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# Accelerating sustainable mobility: towards a shared narrative with health framing

**Workshop Summary Report**

August 2026

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**Acknowledgements:** This report was supported by the Wellcome Trust via the Pathfinder Initiative (grant number 227165/Z/23/Z). The report was prepared by Mariana Mirabile (OECD), with inputs from Tatiana Fernandez (SharedAgendas.org) to Chapter 3, and from Ann Searight Christiano (University of Florida) to Annex I. The report also benefited from valuable feedback and comments from Tatiana Fernandez, Cynthia Echave, and Carla Oliva (SharedAgendas.org); Sabrina Dekker (Dublin Metropolitan Climate Action Regional Office); Lorna Benton, Rebecca Newbould, and Sarah Sharpe (Pathfinder Initiative); and Elisa Lanzi (OECD).

# 1. Introduction

Regions and cities play a fundamental role in triggering the systemic transformations needed to achieve the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) set in the context of the Paris Agreement.<sup>[1]</sup> While the ambition of climate action needs to be scaled up for countries to achieve their NDCs, climate policy implementation often encounters resistance due to real or perceived low public levels of acceptability.

OECD analyses identified communications efforts as a high leverage point to accelerate the implementation of climate action.<sup>[2],[3],[4]</sup> By applying the OECD framework *Systems Innovation for Net Zero*, authors find that the successful implementation of sustainable mobility and decarbonisation policies at scale depends not only on policies' technical design, but also on the ability to foster public support and align a broad range of interest-holders (step *Redesign* in the OECD framework). Communications efforts were identified as a necessary condition for translating policy ambition into effective action and to *redesign* the system. Dechezleprêtre et al<sup>[5]</sup> find that “explaining how policies work and who can benefit from them is critical to foster policy support”. Specifically, evidence suggests that climate policy communicated with a health framing can increase public understanding on the links between climate and health, and accelerate climate policy implementation via increased public support.<sup>[6],[7],[8]</sup>

Health benefits from climate policies are more tangible and immediate than, for example, reduced climate damages from sustainable GHG emission levels.

To better understand how communications efforts with a health framing could, concretely, support the implementation of decarbonisation policies, the OECD organised workshops with local interest-holders in Barcelona and Dublin. The workshops were designed to explore how to operationalise communications as a policy lever, by building capacity among local interest-holders and by testing how and whether a health framing can help forge alliances across sectors and

increase public acceptability of decarbonisation policies. Interest-holders included government officials (at the regional, sub-regional and city-hall levels), civil society representatives, professionals (doctors, engineers, journalists), and academia. In both cities, workshop participants were invited to reflect on:

- the importance of active communications efforts with a health framing to accelerate decarbonisation policies, and what effective communications entails;
- their potential roles in advancing the communications of sustainable mobility policies with a health framing at the local level; and
- concrete actions that each participant could take to advance in this direction.

The workshops were supported by the Wellcome Trust grant 227165/Z/23/Z, via the [Pathfinder Initiative](#). The Pathfinder Initiative aims to “provide practical, evidence-based pathways to net zero through transformative local, regional, and global actions.” The initiative’s vision is to “create a global community that delivers transformative solutions for a healthier, fairer and more prosperous future.” The workshops also benefitted from logistics support - including financial resources for the workshop location, catering, and supplies – from local partners.

The OECD was commissioned by the Pathfinder Initiative to build local capacity and deepen global understanding on the role of communications with a health framing in accelerating the implementation of climate policies.

Section 2 describes the theory of change underlying the workshop design. Section 3 provides a summary of key insights and recommendations. Sections 4 to 6 summarise discussions and short-term impacts for the Barcelona and Dublin workshops. Finally, Section 7 concludes.

## 2. The theory of change underlying the workshops

The workshops were designed following the OECD framework *Systems Innovation for Net Zero*. The framework aims to support governments in the prioritisation and implementation of transformative policy packages towards net zero. It builds on systems thinking insights and consists of three steps.

In the first step, *envision*, policymakers clarify and reflect on the goals, ideas and mental models guiding current decisions, and explore how changing these could open pathways toward a more desirable future. In the second step, *understand*, policymakers analyse how the system's structure generates current behaviours and outcomes, using systemic tools to identify policy packages capable of triggering transformative or systems change. The third step, *redesign*, focuses on policy implementation. Policymakers are invited to agree on the most transformative policy packages and develop the processes and conditions needed to implement these packages at scale, recognising that only well-balanced combinations of policies can shift complex systems.

The workshops in Barcelona and Dublin deep dive into the step *Redesign*, and build on one of the key insights of previous analysis in Ireland and Catalonia (Spain) applying the OECD three-step framework: communications efforts and the co-ordination of a wide range of interest-holders, beyond climate, are necessary to accelerate the transition toward low-carbon and healthy mobility systems.<sup>[2],[3],[4]</sup>



Image credit:  
Lia L./Pexels.com

## The workshops' theory of change based on the OECD framework can be summarised as follows:



### Concept 1: behavioural changes are needed to get to net zero.

As suggested by the IPCC,<sup>[9]</sup> achieving net zero requires behavioural changes towards sustainable choices at scale. Technological change alone is insufficient to reach net-zero goals.



### Concept 2: behaviours are intrinsically linked to system design.

While individual preferences are part of people's decision-making processes, system design plays a more fundamental role in decision-making than individual preferences, as it dictates the relative convenience of available options.



### Concept 3: system redesign may be needed for triggering behavioural change.

Fostering the behavioural changes needed to achieve net zero requires systems change. This means redesigning the systems that currently promote unsustainable choices so that they instead support sustainable behaviours. For instance, in the transport sector, a reallocation of public space may be needed to invert the attractiveness gap between different modes of transport, so that sustainable modes - such as walking, cycling and public transport - become more attractive than emission-intensive modes.



### Concept 4: system redesign requires informed collective action.

Transforming a complex system cannot be achieved by a single individual or department. Instead, an alliance of interest-holders is necessary. The three steps of the OECD framework described above contribute to identifying and building such alliance of actors. The framework provides a structure for interest-holders to collaborate effectively by equipping them with tools to develop a shared vision (*envision*), to identify transformative actions (*understand*), and to identify the processes and conditions needed for the concrete implementation of such actions (*redesign*).

A detailed description of the theory of change that guided the workshops' design will be available on the Pathfinder Initiative Climate and Health Evidence Bank ([climatehealththevidence.org](https://climatehealththevidence.org)).

### 3. Summary of key insights and recommendations of next steps

**The workshops in Barcelona and Dublin demonstrated strong interest and commitment from local interest-holders to work collaboratively across sectors to advance healthier and more sustainable systems. Participants consistently expressed enthusiasm for engaging beyond their usual professional spheres, highlighting the value of dedicated spaces that bring together actors focused on mobility, health, planning, climate and communications. These spaces facilitated rich discussions and built trust among interest-holders, enabling them to identify shared objectives and recognise the potential for coordinated action.**

The workshops revealed that while visions for healthier mobility systems and decarbonisation policies are often aligned, interest-holders typically operate in parallel rather than in concert, leading to missed opportunities for synergies. Participants in both cities expressed interest in creating more permanent coordination spaces to bring together actors who share similar visions but currently do not collaborate systematically. The role of health professionals emerged as especially significant: discussions from the workshops suggest that health messengers—such as physicians and public health experts—may be more effective communicators of the benefits of sustainable systems than climate or transport departments themselves, due to their credibility and the perceived neutrality of health arguments.

Across both cities, participants identified an untapped potential for more strategic and effective communications. Communications is often viewed as an add-on rather than a core component of decarbonisation policy packages, which constrains its ability to influence public acceptability and support behavioural change at scale. Despite efforts already underway, communications remains fragmented, under-resourced, and often peripheral to policy implementation and project planning.

The discussions also underscored the opportunity—and the challenge—of framing decarbonisation policies with a health framing. Participants generally agreed that health arguments resonate more widely across society and are less polarising than climate narratives. They emphasised the importance of aligning communications with visible improvements in the built environment and linking communications efforts to tangible transformation initiatives. Doing so can help make the systemic costs of current practices and the opportunities for change more visible, connect actors across sectors, and identify practical entry points for action. At the same time, some actors questioned whether health framing can be effective in contexts where infrastructure does not yet support healthy choices (for example, where convenience, travel time and safety remain the dominant determinants of mobility behaviour).

### Building on these insights, several recommendations emerge for the future:

- Communications efforts should be embedded in policy processes from the outset, including through the allocation of financial resources and the integration of communications specialists into project teams.
- Communications with a health framing can be more effective when embedded in concrete transformation efforts so that messages respond to the conditions that make change difficult in specific fields. Communications has greater potential when it connects health evidence with daily experience.
- Local interest-holders could benefit from capacity building and professional development in communications skills. The Public Interest Communications framework shared during the Dublin workshop and described in Annex A offers a practical and science-based foundation for strengthening communications practice within public administrations, civil society and partner organisations.
- Creating structured spaces—whether living labs, multi-interest-holder alliances or permanent working groups—could support dialogue, reduce fragmentation and help align narratives across health, mobility and climate actors.
- There is scope to leverage comparative evidence and good practices from other territories. Several workshop participants expressed interest in learning from international examples where health framing, communications strategies or cross-sector governance structures have supported the implementation of decarbonisation policy packages, as well as from international experience on indicators to track progress and maintain momentum. In this context, the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) has been co-developing a practical indicator framework aligned with the EU Mission for 100 Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities by 2030 to help cities better track health-relevant climate outcomes. By mapping existing indicators, identifying data gaps, and working directly with cities to understand barriers to implementation, SDSN is helping connect urban climate action with public health and evidence-based decision-making, advancing a just transition toward healthy, net-zero cities (further information can be found on the Pathfinder Initiative Climate and Health Evidence Bank). Governance-wise, the experience in Catalonia points to the relevance of Shared Agendas as one possible framework for structuring collective work (see Box 5.1 in Section 5).



## 4. Barcelona - first workshop

In Barcelona, the first workshop - *Towards a shared narrative with a health angle to accelerate sustainable mobility* - was organised in collaboration with the Generalitat de Catalunya (Regional Government) and the Barcelona College of Physicians (Col·legi de Metges de Barcelona). It was carried out in the context of Catalonia's Smart Specialisation Strategy (RIS3CAT) and it also involved actors having participated in a recent open letter on air quality.<sup>[11]</sup>

The RIS3CAT identifies challenges across seven themes, and this workshop contributed to the challenges on sustainable mobility and planetary health. The notion of planetary health sheds light on the interdependences between people's and planetary health and the need for

transformative changes in areas such as food, mobility, health and energy to simultaneously improve sustainability and health outcomes.<sup>[10]</sup>

Figure 4.1 describes workshop participants based on their main area of focus. Figure 4.2 provides an overview of participants based on organisation types. Coming from different organisation types and areas of interest, many of the participants in the workshop did not know each other or had not exchanged before the event. According to breakout group's facilitators, discussions during the breakout sessions were active and rich, benefitting from the diverse perspectives of the actors in the room, and the level of trust among interest-holders increased as the day proceeded.

