

THE PATH IS MADE BY WALKING

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SE HACE CAMINO AL ANDAR

Reducir las velocidades de circulación no van a devolver la ciudad a la ciudadanía.

On May 11, the new [rule](#) limiting speed to 20 km/h on roads with a single carriageway, 30 km/h on urban roads with a single traffic direction, and 50 km/h on the rest of urban roads with two or more direction lanes. This measure affects all national cities and seeks to turn cities into healthier, safer, and more humane urban environments. That is, that cities are more sustainable environments.

The different media came

warning of the measure and cities such as [Barcelona](#)

or [Bilbao](#)

They had already gone ahead a few months ago to implement this change. Like all change

It has not been without controversy. Different opinions have been heard

respect, from the citizenship that defended the measure advocating for environments

safer and less noisy and polluted urban areas, even those who argued

that the measure hinders mobility and represents a step backwards. in a survey

conducted by the Diario Vasco to more than 3,000 readers on the adequacy of the measure, 78% responded that they did not agree with the change.

If we look at the data of cities

who have already opted for this type of measures confirms that the reduction of the

speed has led to a reduction in car use that has led to

lower mortality, improved air quality and decreased

noise levels. Therefore, these types of measures facilitate the

transformation towards healthier cities. But then why is there so much

citizenship against?

Car use has become so normalized that taking a 5-minute drive to buy bread doesn't shock us. The car is the transport most used by citizens, we do not see anything unusual in images of urban streets crowded with cars queuing. It seems normal that in a family there is on average almost one car per person with a license. **The car has gone from being a privilege to seeming like a fundamental right.**

There are different factors that have brought to make excessive use of the car. If we focus on the urbanism of cities will see that the growth and design of the urban environment has committed to prioritizing the use of the vehicle. It is estimated that on average in Spain the 73% of the public space is dedicated to wheeled traffic; cars, motorcycles... It is that is, due to factors such as the quality of the road and the supply of parking, the city itself makes it easier to travel by car rather than on foot, in bike or public transport. **Mobility is an activity derived from framework of social needs and desires**, but from the urban prism It is also a consequence of the location of activities and homes, as well as urban design, the characteristics of the public space and the buildings.

Therefore, sustainable mobility suggests urban developments that make the most of the **autonomous capacity** to move that we have (walking or cycling). That is, urban designs that prioritize proximity, autonomy and quality of public space. In addition, urban planning with the intention of contributing to sustainable mobility encourages collective and non-motorized means of transport and discourages the use of cars.

In this line, the measure of driving at 20, 30 or 50 km/h in the urban environment depending on the type of road has been presented by the city councils as a measure that supports sustainable urban mobility. But this new regulation does not change the design of the urban environment or prioritize other types of transport with respect to the car, such as walking or cycling. What it does allow is to facilitate coexistence with other means such as bicycles or pedestrians and reduce levels of both acoustic and environmental pollution, but the car continues to be the protagonist. In addition, according to the [Ministry for Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge](#), the average speed of motorized road transport in Spanish cities is around 22 km/h. So, are the new signs that make traffic explicit at 20, 30 or 50 km/h going to change that much?

Without wishing to detract from the new measure, which has been taken by the city councils as a result of the [BOE N°297](#) of November 11, 2020, the changes at the urban level are not yet going to be of the magnitude to achieve environments with high environmental health and quality of life. The circulation speeds are not going to return the city to the citizens, but we hope that they serve as a starting point for us to start leaving the car and put fifth gear on foot, by bike or with public transport.

Marta Iturriza Mendia

PhD in Ecological Transition at Naider

There are no comments yet.