

CIVITAS

Sustainable and smart mobility for all

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Visual Story Competition

Moving from the year of youth to the year of skills

Vilém Honysz



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I am walking down the street in a densely built-up part of the city where I have lived since birth. Every day I perceive problems around me that bother me and thoughts run through my head on how to improve it. Cars pass me and I watch their headlights shine. And suddenly, boom, I bump my head into a pole with a No access for pedestrian sign. And I was lucky, in a state of high reverie, I would have ended up under the wheels of a fast-moving electric SUV, completely inaudible car. It saddens me that my city is still as strongly car-oriented as it was decades ago in western countries or in sixties in the U.S. Why do we have signs prohibiting pedestrians from entering residential zones? I would like to see the traffic pyramid reversed and the green light given primarily to pedestrians with cyclists. In my collage, I collected several pictures expressing this attitude. I tried to transform the situation in the recalled story in my imagination with minor interventions that would not restrict motorists while ensuring greater equality for road users. The key lies in simple and quick interventions that can be implemented to greater satisfaction in a short time and at a low cost. For example, as in Milan, where some streets became blind or one-way, they introduced Zone 30, marked temporary cycling trails, and devoted spare space to residents for sitting and temporary greenery. Even a combination of measures we know from other cities, such as Vienna, where you can count many ways to calm and increase traffic safety. Perhaps that is why this city is rated as one of the best to live in. It is otherwise in a photograph from Istanbul, where you will find many places with good infrastructure in this unimaginably large metropolis, but the routes are empty, because the overall thinking about this mode of transport and the unconnected net of the routes are rather wasted investments. One thing's for sure. The number of people on the planet continues to grow, the motoring index is growing at an exponential rate, but the space in our cities will still be the same, even smaller. The change is not about the advent of electric mobility, as cars will occupy the same acreage of parking spaces and lanes. The change is that we will improve conditions for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users. Equality of modes of transport turns out to be the key. The key to a better environment, cities, people's health, and car drivers who will have emptier roads. Thanks to all those we allow to get around our cities quickly and safely. The city is not to be planned according to those who come to power tooth and nail with their strength, but according to those who are most vulnerable. When our six-year-olds are happy to come home from school on their own, only then can we pat ourselves on the shoulders and say: "we're really good."