Image credit:  
Bingqian Li/Pexels.com



Figure 4.1. Participant's area of focus

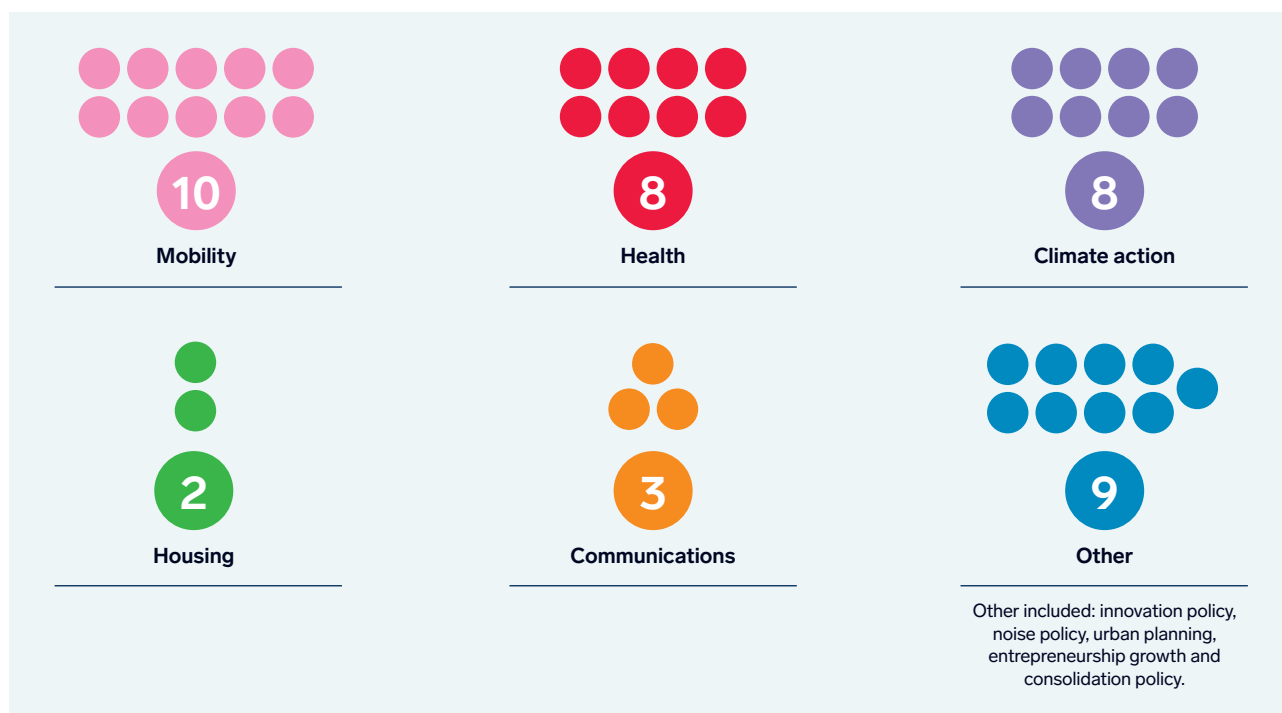
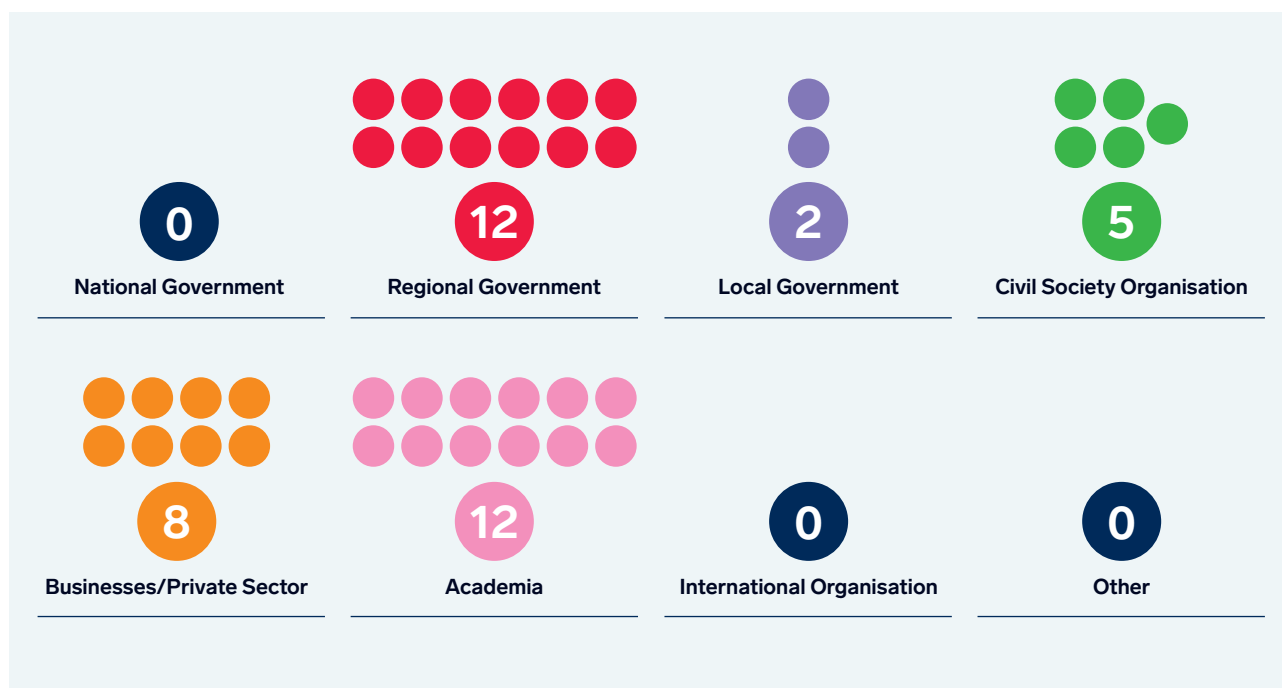


Figure 4.2. Participant's organisation type



## Summary of discussions

Overall, there was agreement across the workshop participants on the need to transition to a healthier and more sustainable mobility system.<sup>1</sup> Participants also agreed on the need for a shared narrative to accelerate such transition, and the importance of health arguments - and messengers (e.g. physicians) - to advance such narrative. They explained that health arguments –

differently to climate arguments – were not contested, but a shared concern among different spheres of society.

Table 4.1 describes the workshop agenda. The rest of this section provides insights from breakout group discussions throughout the day.

**Table 4.1. Barcelona Workshop Agenda**

| Time        | What                                                                                                                                                                                  | Speakers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9:00-9:30   | Registration                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 9:30-10:00  | Institutional welcome, icebreaker, workshop objective and agenda.                                                                                                                     | <b>Tatiana Fernandez</b> , Head of Transformative Innovation, Economics Department, Generalitat de Catalunya.<br><b>Elvira Bisbe</b> , President, College of Physicians of Barcelona.<br><b>Mariana Mirabile</b> , Economist, OECD                                                                    |
| 10:00-10:30 | Setting the scene: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>why focus on mobility for better health</li> <li>how to transform the mobility system towards a healthier system</li> </ul> | <b>Carla Oliva Morell</b> , Opportunities Discovery Mechanism technician, RIS3CAT 2030, Research and Universities Department, Generalitat de Catalunya<br>President, Section of Climate Action and Planetary Health, College of Physicians of Barcelona.<br><b>Mariana Mirabile</b> , Economist, OECD |
| 11:00-11:30 | Coffee break                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 11:30-12:45 | Vision & communications efforts today                                                                                                                                                 | Breakout group discussions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 12:45-13:00 | Plenary discussion:<br>Did a shared vision emerge?<br>What surprised you?                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 13:00–13:15 | Do's and Don'ts on communications: what we know from science                                                                                                                          | <b>Mariana Mirabile</b> , Economist, OECD                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 13:15-14:00 | Lunch break                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 14:05-15:30 | Thinking ahead: towards a shared narrative & strategy                                                                                                                                 | Breakout group discussions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 15:30-16:00 | Wrapping up and next steps                                                                                                                                                            | <b>Tatiana Fernandez</b> , Head of Transformative Innovation, Economics Department, Generalitat de Catalunya                                                                                                                                                                                          |

## Vision & communications efforts today

The first set of exercises aimed to allow actors to get acquainted with each other and assess where they are today, in terms of their:

- i. vision of what a healthy and sustainable mobility system looks like;
- ii. reason for participating to the workshop; and
- iii. individual contribution in terms of communications to get to that vision.

Across all breakout groups, participants articulated, with ease, a shared vision of a healthy and sustainable mobility system. The envisioned system promotes active mobility, integrates public transport with urban planning, and ensures accessibility for all. Indicators of success include space distribution across modes, a modal share in which active and shared mobility account for the bulk of the trips, reduced travel distances by increasing proximity (e.g. 15-minute city), improved air quality, enhanced public health, and high user satisfaction. A healthy and sustainable mobility system is also one that, if not used, “does not harm” (intended in terms of air and noise pollution, fatalities and GHG emissions).

The shared vision that emerged from the groups was significantly different to the dominant car-centric narrative in OECD territories.<sup>[12],[3]</sup> Participants identified a car-centric narrative – and the lack of a compelling alternative narrative to engage citizens – as barriers to the transition to a healthier and more sustainable mobility system (see section on ‘short-term impacts’ for more on barriers to sustainable mobility policies).

Significant efforts are already on-going locally to advance towards a healthier and more sustainable mobility system. However, several participants struggled to articulate their contributions, indicating the need to articulate clearer roles and responsibilities. Contributions from participants included policy support, infrastructure planning with a focus on active and shared modes, research and teaching, and advocacy (including by healthcare professionals).

Many of the participants had actively participated in communications efforts aimed at promoting healthier mobility. These included public campaigns, press releases, social media outreach, educational programs, and collaborations with media and professional associations. Despite these efforts, challenges such as fragmentation, limited reach, and resistance from entrenched interests were noted. The exercises revealed synergies and gaps in current communications strategies, underscoring the potential for more coordinated and targeted efforts.

**Figure 4.3.**  
Workshop participants during the visioning exercise.



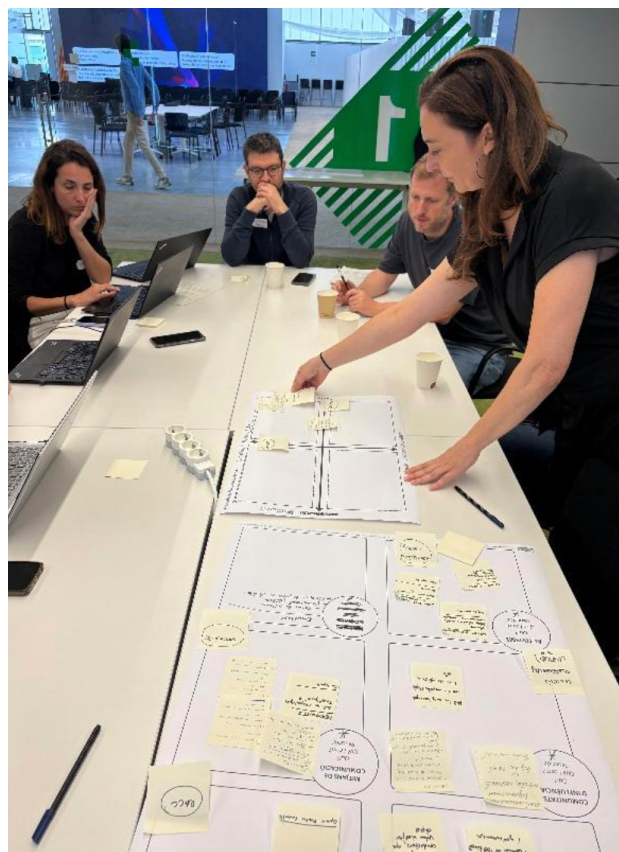
Source: Authors

## Thinking ahead: towards a shared narrative & strategy

In the previous exercises, participants articulated a shared vision of a healthy and sustainable mobility system and shared their individual (and/or organisational) contributions to advance towards such vision. The objective of the exercises in this section was for participants to explore what they could do together, and start imagining a coordinated communications strategy, building on science-based insights for effective communications shared in plenary (see Annex A). In this exercise, participants were asked to:

- i. identify key actors with agency to transform the system (or influence public acceptability of sustainable mobility policy), whom they could target— or use as messengers—in a shared communications strategy; and
- ii. develop a draft communications strategy, by selecting a maximum of 3 actors from the mapping above as targets, and specifying key messages, messengers, communications channels, and calls to action. With the objective that participants reflect on their role as communicators, they were asked to identify what each of them could concretely do to advance on such strategy.

Figure 4.4. Workshop participants during the Thinking ahead exercises



Source: Authors

Participants mapped actors based on their influence to transform the system and alignment with the vision described in the previous exercise. Most groups struggled to identify the key actors and position them along the axis (high-to-low influence, aligned or misaligned with vision). High-influence allies to accelerate sustainable mobility policy that could improve health included medical associations, state government, private companies fostering active and shared mobility, media outlets, and influencers, such as the Barcelona Football Team (football players were identified as influencers able to, for example, disassociate the use of private vehicles to the notion of status and power). Schools and patient associations were also identified as key actors but perceived as having lower influence on the system, while local business owners were perceived as having mid-influence and as allies by some groups, and resistant to change by others.

The perceptions on the level of influence of actors were not always aligned. For example, participants from medical associations saw themselves as having a lower level of influence than the level attributed by other group participants. There was also a difference in perception between participants from academia and participants working closely with the public, in terms of existing levels of public support and what forms of change appeared politically feasible. The focus also varied across groups. Some of the groups focused on actors with direct competences to transform the mobility system (e.g. Barcelona city hall), while others focused on identifying messengers that could increase public support for sustainable mobility policy (e.g. physicians). Several groups also suggested the need for spaces, such as “living labs”, for actors sharing the vision of a healthier and more sustainable mobility system to work together towards a shared narrative and strategy.

Communications-strategy-wise, key messages focused on health benefits of a mobility system with

more attractive active and shared mobility options. Messengers included physicians and influencers (e.g. Barcelona Football Club), with channels ranging from social media and press articles to public events and formats such as art-science exhibitions, ‘Adopt a Bike’ campaigns, and collaborations between unusual actors, for example, the Automobile Club (RACC in Catalan) and the Medical Emergency Services (SEM in Catalan).

