPECULUUM (sobre documentários autobiográficos produzidos por produtoras de língua portuguesa). Trabalha na promoção da igualdade de género tanto no ensino superior quanto no nível da comunidade local, participando em projetos como VELEDA (uma abordagem sócio-artística para mulheres monoparentais) e até 2021 como presidente da UBI Equality Commission (CI-UBI) numa abordagem de investigação-ação sobre género, ensino superior e mudança organizacional no ambiente universitário. Atualmente está particularmente interessada em mobilidades transfronteiriças e desenvolvimento local e mobilidades artísticas.