Promoting Active Mobility in Lisbon: A Pathway to a Sustainable City

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Abstract: Since the turn of the 21st century, societies worldwide have been unwavering in their dedication to achieving sustainable development, considering it a fundamental goal. At the core of sustainable development is the principle of meeting the present generation's needs while safeguarding the ability of future generations to fulfill their own aspirations for growth and well-being. The concept of sustainable development was first articulated in the Brundtland Report of 1987, which emphasizes a balance between economic advancement, social equity, and environmental conservation. The concept of sustainability places the environment as the primary pillar. It emphasizes that a healthy and preserved environment is essential for fostering social well-being and sustainable development, which in turn creates a foundation for economic progress (Costanza and Daly, 1992). Therefore, this study focuses on active mobility (i.e. walking, biking), which is a part of sustainable transportation, aiming to prevent environmental pollution and the use of non-renewable energy, and is important for human health, which are essential components of a sustainable city as environmental dimension of the sustainability. In the current century, there are significant differences in sustainability strategies and practices among regions, countries, and even cities within the same country. This study examines the impact of sustainable transportation on sustainable cities and societies. Differences in active mobility can be observed among European countries due to their geographical, demographic, economic, and social conditions, as well as their transportation infrastructure and policies. There are several international indexes that demonstrate this. For example, according to the Environmental Performance Index (EPI) for the year 2018, 180 countries have been ranked based on 24 performance indicators, which are classified under ten issue categories. These indicators assess various aspects related to environmental health and ecosystem vitality. Portugal is ranked 26th among these countries (Yale University, 2018). The research will seek answers to the following questions: (1) What is the role of active mobility in creating sustainable cities?; (2) What is the significance of active mobility for urban communities? (environmental, economic, social, and health aspects); (3) Are there differences in approaches to active mobility among European countries? (4) What are the sustainable transportation strategies and practices in Portugal? In the paper, the differences in active mobility strategies and practices among European countries will be identified. Subsequently, a literature review and observational studies will be conducted to examine the strategies for active mobility as a part of sustainable transportation specific to Portugal and how they are implemented in the city of Lisbon. The study will conclude by identifying the differences between Portugal and other EU countries; and lacking strategies and practices in Lisbon and proposing recommendations for improvement.

Keywords: accessibility; mobility; public transportation; sustainability; walkability

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