## Short-term impacts of the workshop

The topic of mobility, health and communications was of interest to local interest-holders: 77 people registered for the workshop, and 53 people participated on the day of the event. In order to assess the impact of the discussions in terms of ecosystem building and mindset shifts, participants were invited to respond to a Mentimeter questionnaire at the beginning and at the end of the workshop, and to a feedback survey after the event. Additionally, three one-hour interviews were carried out with selected participants one month after the event.

At the beginning of the workshop, participants were asked to describe their main topic of interest and type of organisation (see Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2 above), assess their level of agreement for 17 statements (1=completely disagree, 7=completely agree), and share the main barrier, in their opinion, hindering the transition to a healthier and more sustainable mobility system. At the end of the workshop, the questionnaire repeated the questions asked at the beginning of the workshop and included two additional questions: a key word describing their experience during the day, and one thing they would do differently after the workshop.

A detailed analysis of the Mentimeter results, as well as the insights from the post-workshop interviews will be available on the Pathfinder Initiative Climate and Health Evidence Bank. The rest of this section describes the responses to qualitative questions in the Mentimeter.

Table 4.2 lists participants' responses to the question "What is another barrier to transitioning to a healthier mobility system that comes to mind? (just one)". The barriers that came out most often in participants' responses and during the plenary sessions included a low quality/reliability of public transport, the power of the automobile industry to influence policy efforts (e.g. via lobbying), fragmented governance and the dominance of a "car culture".

**Table 4.2. Barriers to the transition to a healthier and more sustainable mobility system**

| Category                                    | Barrier                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Institutional &amp; Governance</b>       | Political will / Lack of political courage<br>Governance / Silos<br>Fear of political leaders to promote change<br>Politics favouring the established and labelling sustainable alternatives as anti-system<br>Complexity and number of actors |
| <b>Economic &amp; Industrial Interests</b>  | Lobbies (automobile, cement, commercial)<br>Economic and political interests                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Cultural &amp; Behavioural</b>           | Car culture / Addiction to private vehicles<br>Individualism<br>Cultural inertia / Ability to change mindsets<br>Masculinity<br>Need more action and less debate                                                                               |
| <b>Infrastructure &amp; Service Quality</b> | Low public transport quality<br>Infrastructure saturation / Lack of infrastructure<br>Intermodality between cities<br>Cities designed for cars<br>Safety                                                                                       |
| <b>Knowledge &amp; Communications</b>       | Little knowledge of real benefits<br>Lack of public knowledge about health impacts<br>Education<br>Communications<br>Information overload<br>Fake news<br>Role models                                                                          |

Note: Extracts from selected responses. Duplicates or similar responses were merged

Source: Mentimeter questionnaire

At the end of the day, two additional questions were added to the Mentimeter questionnaire. The responses to these questions are summarised in Figure 4.5 and Table 4.3.

Figure 4.5. A key word describing participants' experience in the workshop



Note: Mentimeter visual output. It reflects responses to the question "Write a key word describing your experience today".  
Source: Post-workshop Mentimeter

**Table 4.3. One action after the workshop**

Extracts from response to the post-workshop Mentimeter question “*Mention one thing that you will do after this workshop that you would not have done*”.

| Category                       | One action after the workshop                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Alliances / Ecosystem building | Expand alliances                                                                                                                                      |
|                                | Join my neighbourhood association                                                                                                                     |
|                                | Connect with other actors to achieve more meaningful change                                                                                           |
|                                | Consider the medical community as an ally                                                                                                             |
|                                | Talk to people in the film industry to get them to incorporate messages about sustainable mobility                                                    |
|                                | Think about alliances beyond the sector where I work                                                                                                  |
|                                | Think about who my allies could be in implementing actions                                                                                            |
|                                | Make a clear proposal to the Department of Education                                                                                                  |
|                                | Try to get the message of sustainable mobility across to other agents, perhaps by trying to choose more influential ones                              |
| Communications                 | Always include health in my communications narratives                                                                                                 |
|                                | Rethink my way of communicating   More thoughtful communications   Prepare communications better   Think about the dos and don'ts [of communications] |
|                                | Communicate through images   Use inspiring images                                                                                                     |
|                                | Short message                                                                                                                                         |
|                                | Use more positive messages                                                                                                                            |
|                                | Think more about the interlocutor                                                                                                                     |
|                                | Focus messages on key actors when the opportunity arises                                                                                              |

Source: Post-workshop Mentimeter

## 5. Barcelona - second workshop

The second Barcelona workshop – *Health as a lever to advance decarbonisation* - was organised by the OECD and SharedAgendas.org, in collaboration with the Barcelona College of Physicians (Col·legi de Metges de Barcelona) and the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. It was held on 8 June 2026 at the Col·legi de Metges de Barcelona, and built on the concept of Shared Agendas (Box 5.1).

Building on the first Barcelona workshop, which focused on developing a shared narrative around health and sustainable mobility, the second workshop extended the discussion to a broader set of urban transformation domains. The workshop brought together interest-holders working on urban transformation domains linked to decarbonisation, including mobility, food systems, school environments, ageing and care, housing, public space, urban planning and construction. The aim was to explore whether health framing could support communications across these domains and help make visible both the costs of maintaining current patterns and the benefits of moving in new directions.

The starting point was that many decarbonisation measures are difficult to discuss when they are framed mainly through emissions, targets or technical interventions. Changes in mobility, food, buildings, care, schools or urban space affect routines, practices, identities and institutional responsibilities. By starting from health and wellbeing, the workshop connected decarbonisation with how people move, eat, age, care, learn, live and use public space.

Image credit:  
Edoardo Umanzor/Pexels.com



### Box 5.1. Shared Agendas for health-based climate action: governance, learning and collective action

The workshops in Barcelona and Dublin showed that many organisations already share a common ambition: healthier, fairer and lower-carbon cities. Yet these actors—public administrations, health professionals, researchers, planners, civil society organisations, mobility practitioners and communicators—often pursue this ambition through separate mandates, funding streams and communications efforts. The result is that actions with complementary objectives are frequently implemented in parallel rather than as a coordinated transformation.

A Shared Agenda is a structured, place-based approach for organising collective action around a complex challenge (Table 5.1). Rather than creating another plan, it helps interest-holders

develop a shared vision of the change they want to achieve, identify the system conditions that enable or constrain progress, and coordinate complementary efforts across sectors. It provides a governance framework for aligning policies, communications, investments, research and community initiatives around a common direction of change. By clarifying how different contributions reinforce one another and where collaboration can remove implementation barriers, it enables initiatives to be organised as a systemic portfolio rather than as isolated projects. Its value lies in the interaction between these complementary efforts: infrastructure creates opportunities, communications builds understanding and legitimacy, evidence informs decision making, and partnerships sustain implementation.

Table 5.1. How Shared Agendas can help

| Challenge                              | How a Shared Agenda can help                                                                               |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Fragmented initiatives</b>          | Aligns projects, policies and investments around a common direction of change.                             |
| <b>Separate narratives</b>             | Develops a shared story linking health, climate, mobility and quality of life.                             |
| <b>Limited public support</b>          | Coordinates trusted messengers, particularly health professionals, with infrastructure and policy changes. |
| <b>Weak cross-sector collaboration</b> | Creates governance arrangements for joint planning, learning and decision-making.                          |
| <b>Uncertain implementation</b>        | Builds portfolios of complementary actions and adapts them through monitoring and learning.                |

For embedding health within climate action, Shared Agendas provide a practical framework to strengthen collaboration across sectors, improve the coherence of communications, support locally tailored implementation strategies and create continuous learning processes. By linking health framing with governance, communications and coordinated action, Shared Agendas can help translate ambitious decarbonisation goals into tangible improvements in people's daily lives.<sup>[13], [14], [15]</sup>

Source: Authors

Figure 5.1 describes workshop participants based on their main area of interest. The workshop brought together actors working on health, climate action, housing, communications, mobility and other fields.

Figure 5.2 provides an overview of participants based on organisation type. Organisation types included academia, civil society organisations, private sector actors, regional and local public administrations, international organisations and others.

Figure 5.1. Participants' main area of interest

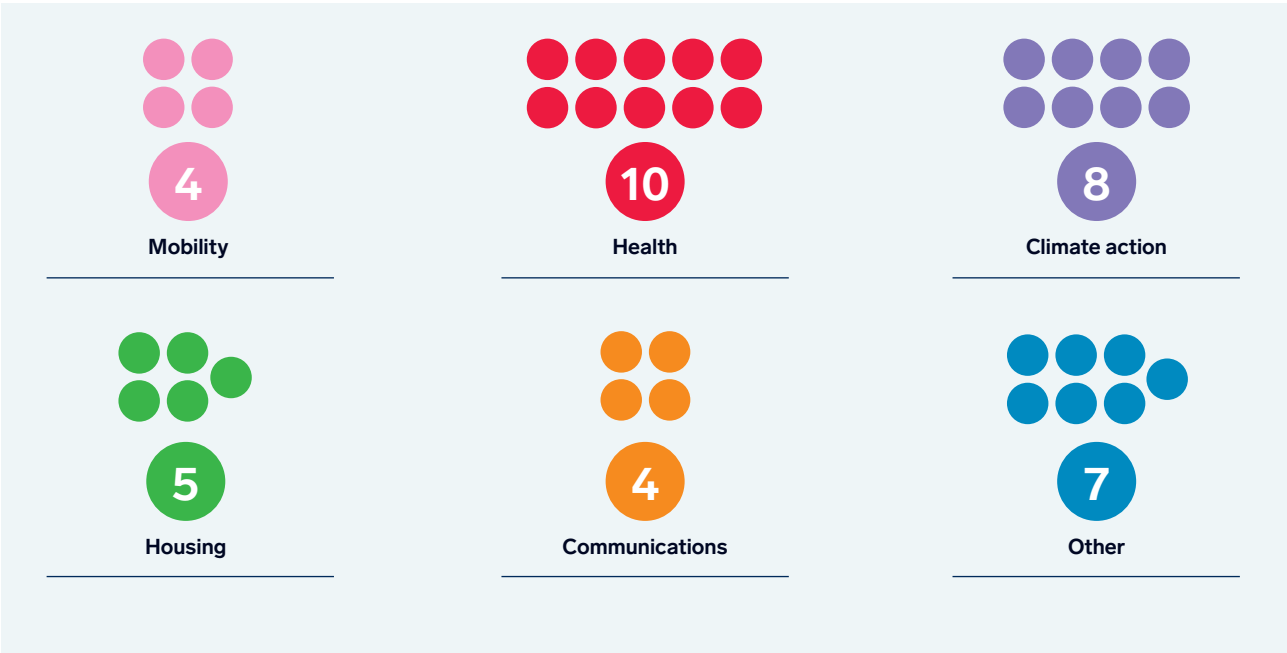


Figure 5.2. Participants' organisation type

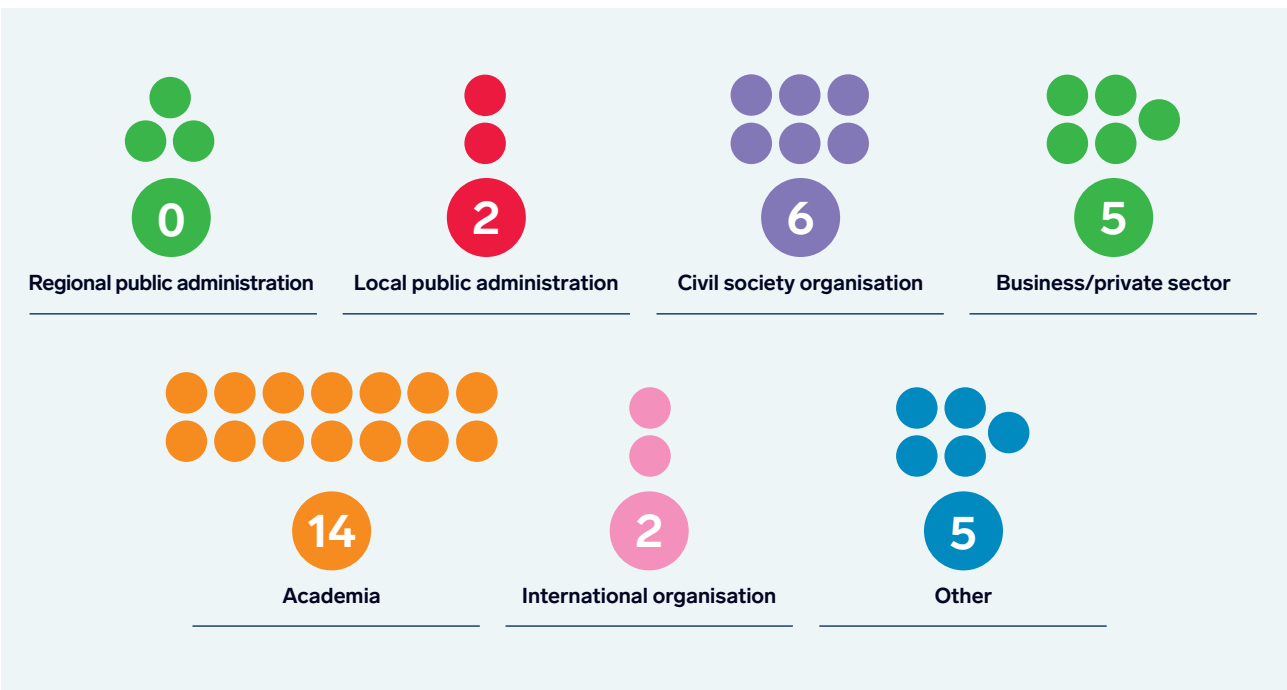




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Regimantas Danys/Pexels.com

## Summary of discussions

Overall, the workshop confirmed that health can provide a useful entry point for discussing urban decarbonisation, working in two complementary ways. First, it can bring hidden, normalised or externalised health costs into public discussion. Second, it can strengthen support for new directions by showing how change can improve everyday life. Participants acknowledged the importance of both functions but consistently emphasised the latter. They perceived greater communicative potential in showing the benefits of transformative change than in highlighting the harms associated with maintaining the status quo. When asked where health-related communications offered the greatest opportunities, three-quarters of participants saw health-related communications playing a key role in facilitating emerging transformations, while one-quarter saw more potential in making visible the costs of current dynamics.

The workshop also shed light on a gap between the perceived potential of communications and its current contribution. Via a Mentimeter questionnaire, participants rated the potential of effective health-related communications to transform urban systems at 3.3 on a scale from 1 to 4, while they rated the current

impact of communications strategies in relation to that potential at 2.3. This gap suggests that communications is seen as relevant but still underdeveloped in relation to what it could contribute. Several patterns emerged across groups when examining the impacts of current systems on health and potential alternatives. Participants identified costs that are present in daily life but are rarely treated as part of the public debate on decarbonisation. These included stress, loneliness, loss of autonomy, mental health, heat exposure, poor air quality, unhealthy food environments, loss of biodiversity, fragmented care and poor-quality built environments. In most groups, participants linked health opportunities to positive changes in the conditions that organise daily life. Opportunities were associated with more liveable neighbourhoods, stronger community networks, better public spaces, healthier food environments, more accessible care, improved indoor environmental quality and more resilient territorial systems.

Table 5.2 describes the workshop agenda. The rest of this section provides insights from the multidisciplinary roundtable and the group work.

Table 5.2. Workshop agenda

| Time        | What                                                                        | Speakers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9:30- 10:00 | Registration and welcome coffee                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 10:00-10:25 | Institutional welcome and presentation of the workshop                      | <b>Elvira Bisbe</b> , President, College of Physicians of Barcelona<br><b>Xavier Ariño</b> , Head of Institutional Projects, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona<br><b>Cynthia Echave</b> , co-founder SharedAgendas.org<br><b>Mariana Mirabile</b> , Economist, OECD                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 10:25-11:00 | Setting the scene: Multidisciplinary testimony roundtable                   | <b>Elena Codina</b> , Barcelona College of Physicians / Catalan Society of Paediatrics<br><b>Helen Cole</b> , Institute of Environmental Science and Technology- Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona<br><b>Jordi Mazón</b> , Viladecans City Council<br><b>Dirk Madriles</b> , Singulars<br><b>Carme Miralles</b> , Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona<br><b>David Dalmau</b> , Mútua Terrassa / University of Barcelona Chair on Climate Change and Health. Facilitated by Carla Oliva, College of Physicians and SharedAgendas.org |
| 11:00-13:00 | Transformation tensions and design of health-related communications actions | Breakout group discussions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 13:00-13:45 | Lunch break                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 13:45-14:30 | Exchange between groups                                                     | Group exchange and individual responses through Mentimeter                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 14:30-15:30 | Discussion of results and identification of action opportunities            | Plenary discussion moderated by Ferran Dalmau, SharedAgendas.org                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

## Setting the scene: multidisciplinary testimonies

The workshop opened with a multidisciplinary testimony roundtable. The speakers brought perspectives from paediatrics, planetary health, urban policy, food production, mobility, climate change and health. They were asked to respond to two questions: first, what are the health and wellbeing costs of continuing to organise everyday systems as they currently function; and second, how communications can help place health at the centre of public debate and decision-making, and what opportunities this could open.

Across the interventions, health was presented as a way to make the consequences of current systems more tangible. The discussion pointed to costs linked to air pollution, heat exposure, sedentary lifestyles,

food environments, housing conditions, social isolation, care, children's autonomy, public space and territorial resilience. It also highlighted that these costs are often borne unevenly and may remain invisible when policy debates focus mainly on emissions, infrastructure or sectoral objectives.

At the same time, the roundtable presented health as a way to communicate net-zero transformations in concrete terms, as placing health at the centre of public debate can help connect decarbonisation with people's daily conditions and choices. This framing prepared the ground for the group work, where participants examined specific tensions and explored how communications could make both costs and opportunities more visible.

Figure 5.3. Multidisciplinary Round Table



Source: Authors

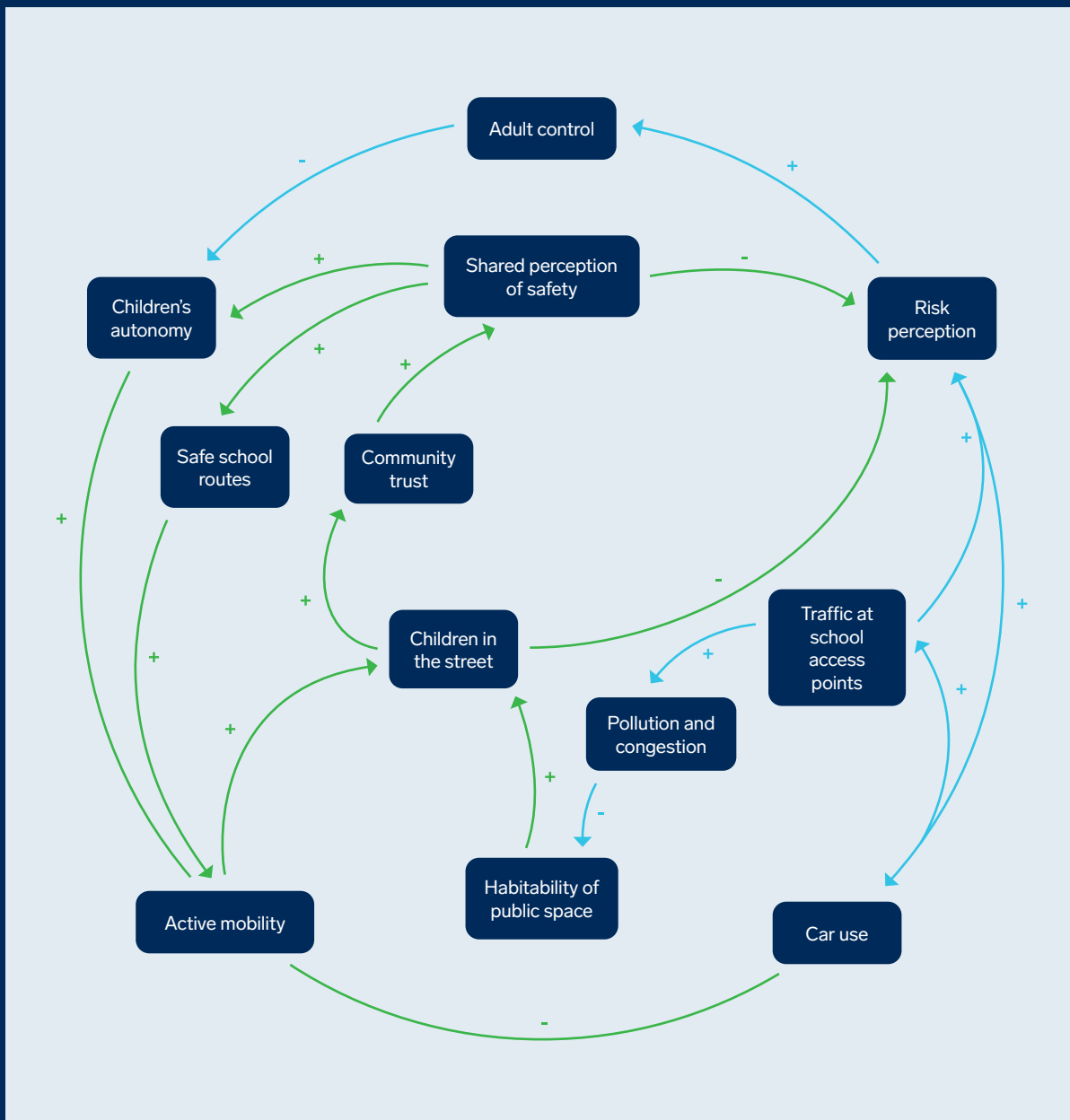
## Transformation tensions and communications actions

The main group exercise was structured around transformation tensions identified in Shared Agenda processes (see Box 5.1) developed in Catalonia. In this context, a transformation tension describes a recurring dynamic in which an established approach continues to provide important value, yet it also creates costs, or constrains progress towards other objectives. Alternative approaches could generate greater overall value but require changes in the surrounding conditions—including institutions, infrastructure, incentives or social norms—to become feasible and sustainable. For example, in interventions to improve school environments and their surroundings, safety concerns often lead to control, supervision and restrictive actions. These responses can increase perceived safety, but they also reduce children's autonomy and limit the positive health impacts of allowing children to move freely around the neighbourhood. The transformation tension does not lie in balancing safety against autonomy. Rather, it is about how to change the surrounding conditions — such as

traffic management around school entrances, pick-up and drop-off routines, street design in front of schools, and rules about independent mobility — so that children can be both safe and autonomous at the same time.

Participants worked in groups using polarity loops to explore transformation tensions in cities and mobility, food systems, school environments, and ageing and care (Figure 5.4). Polarity loops illustrate transformation tensions with the objective to foster structured discussions on the value of established practices, the health and well-being costs that arise when these practices dominate, the potential benefits of alternative approaches, and the conditions needed for these alternatives to become visible, viable and actionable. In the workshop, the loops were also used to help participants identify communications strategies that could reduce barriers to change and support the transition towards healthier and more sustainable systems.

Figure 5.4. An example of a polarity loop used during the workshop



Note: One of the polarity loop diagrams used during the workshop to explore complex system dynamics. Green arrows represent relationships that reinforce desirable outcomes, while orange arrows represent dynamics that reinforce undesirable outcomes or constrain progress. The discussion around this loop focused on the tension between protecting children and enabling their autonomy in school environments. Participants examined how adult control responds to legitimate safety concerns but can also reduce children's independent mobility, active travel and use of public space. The discussion then turned to the conditions that would need to change — including traffic management, street design, school access arrangements and community confidence — so that safety and autonomy could be strengthened together.

## The groups followed four steps:

- i. Participants analysed the transformation tension represented in the loop. They discussed which elements reproduce the existing situation, which elements could support better outcomes, and which parts of the loop were most relevant for health, wellbeing, quality of life, resilience and decarbonisation.
- ii. Participants identified health-related costs and opportunities. They discussed the costs associated with the continuation of existing patterns, such as air pollution, heat exposure, sedentary lifestyles, poor housing conditions, social isolation, fragmented care, unhealthy food environments, vulnerability or loss of autonomy. They also identified the health and wellbeing opportunities that could emerge if the dynamics evolved in the desired direction.
- iii. Participants discussed potential communications interventions. They identified the parts of the loop where communications with a health framing could help show the consequences of the current situation, reinforce opportunities or influence how transformation was understood by different actors. Some interventions focused on children's autonomy, outdoor time, play and wellbeing in school environments and their surroundings. Others on the need to connect the notions of ecosystem health and green infrastructure with urban planning, as well as increase coordination between municipal and community actors. In the food-related groups, participants proposed actions linked to local food access, healthier food routines, trust, community networks, public procurement and food waste prevention.
- iv. Each group developed possible communications actions for the transformation tension analysed. Some groups proposed actions clearly focused on communications, such as narratives, campaigns, engagement processes, targeted messages or communications materials. Other groups interpreted the task more broadly and proposed actions related to policy, governance, service adaptation, coordination or implementation. This was partly linked to the composition of the workshop: participants came from health, climate action, urban policy, housing, academia, civil society and other fields, but there were relatively few participants with a specific communications profile.

Figure 5.5. Workshop participants during group work



Source: Authors

After the exercise, participants were asked about the health costs associated with maintaining current dynamics and the health opportunities associated with alternative responses. Participants linked existing dynamics (including routines, practices and infrastructures) to physical and mental health impacts, environmental exposure, inequalities and reduced resilience (Table 5.3). They associated alternative responses with more active routines, stronger social relations, healthier environments, greater autonomy and more resilient territorial systems.

**Table 5.3. Health costs and opportunities identified by participants**

| Dimension                             | Health costs associated with maintaining current dynamics              | Health opportunities associated with emerging transformations                                      |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Physical health                       | Disease burden; sedentary lifestyles; exposure to environmental risks  | More active routines; cleaner air; healthier food environments                                     |
| Mental health and wellbeing           | Stress; loneliness; lower quality of life                              | Greater wellbeing; stronger social relations; more supportive neighbourhoods                       |
| Urban and environmental conditions    | Air pollution; heat exposure; noise; poor indoor environmental quality | Greener public spaces; healthier housing; reduced exposure to heat                                 |
| Inequalities and autonomy             | Unequal exposure to risks; accessibility barriers; reduced autonomy    | Greater autonomy; more accessible care; stronger community support                                 |
| Territorial and ecological resilience | Biodiversity loss; supply failures; reduced resilience in crises       | Stronger local food circuits; community food initiatives; greater ecological and social resilience |

Source: Mentimeter questionnaire

After reviewing the results produced by the different groups, participants selected the three actions they considered most feasible and the three actions they considered to have the greatest potential impact. Table 5.4 summarises the prioritised actions. The comparison between the feasibility and the potential impact is relevant. The actions perceived as most feasible tended to build on existing communications practices, institutional instruments or community-based initiatives. The actions perceived as having greater potential

impact pointed to broader changes in everyday environments, local food systems, neighbourhood relations and educational ecosystems. This suggests that participants saw communications as a means to make concrete opportunities for change more visible and connected with health, wellbeing and quality of life benefits. It also confirms the need for a second step in which communications professionals help translate these transformation-oriented actions into more precise communications strategies.

Table 5.4. Prioritised actions identified during the workshop

| Working group                              | Actions considered most feasible                                                                      | Actions considered to have the greatest potential impact                                          |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Cities and mobility                        | Health and housing communications; neighbourhood life as health; teleworking for health and wellbeing | Neighbourhood life as health; teleworking for health and wellbeing                                |
| Food, school environments, ageing and care | Local food and health; network as health; public procurement for food system transformation           | Healthy and sustainable food communities; local food and health; connected educational ecosystems |

Source: Mentimeter questionnaire

Figure 5.6. Participants discussing Mentimeter results



Source: Authors

### Short-term impacts of the workshop

The short-term impacts of the workshop were assessed through Mentimeter questions answered during the session, and a feedback form sent to participants after the workshop. In the Mentimeter, participants were asked to identify one thing they would do after the session that they would not have done before. As shown in Table 5.5, responses

suggest that the workshop generated interest in building new relationships, communicating health and environmental issues in a more coordinated manner, exploring neighbourhood-level action, engaging with Shared Agenda processes, identifying health and built-environment influencers, and learning from successful urbanism and health policies.

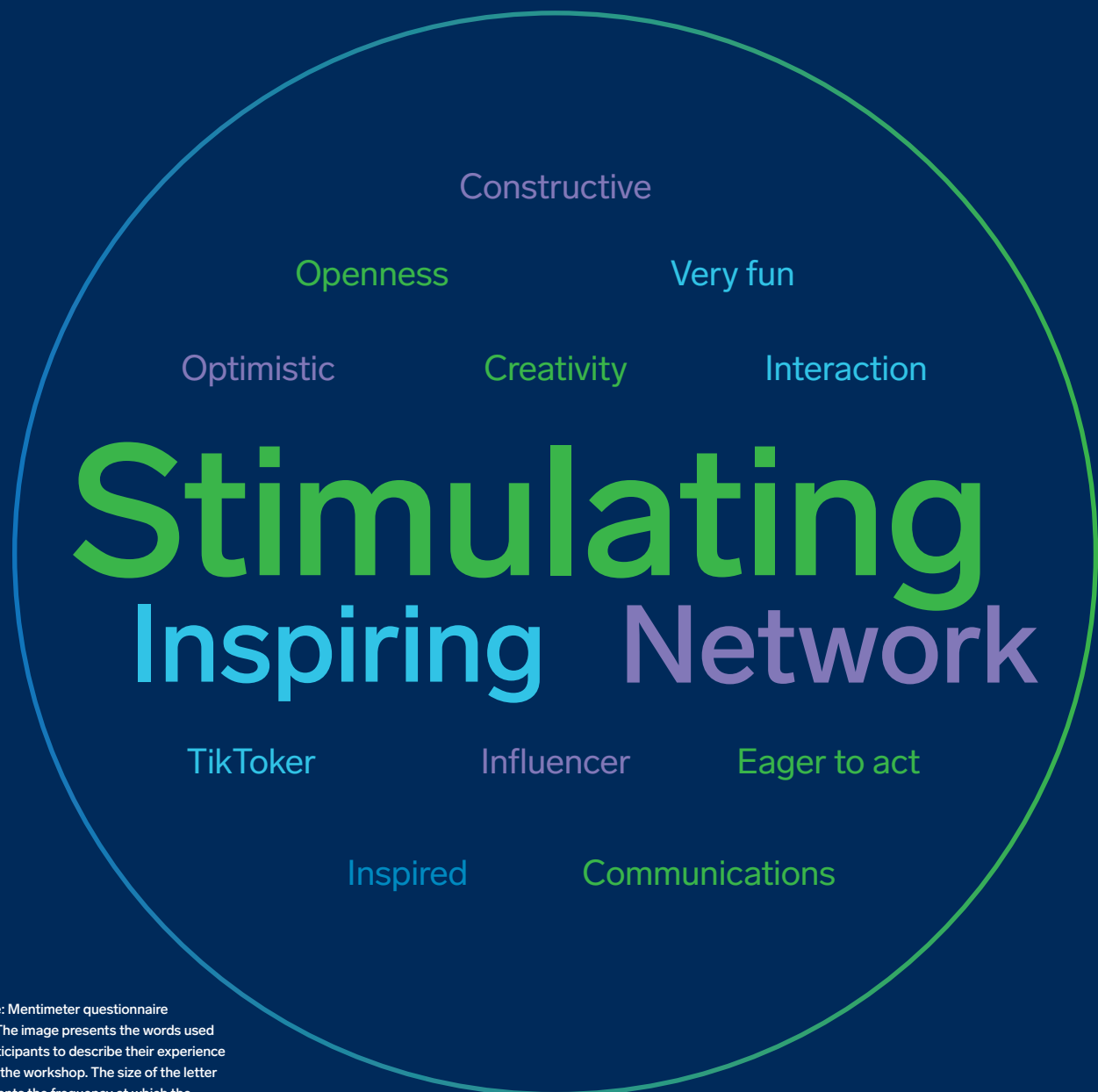
Table 5.5 One action after the workshop

| Areas of change          | Examples of intended actions                                                                                                                                   |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| New relationships        | Follow up with people met during the workshop; connect more often with actors from other fields; engage with public administrations and Shared Agenda projects |
| Communications practice  | Communicate health benefits more clearly; link health with environmental and climate issues; strengthen public awareness work                                  |
| Neighbourhood action     | Take part in neighbourhood life; explore community-building activities; promote neighbourhood-based initiatives                                                |
| Learning from practice   | Learn from successful urbanism and health policies; replicate co-creation of health narratives in research settings                                            |
| Messengers and influence | Identify health and built-environment influencers; connect with actors able to communicate health determinants                                                 |

Source: Mentimeter questionnaire

Participants were also asked to provide one word describing their experience (Figure 5.7). The most frequent words included stimulating, inspiring, network, creativity, communications, constructive, optimistic and reflective. These responses suggest that the workshop was perceived not only as an analytical exercise, but also as a space for connection, experimentation and practical imagination.

Figure 5.7. A key word describing participants' experience in the workshop



Source: Mentimeter questionnaire

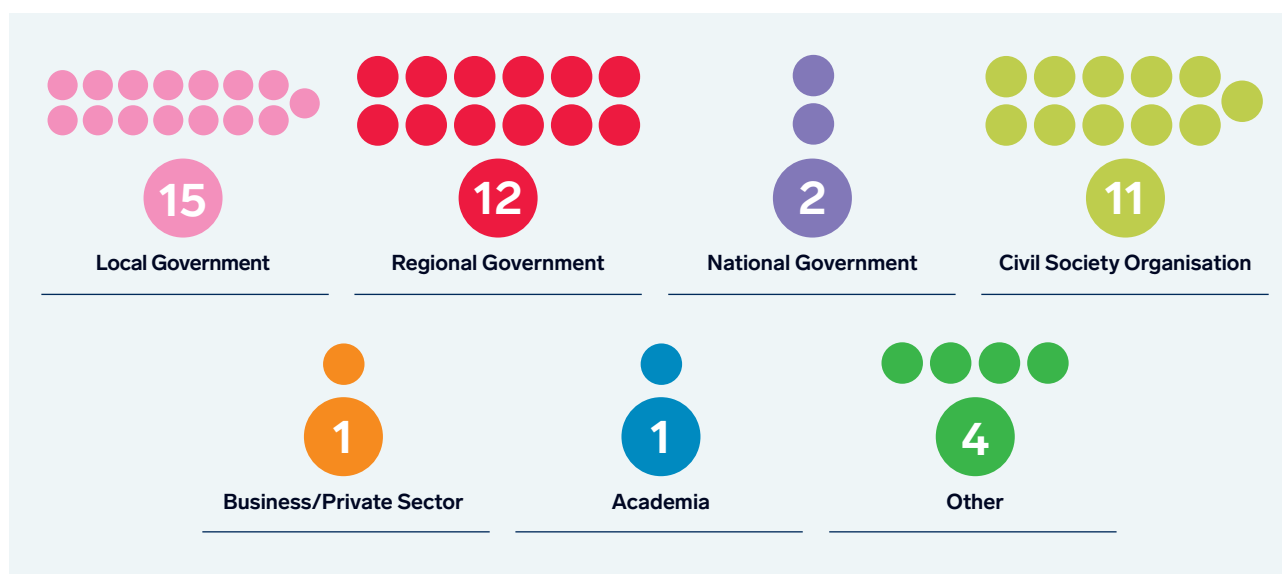
Note: The image presents the words used by participants to describe their experience during the workshop. The size of the letter represents the frequency at which the words were mentioned.

Participants' feedback to the workshop was generally positive. On a scale from 1 to 7, the average satisfaction score was 5.9, the perceived usefulness of the ideas and tools for daily work averaged 5.3, and the usefulness of the group exercises averaged 5.5 (sample = 15 responses). Open responses highlighted the value of addressing health from different perspectives, connecting planetary health and decarbonisation, using systemic thinking and polarity loops, and recognising the importance of language, narratives and communications in making health costs and opportunities more visible. Participants particularly valued the diversity of profiles, the interdisciplinary discussions and the opportunity to work across sectors, and highlighted the need to involve more communications professionals in similar processes moving forward.

## 6. Dublin workshop

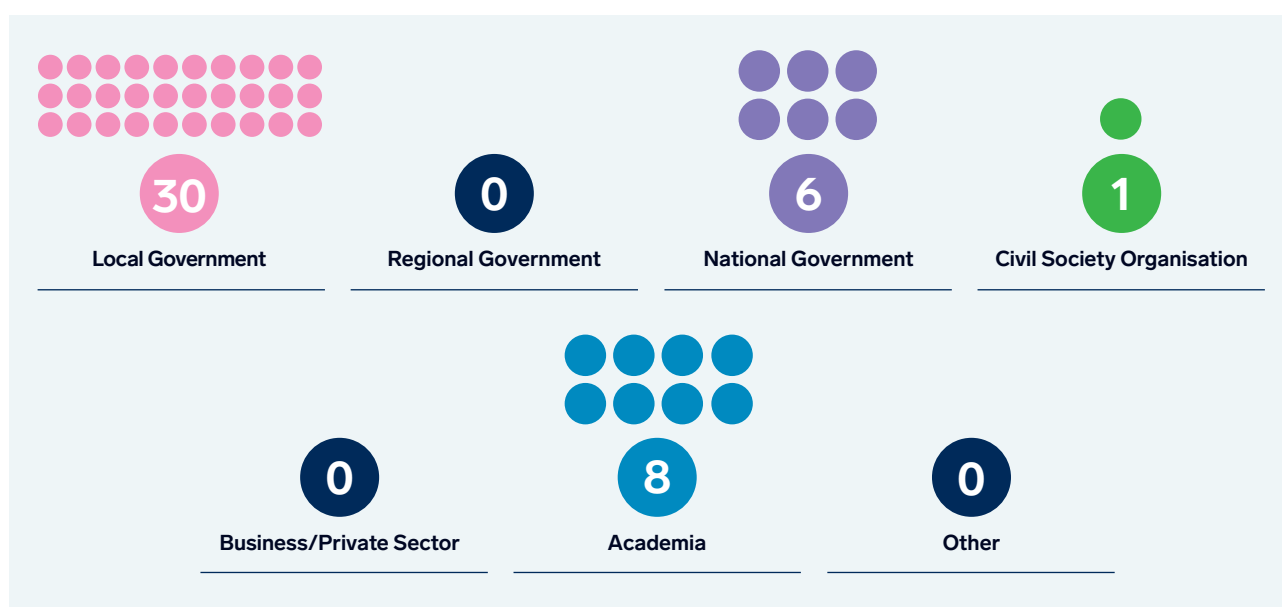
In Dublin, the workshop was hosted by the Dublin City Council Public Realm Working Group, a multi-disciplinary, cross departmental group aimed at addressing challenges in the public realm. It was co-organised with the Dublin Metropolitan Climate Action Regional Office (CARO) and the Dublin Technological University (TU Dublin).

Figure 6.1. Participant's area of focus



Note: Other include: water, societal mobilisation, and commercial determinants of health

Figure 6.2. Participant's organisation type



## Summary of discussions

Overall, participants agreed on the need for further communications efforts to advance sustainable mobility and the transformation of the public realm. They identified a lack of resources and skills to proceed in that direction. Communications efforts were perceived as coming on top of an already charged workload, and resources to engage experts on the subject are often not available locally.

Discussions revealed that communications efforts often focus on “obvious interest-holders” and rarely engage health professionals and community champions such as pharmacists and physicians. Engaging these actors was identified as an opportunity moving forward.

Language emerged as a barrier to effective communications, with technical terms like ‘mobility’ failing to resonate with the public. The need to reframe health as wellbeing, linking it to community and emotional benefits rather than disease prevention, was also discussed.

While many of the participants agreed on the potential of health arguments to strengthen mobility policy support, this potential was questioned, as some participants saw convenience, safety, and time constraints as the key drivers of transport choices, rather than health considerations. Participants also noted systemic barriers in integrating mobility and health, including the absence of statutory obligations to do so, and limited budgets for communications.

Table 6.1 describes the workshop agenda. The rest of this section provides insights from breakout group discussions throughout the day.

Image credit:  
Lauren Boswell/Pexels.com



Table 6.1. Dublin Workshop Agenda

| Time                                           | Session                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Speakers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9:00-9:30                                      | Registration & welcome coffee                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Morning session (start at 9:30 sharp)          | Institutional introduction                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Edel Kelly</b> , Head of Transportation Planning, Dublin City Council                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|                                                | <b>Workshop objectives &amp; scene setting</b><br>The links between mobility and health<br>How to transform the mobility system towards a healthier and more sustainable system<br>Framing matters for public policy                                                                                        | <b>Lorraine D'Arcy</b> , Sustainability Action Research & Innovation Lead, TU Dublin<br><br><b>Mariana Mirabile</b> , Economist, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)<br><br><b>Norah Campbell</b> , Associate Professor, Trinity Business School |
|                                                | <b>Communications efforts today towards a healthier and more sustainable mobility system</b><br>Participants will be invited to reflect on current communications efforts to advance towards a healthier and more sustainable mobility system.                                                              | Breakout groups' discussion                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|                                                | <b>The fundamentals of excellent communications: The Science of What Makes People Care</b><br>An interactive presentation of a science-based framework to approach communications challenges based on six core principles from behavioural, cognitive and social sciences.                                  | <b>Ann Searight Christiano</b> , Director of the Center for Public Interest Communications, University of Florida                                                                                                                                                          |
|                                                | <b>Lunch break</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Afternoon session (end at 16.30 at the latest) | The fundamentals of excellent communications: The Science of What Makes People Care (continues)                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>Ann Searight Christiano</b> , Director of the Center for Public Interest Communications, University of Florida                                                                                                                                                          |
|                                                | <b>Applying the fundamentals of excellent communications to selected public realm projects</b><br>Participants will be invited to apply the principles presented in the previous session to accelerate the implementation of selected public realm projects (e.g. by increasing their public acceptability) | Breakout groups' discussion                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|                                                | <b>Wrap up &amp; next steps</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>Edel Kelly</b> , Head of Transportation Planning, Dublin City Council                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

## Communications efforts today

The first exercise fostered a reflection on current communications efforts to advance towards a healthier and more sustainable mobility system. Three plenary interventions provided inputs to the exercise, including presentations on i) the link between the mobility system and health outcomes, by Lorraine D'Arcy (TU Dublin); ii) a discussion on the importance of the public realm transformation to transition towards a healthier mobility system, by Mariana Mirabile (OECD); and iii) a keynote on the importance of framing to shape policies' public support, by Norah Campbell (Trinity Business School).

The exercise revealed that most communications efforts target familiar actors such as local communities, residents, and local authorities. Participants commonly reported focusing on safety, infrastructure improvements, and modal shift benefits. Health arguments were seldom used, and health actors were rarely considered as allies or targeted audiences.

Engaging interest-holders such as national policymakers and media in communications efforts was seen as a struggle due to resource constraints and unclear protocols. Simplifying technical language, overcoming public perceptions of conflicting agendas, and the development of communications skills within local administrations were also identified as barriers to effective communications of sustainable mobility and public realm transformation efforts.

Despite these challenges, participants demonstrated strong commitment to early engagement and recognised the value of champions and diverse perspectives in shaping public opinion.

## Thinking ahead: towards a shared narrative & strategy

In the previous exercises, participants reflected on communications efforts currently taking place as part of their role or within their own team or organisation. The objective of the exercises in this section was to encourage participants to explore potential areas for collaboration and begin envisioning a coordinated communications strategy, considering the value of adopting a health-oriented framing.

Participants were asked to imagine being the communications task force for one of three on-going public realm projects in Dublin, with the task to draft a communications strategy to increase the public acceptability of the project. The public realm projects used as case studies were Grow College Green, the Isolation Hospital Revitalisation, and Vernon Avenue Active Travel Scheme (see Annex B for a brief description of each of these projects).

As an input to the exercise, Ann Searight Christiano, Director of the Centre for Public Interest Communications of the University of Florida, introduced science-based insights for effective communications. These insights are summarised in Annex A and were shared beyond this workshop via a webinar co-organised with the EU Net Zero Cities Platform.

### Similarly to the workshop in Barcelona, participants were asked to proceed in two steps:

- i. to identify key actors to target– or use as messengers –to increase the project's public acceptability
- ii. to develop a first draft of a communications strategy, by selecting one actor from the mapping exercise above, and specify key messages, messengers, communications channels, and calls to action. Participants were also asked to identify resources available and needs for this strategy to be implemented.

Figure 6.3 Workshop participants during the ‘thinking ahead’ exercises



Most groups found it relatively easy to identify key actors to target. Selected actors included local residents, community groups, and disabled persons' organisations (DPO), chosen for their influence and ability to mobilise public support.

While health arguments (often focused on air quality and noise reduction) were more present in the drafted strategies than in the communications efforts identified in the previous exercise, discussions revealed hesitations around prioritising health as a central message to trigger sustainable mobility choices (and, thus, support for public realm transformations in this sense). Some participants argued that time budgets and comfort are biggest drivers of mobility choices than health. Other participants questioned the added value of health arguments to increase public support for sustainable mobility policies, without first redefining

health more broadly; moving beyond the understanding of health as the treatment of ill-health and injury, toward the notion of prevention through the creation of healthy living environments.

Most of the groups emphasised the importance of storytelling, of visuals designed to trigger emotions, and of experiential engagement (e.g., pop-up events, immersive installations) as key elements of the communications strategy. Similarly to the previous exercise, key challenges identified included managing diverse expectations, securing funding, developing communications skills within teams and addressing media scepticism. Opportunities identified included leveraging local champions, developing case studies to showcase good communications practices, and embedding communications expertise in design teams and budgets from the project on-set.

## Short-term impacts of the workshop

Participants of the workshop remained engaged throughout the day and appreciated the opportunity to reflect on communications and the link between mobility, climate and health arguments, a link that was new to some of them. 76 people registered for the workshop, and 55 people participated on the day of the event.<sup>2</sup>

As for the Barcelona workshop, participants were invited to respond to a Mentimeter questionnaire at the beginning and at the end of the workshop. While the same overall framework was used, the OECD and Pathfinder teams revised the Mentimeter questions to improve clarity for the Dublin workshop compared to the workshop in Catalonia. Participants were also invited to complete a feedback survey after the event,

and five one-hour interviews were carried out with selected participants one month after the event.

A detailed analysis of the Mentimeter results, as well as the insights from the post-workshop interviews will be available on the Pathfinder Initiative Climate and Health Evidence Bank. The rest of this section describes the responses to qualitative questions in the Mentimeter.

Table 6.2 lists participants' responses to the question "What is another<sup>3</sup> barrier to transitioning to a healthier mobility system that comes to mind? (just one)". The barriers that came out most often in participants' responses and during the plenary sessions included a low quality/reliability of public transport, a "car culture" and limited resources or communications skills to deal with such "culture".

**Table 6.2. Barriers to the transition to a healthier and more sustainable mobility system**

| Category                                    | Revised Barrier                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Infrastructure &amp; Service Quality</b> | Insufficient public realm space for e-bikes and e-scooters                      |
|                                             | Lack of viable alternatives to private vehicles and unreliable public transport |
|                                             | Long travel distances                                                           |
|                                             | Poor public transport reliability and frequency                                 |
|                                             | Perceived lack of safety                                                        |
| <b>Cultural &amp; Behavioural</b>           | Car-centric culture/mindsets                                                    |
|                                             | Perceived convenience of car travel                                             |
|                                             | Public resistance/apathy to change                                              |
|                                             | Negative perceptions/attitudes of active travel (effort, weather, safety)       |
|                                             | Long engagement time required for behavioural change                            |
| <b>Institutional &amp; Governance</b>       | Institutional inefficiency                                                      |
|                                             | Insufficient financial resources                                                |
|                                             | Lack of cross-government understanding                                          |
|                                             | Lack of political will                                                          |
|                                             | Over-reliance on Greater Dublin region                                          |
|                                             | Logistical and administrative barriers                                          |
| <b>Communications</b>                       | Communications silos                                                            |
|                                             | Lack of understanding of health impacts of mobility                             |
|                                             | Negative messaging around sustainable modes                                     |
|                                             | Ineffective communications to support mindset shifts                            |
|                                             | Insufficient resources for creative engagement and storytelling                 |
|                                             | Insufficient communications budgets                                             |
|                                             | Lack of recognition for communications resourcing and upskilling                |
|                                             | Media bias driven by car advertising revenue                                    |

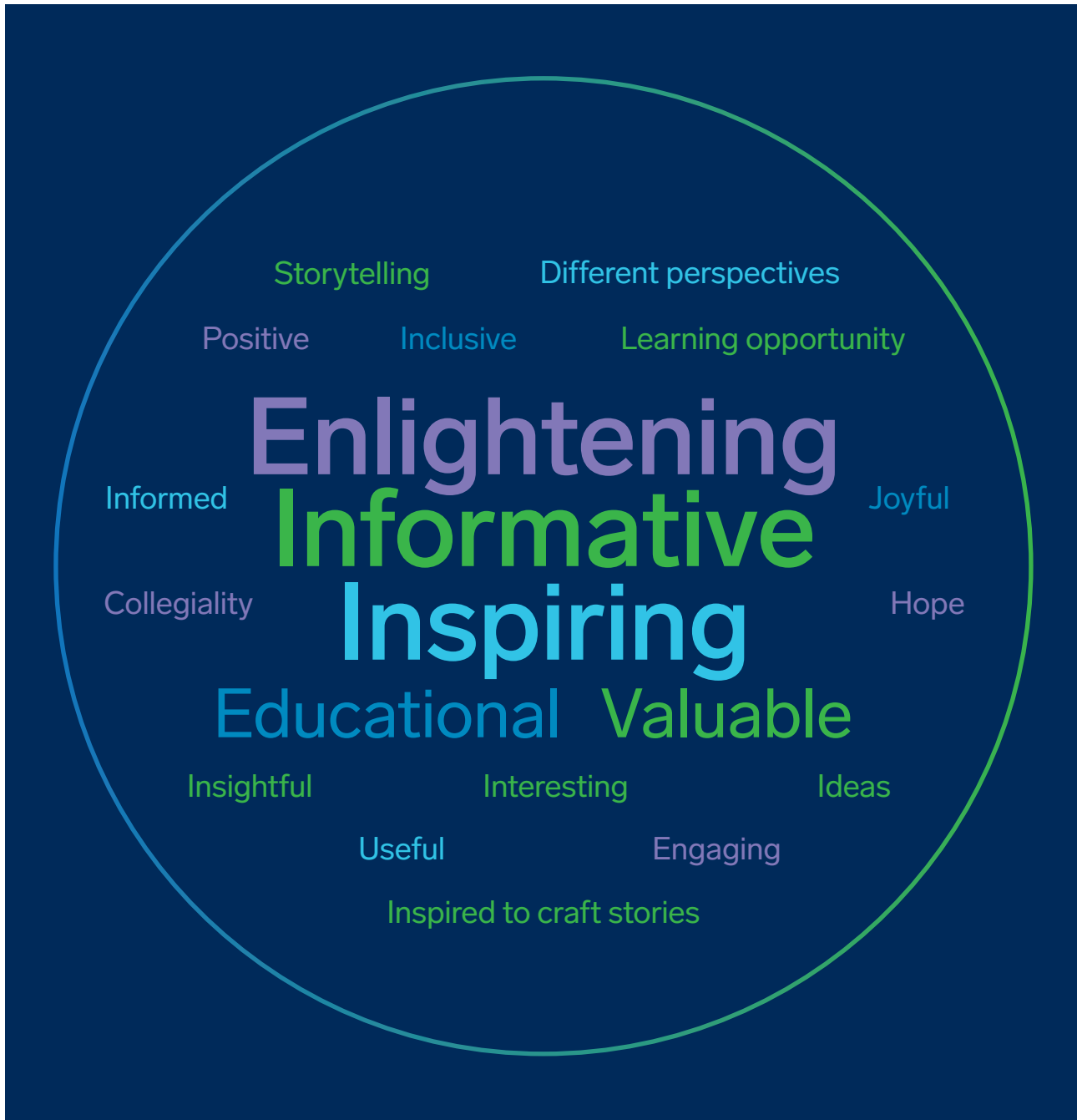
Note: Duplicates or similar responses were merged.  
Source: Mentimeter questionnaire

<sup>2</sup>Eight of which were part of the facilitation team, and two of which were part of the Pathfinder team.

<sup>3</sup>Previous to this question, participants were asked to share their level of agreement with the following statement: "A car-centric narrative – linking private vehicles to freedom, status, etc – is a barrier to transitioning towards a healthier mobility system."

At the end of the day, two additional questions were added to the Mentimeter questionnaire. The responses to these questions are summarised in Figure 6.4 and Table 6.3 below.

Figure 6.4. A key word describing participants' experience in the workshop



Source: Post-workshop Mentimeter

Table 6.3. One action after the workshop

| Category                                                      | Actions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1. Strengthening Communications Practices &amp; Skills</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improve communications and communications skills</li> <li>- Think differently about how I communicate my projects</li> <li>- Be more conscious of visual language</li> <li>- Use emotions more deliberately as a communications tool</li> <li>- Assert stronger framing for projects</li> <li>- Apply better framing and narrative techniques</li> <li>- Use health as a more prominent lever for promoting active travel</li> </ul>                                                                                                                            |
| <b>2. Applying Framing &amp; Storytelling Techniques</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Integrate storytelling more consistently into communications</li> <li>- Try to tell better stories</li> <li>- Increase stories created by students and give them more control</li> <li>- Evoke the emotion behind the project</li> <li>- Reframe project narratives with positive messaging</li> <li>- Frame narratives with a stronger focus on health</li> <li>- Storytelling of successful implementation</li> <li>- Make use of the communications framework</li> </ul>                                                                                     |
| <b>3. Enhancing Engagement &amp; Strategy</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Engage earlier with local residents and key actors</li> <li>- Send documents to local councils and involve them from the inception</li> <li>- Redesign communications strategy based on the science of what makes people care</li> <li>- Revisit positive framing and messaging and encourage my team to adopt these</li> <li>- Focus more on communications efforts within strategic processes</li> <li>- Read recommended authors and explore Ann Searight Christiano's work</li> <li>- Testing (experimenting with new communications approaches)</li> </ul> |

Note: Responses to the question "Mention one thing that you will do after this workshop that you would not have done". Duplicates or similar responses were merged.  
Source: Post-workshop Mentimeter

## 7. Conclusion

The workshops in Barcelona and Dublin confirmed the strong commitment of local interest-holders to advance healthier and more sustainable mobility systems. Participants expressed enthusiasm for working across sectoral boundaries and valued the opportunity to exchange perspectives with actors focusing on mobility, health, planning, climate and communications. These interactions helped build trust and revealed that, although actors often share similar visions, they frequently work in isolation, leading to fragmented efforts and missed opportunities for systemic progress.

A central insight emerging from both workshops is the untapped potential of more strategic, evidence-informed communications. Participants recognised that communications is often under-resourced, lacking both dedicated skills and early integration into project design. Despite growing awareness of the value of health framing, its effectiveness is constrained when infrastructure conditions do not yet support healthy choices or when governance structures hinder collaboration across sectoral boundaries.

The discussions highlighted the importance of embedding communications into policy processes from the outset, strengthening internal capacities, and adopting science-based frameworks to guide narrative development, message testing and audience engagement. The discussions also helped identify specific leverage points across mobility, health and planning systems where communications can support more coordinated and effective action.

Moving forward, cities would benefit from more sustained coordination between health, climate and mobility actors, as well as from spaces that enable these communities to co-develop shared narratives and communications strategies. Health professionals emerged as credible and influential messengers who can broaden public support for sustainable mobility. Interest-holders also expressed interest in drawing on international examples of successful communications campaigns and indicators to track progress and maintain momentum.

# Annex A.

## Six imperatives for effective communications

When an issue is considered important—such as climate change or social justice—the initial reaction is often to attempt to encourage others to share the same level of concern or urgency. Another common approach is to present data and factual evidence in the expectation that audiences will reach similar conclusions independently. However, neither strategy is likely to engage individuals who are not already interested in the topic.

People do not seek information,<sup>[16]</sup> and information alone rarely motivates action.<sup>[17]</sup> Effective communications requires both cultivating concern and providing clear guidance on how individuals can contribute to change.<sup>[18]</sup>

The Center for Public Interest Communications at the University of Florida conducts research aimed at understanding how communications strategies can effectively engage people in complex social issues. The Center has developed the field of Public Interest Communications, defined as “science-based strategic communications designed to create lasting change on an issue that transcends the interests of any person or organisation”.<sup>[19],[20]</sup> Public Interest Communications builds on five essential elements:<sup>[21]</sup>

- Truth or facts: replicable research and verifiable information that incorporates diverse lived experiences.
- Resonance: the communications of truthful information in ways that connect with audiences capable of influencing outcomes through their decisions or actions. This requires aligning messages with audiences’ worldviews, moral values and identities.
- Solutions: solutions that are systemic, measurable and designed to produce lasting change.

- Greater good: equity-driven approaches that extend rights and benefits to all members of society while holding those responsible for harm accountable.
- Strategy: deliberate choices regarding how time, financial resources, relationships and influence are allocated to maximise impact.

Each element is necessary for the approach to function effectively, as the absence of a component alters the nature of the communications. Communications based solely on facts resembles journalism or academic research dissemination. Communications focused only on resonance resembles advertising or public relations. If communications does not aim toward visible, measurable and durable solutions, it may only raise awareness without advancing meaningful progress. If communications is not directed toward the greater good, it cannot be considered to serve the public interest. Similarly, without strategic allocation of resources, efforts may fail to produce measurable impact.

Applying these elements to sustainable mobility and health policy may ensure that communications not only informs but also builds public trust and legitimacy, which are critical for the acceptability of measures such as low-emission zones, road reallocation, or active mobility investments.

Through the review of peer-reviewed academic research and case studies, the Center identifies six core principles of effective communications.<sup>[18]</sup> These principles—referred to as the “Six Imperatives of Effective Communications” - are applicable across a wide range of communications challenges. They are especially relevant for tackling wicked problems—complex issues that are difficult to define and lack clear, straightforward solutions. Sustainable mobility represents a ‘wicked problem’ closely intertwined with public health outcomes, including air pollution exposure, physical inactivity, and traffic injuries, making these principles especially relevant for policy communications.

The rest of this Annex describes each principle in further detail.

### **Principle #1: Enter the world of your actors and offer them something of value**

Individuals rarely critically examine their own moral values or worldviews<sup>4</sup>; instead, these perspectives are often perceived as inherently correct.<sup>[22],[23],[24]</sup>

As a result, attempts to persuade individuals to fundamentally reconsider such beliefs frequently prove ineffective.

Successful communications strategies are designed around issues that actors consider important, and around messages that align with their moral values, worldviews and identities.<sup>[25],[23],[26]</sup> This requires identifying the intersection between the objectives of a communications initiative and the priorities of the actors it seeks to engage. It also requires empathy toward perspectives that may differ significantly from those of the communicator, as well as the pragmatic recognition that actors are motivated by their own interests and values, rather than those of the communicator.<sup>[18]</sup> This approach is exemplified by efforts to build support for connecting protected lands across Florida—enabling wildlife movement—through the Florida Wildlife Corridor Act. The film *Saving the Florida Wildlife Corridor*<sup>[27]</sup> incorporates perspectives from ranchers, fishermen and individuals working in tourism and development. These contributors describe the importance of open landscapes and wildlife for sectors that are central to the state's economy. The film was designed to align with the moral values, worldviews and identities of legislators who might otherwise have been reluctant to support conservation initiatives. The Florida Legislature passed the Florida Wildlife Corridor Act unanimously, just two weeks after watching the film.

In sustainable mobility, this may involve framing policies in terms of benefits that matter to specific groups—for example, emphasising economic vitality for local businesses, independence for older adults, or child health and safety for parents.

### **Principle #2: Talk in Pictures**

When communicating complex, large-scale or abstract ideas, the use of concrete and visual language can improve engagement.<sup>[28],[29]</sup> Applying this principle involves illustrating the tangible outcomes of policy change. For example, this could include illustrating what a low-traffic street looks like in terms of children playing safely, cleaner air, and reduced noise, rather than abstract indicators of emissions reduction or health outcomes.

### **Principle #3: Use Emotion with Strategy and Intention**

Research suggests that messages associated with unpleasant emotions—such as sadness, anger or fear—can lead audiences to disengage.<sup>[16]</sup> These emotions are often triggered in communications strategies. For example, those concerned about animal welfare may emphasise distressing images of factory farming, while those angered by injustice may attempt to mobilise others through expressions of outrage.

Effective communications strategies prioritise emotions that audiences are inclined to embrace, such as pride, hope and awe.<sup>[18]</sup> Positive emotions—including awe, parental love, pride and hope—are more strongly associated with sustained engagement and action.<sup>[30],[31]</sup> Behavioural research indicates that individuals are more motivated by the anticipation of pride associated with positive action than by the avoidance of shame associated with inaction.<sup>[32]</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Worldviews, moral values and identities are commonly referred to as psychographics. They provide insight into how actors think and what they prioritise.

Hope has been identified as a powerful driver of engagement on issues such as climate change. Feelings of awe may also encourage generosity and cooperation.<sup>[31]</sup>

For example, highlighting the positive health outcomes of sustainable mobility policy —such as increased wellbeing, more liveable neighbourhoods, and community cohesion—can foster emotional engagement and reduce resistance to mobility transitions.

#### **Principle #4: Create Powerful Calls to Action**

Research indicates that individuals often respond positively when asked for assistance, as such requests reinforce their sense of agency.<sup>[33]</sup> Behavioural scientist Xuan Zhao of Stanford University observed that individuals frequently underestimate others' willingness to provide assistance and overestimate the inconvenience involved.<sup>[34]</sup>

Effective communications strategies include calls to action. Effective calls to action generally possesses the following characteristics:<sup>[18],[35]</sup>

- It is meaningful: individuals understand why their contribution matters.
- It is within the capacity of the actors being addressed.
- It is feasible and easy to implement.
- It generates a positive emotional response.
- It is specific and observable.
- It aligns with perceived social norms.
- It allows individuals to participate in ways that reflect their own voice or identity.
- It demonstrates tangible results resulting from participation.

This is particularly relevant for sustainable mobility policy. For example, to encourage modal shifts toward

active and sustainable transport, individuals must understand the concrete steps they can take, such as choosing cycling routes, using public transport, or supporting local mobility policies. Effective calls to action might also include trying a new transport mode for a week or participating in local consultations. Ineffective calls to action often arise when communicators confuse long-term goals with immediate actions. Broad aspirations—such as defending science or resolving humanitarian crises—cannot be achieved through a single individual action. Effective strategies identify, instead, specific behaviours that can influence decision-makers and contribute incrementally to systemic change, and make those actions clear to their audience.<sup>[36],[37]</sup>

#### **Principle #5: Activate Trusted Messengers**

The credibility of a message is influenced not only by its content, but also by the reputation of the individual or institution delivering it.<sup>[38]</sup> Trusted messengers typically possess one or more of the following characteristics:

- They are recognised authorities with professional or domain expertise.
- They have direct experience of the issue.
- They reflect the values of the communities they represent.
- They share social identities, worldviews or experiences with the intended audience.

In practice, trusted messengers may include medical professionals, community leaders, business owners or local elected officials who can speak credibly about the benefits of the suggested change. For example, in the film referred to above, “Saving the Florida Wildlife Corridor”, the voices featured were those from sectors central to Florida’s economy, including ranching, tourism and recreational fishing, perceived as peers or constituents by the Florida legislature, rather than those of conservation activists or environmental organisations, to which the legislators might have perceived as “opponents”.

Health professionals, such as doctors or public health officials, may be influential messengers when communicating the co-benefits of sustainable mobility, helping to bridge the gap between environmental and health narratives.

### **Principle #6: Tell Stories**

Storytelling enables audiences to identify with characters and situations, and to trigger, as a consequence, empathy and action.<sup>[39],[40],[41]</sup> Research conducted by Green<sup>[42]</sup> indicates that stories capable of producing “narrative transportation”—a state in which audiences feel immersed in a narrative—can reduce counter-argument and increase receptivity to ideas. Stories that create “narrative transportation” typically include:

- Characters with whom audiences can identify.
- Access to the internal thoughts and emotions of those characters.
- Vivid descriptive details that situate audiences within the narrative environment.

For storytelling to reach its full impact, it should follow a clear narrative arc: an introduction, a moment of tension or uncertainty, and a resolution that reveals the outcome. Understanding these structures matters, as organisations may otherwise default to a single pattern, making their communications predictable. Booker identifies several narrative structures commonly found in literature, including: overcoming the monster, voyage and return, rags to riches, the quest, tragedy, comedy and rebirth.<sup>[43]</sup> In the context of mobility initiatives, many stories may emphasise overcoming threats such as congestion or pollution—relying on the ‘overcoming the monster’ plot structure. Invoking ‘rebirth’ narratives such as stories of how a community is renewed or reenergised, or transformation in which a community attracts new members or businesses may provide more compelling frameworks for engagement.

Stories of individuals or communities experiencing improved health and life quality after the introduction of sustainable mobility policies such as space redistribution towards active and shared modes may make these policies more tangible and relatable, thereby increasing public acceptance and engagement.

# Annex B.

## Public realm projects used as case studies in the Dublin workshop

### Isolation Hospital Revitalisation

**Lead Department:**

Housing Development

**Location:**

Former Isolation Hospital | Infirmary Road | Dublin 7

The Isolation Hospital Revitalisation project presents a unique opportunity to revive an important piece of Dublin's history, breathing new life into a long-abandoned site while fostering a dynamic and inclusive community space.

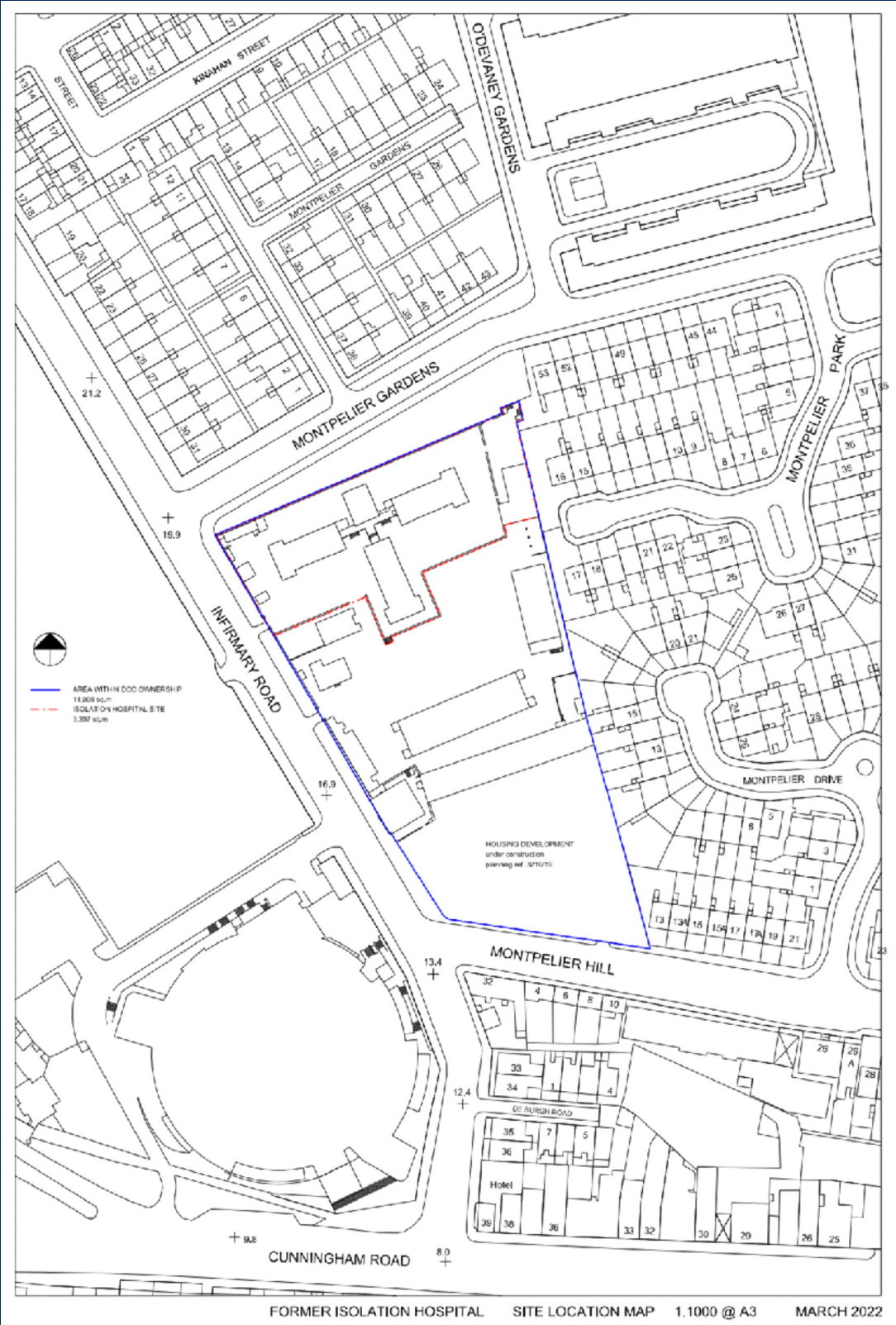
A proposed housing development in the lower portion of the site will provide approximately 144 apartments (Figure B.1). The new apartments will support car free living: there are no parking facilities.

While currently not included in the project, the roads and neighbourhood surrounding the site are part of existing plans. Infirmary Road's cycling infrastructure will be upgraded after 2028 as part of the active travel network and will link with the completed Liffey cycle route and surrounding in progress routes. Montpelier Gardens, and Montpellier Hill will be planted with trees as part of the Stoneybatter Greening strategy. Realising the co benefits and synergies with the revitalisation of the site, active travel and greening plans are key to ensuring that new residents and users of the new community facilities are able to access their homes and the amenities via walking, cycling, scooting, or wheeling; as well as increasing the desirability and willingness of existing residents to move sustainably.

### The Key Features of the completed project will be:

- Increased permeability to support movement through the site and connection of spaces creation of a new entrance from Montpelier Gardens, and opening of entrances on Montpelier Hill
- Landscaping that creates and heighten qualities and characteristics in the open spaces enjoyed in nature such as change, surprise, awareness of transition and movement; weather, seasonal change, use and maturing.
- Public realm that encourages social interaction, engagement with the external environment
- Community spaces that can host classes, meetings, after-school clubs, games, and workshops for people living in the neighbourhood.
- Active mobility and car-free living are supported on site and on the surrounding streets: Infirmary Road, (new route set to be constructed in 2028)
- Increased planting on Montpelier Gardens and Montpelier Hill to support biodiversity corridors/nature

Figure B.1. Isolation Hospital Revitalisation



## Grow College Green

### Lead Department:

DCC Environment and Transportation – Traffic

### Location:

College Green | Dublin 1

The project Grow College Green is a Public Realm Project aimed at revitalising the historic heart of Dublin – transforming it into a world-class public space where people can relax, explore, celebrate, and connect with each other and with the city's rich heritage (Figure B.2). It is a space that will be greener, more open, and more welcoming than is the case today. A place where history and modern life will meet.

### Three pillars guide the vision of the project:

- A Liveable & Vibrant City
- A Connected & Accessible City
- A Resilient & Healthy City

### Key features include:

- A lively public space for everyday uses and events
- A meeting point for Dubliners and visitors
- A space to learn and to celebrate the history of the city
- A space to play
- Increased biodiversity, encompassing nature-based solutions
- Improved air quality
- Enhanced storm-water management and wind-mitigation measures
- Accessibility for all
- A pedestrian friendly space with limited street clutter
- Cycle-friendly routes
- Improved connectivity with public transport and surrounding areas

Figure B.2. Grow College Green



Source: [Dublin City Council](#)

## Vernon Avenue Active Travel Scheme

### Lead Department:

Active Travel

### Location:

Vernon Avenue to Clontarf Road (Figure B.3)

This scheme aims to enhance walking and cycling facilities along a 600 metre route as part of Dublin City Council's Active Travel programme. It is currently in the Preliminary design Stage.

The proposed scheme will span 600 metres from the junction of Vernon Avenue and Seafield Road to the Clontarf Road seafront. It aims to enhance pedestrian and cyclist facilities along the route. It will also improve the public realm and foster urban greening.

The cycling routes will provide safer crossings, better access, dedicated cycling facilities and improved connectivity to the cycling and pedestrian network. Additionally, it aims to create more community spaces, integrate sustainable urban drainage systems, enhance biodiversity and improve urban landscapes and habitats.

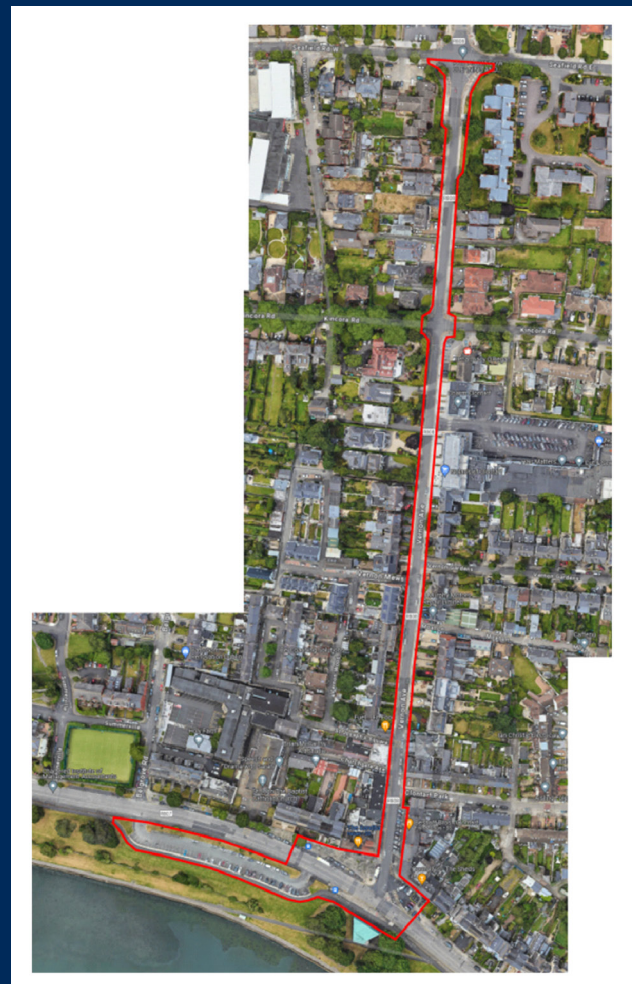
This scheme connects with the Gracefield Road to Vernon Avenue Active Travel Scheme to the north, which will deliver protected cycle tracks and improvements for pedestrians over a 2.5km route along Gracefield Road, Brookwood Avenue, Sybill Hill Road and the northern section of Vernon Avenue.

Key features of the scheme include:

- Footpath widening at existing narrow sections/ pinch points where possible
- Localised footpath / roadway repairs
- Safer, upgraded junctions with better crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists
- Continuous footpaths across side roads to improve pedestrian priority
- Additional planting and green spaces
- Changes to vehicle access and reduction in 'through traffic' on Vernon Avenue between Clontarf Park and Clontarf Road

- Changes in car parking to improve safety
- Enhanced connection from Vernon Avenue to Clontarf Promenade
- Maintain loading bays and accessible parking bays to the southern end of Vernon Avenue
- Reduced noise and vibration through reduction in traffic
- Improved air quality
- Enhancing the placemaking potential for the urban centre of Clontarf Village as an urban destination along the north coast of the Tolka Estuary.

Figure B.3. Vernon Avenue Active Travel Scheme



Source: [Dublin City Council](#)

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With thanks to funders and partners  
of the Pathfinder Initiative.

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