

The dialogue entitled **Feminist urban planning, putting lives at the centre** between **Franziska Ullmann** and **Zaida Muxí** and moderated by **Claudina Relat**.

The proposal is intended for students in the 4th year of compulsory secondary education, baccalaureate secondary education, vocational education, and university studies.

Classroom work proposals

1. Introducció

The first discussion at the **6th edition of Cosmògraf 2022¹** was held on 3 November 2022, entitled **Women Transforming the World** (<http://www.manresacultura.cat/cosmograf>). *Feminist urban planning, putting lives at the centre* was led by the Austrian architect and urban planner Franziska Ullmann, the Argentine architect and professor Zaida Muxí, and moderated by Claudina Relat, Chair of the Association of Architects in Central Catalonia.

What does it mean to talk about a gender perspective in urban planning? Talking about gender does not mean talking about sex, as Muxí stated, but about roles assigned to women (roles related to reproductive tasks, taking care of others, unpaid and invisible tasks, domestic chores, and more) and other roles assigned to men (roles related to the world of work, the public sphere, paid and visible tasks, and so on). For Muxí, it is essential to introduce the gender perspective into urban planning to analyse how cities and homes are structured and planned, the public and private spaces that our daily lives revolve around, and our lives to change structural inequalities in order to consider all their diversity. According to Muxí, "planning has not been neutral or universal." That is, cities and homes have not been designed taking into account all the diversity of the people who live there nor have all the different needs and expectations been met.

Professor Zaida Muxí's words highlighted the invisibility of women in general throughout history, in society, and in the planning and management of both private and collective spaces as improving the quality of life for women has not been taken into account because the necessity of daily care for others has not been studied or valued. Within this context, Muxí highlighted some of the most salient remarks by the American architect Jane Jacobs:² "in



Franziska Ullmann



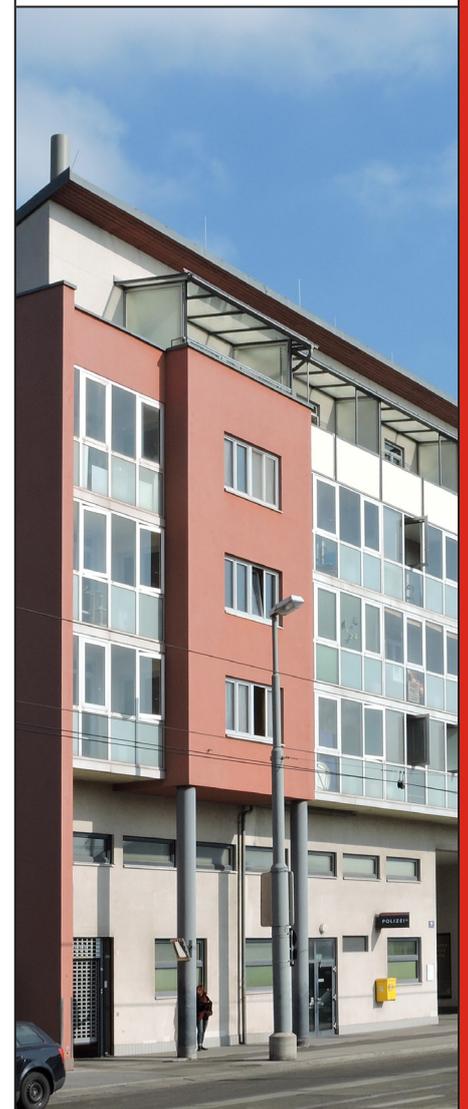
Zaida Muxí

urban planning, people must be the centre," that is, urban spaces and cities must be planned as complex systems based on "lived experiences" so it will be possible to design just and equal cities. Therefore, it is necessary to prioritize daily experiences, shatter stereotypes, listen, and learn from all users of cities, neighbourhoods, and homes.

Daily life is, thus, the central focus of the gender perspective in urban planning and is divided into four spheres: the productive sphere (the world of work); the reproductive sphere (taking care of people, children, and the elderly); the personal sphere (taking care of oneself, leisure); and the community sphere (neighbourhood connections, associations, etc.). One of the aspects that must be taken into account is the choreography of movement and forced and unforced mobility: what is the mobility that is present between these four spheres? Who makes the most trips and spends the most time traveling across spaces to carry out both reproductive and productive tasks that represent "the patterns of movement?" Have urban design and space planning taken all these journeys into account? Have they supported equality? Has the resulting ecodependence been considered? Both architects shared their reflections directly and indirectly in this encounter.

A practical example of an urban project under the gender perspective is the urban complex in Vienna, the Frauen Werk Stadt, designed in the nineties by the architect Franziska Ullmann. It was the first neighbourhood designed and built with a gender perspective in mind, and is home to 350 dwellings. This project studies and assesses the needs of women and their daily lives. Through the projection of slides from her project, which was conducted alongside other women, Ullmann highlighted the importance of public space, green space, and also common space (necessary to reduce the burden of domestic work); the need to address the planning of leisure spaces (that encourage socialization, contact between neighbours, etc.); the priority of designing public spaces that are open and safe (with short distances between different spaces, openings that favour visibility, and good lighting) where people can carry out daily tasks without needing to make multiple journeys and do so safely while decreasing the time they spend on them; and other primary objectives, such as designing flexible housing for different types of users, different families, and different stages of a person's life, or "who cares for whom and at what age." As Ullmann pointed out, it involves "creating neighbourhoods, cities, and open spaces with different spaces that feature good orientation and are designed to meet all daily needs."

In conclusion, the gender perspective in urban planning is not a finished project, but rather it involves raising awareness about putting people at the centre of urban planning, asking questions, understanding that we are diverse with different needs and expectations, and that the tasks related to women's roles at present, such as taking care of others, are necessary for valuing them and designing for them in urban and housing design to produce more just and equal spaces. Architecture must therefore take into account people's daily lives in order to improve their quality of life.



Background

Traditional urban planning has not taken into account the diversity of people who can occupy both public and private spaces. We must have a more egalitarian and just vision, a vision with gender perspective.

2. Goals, objectives, and activities

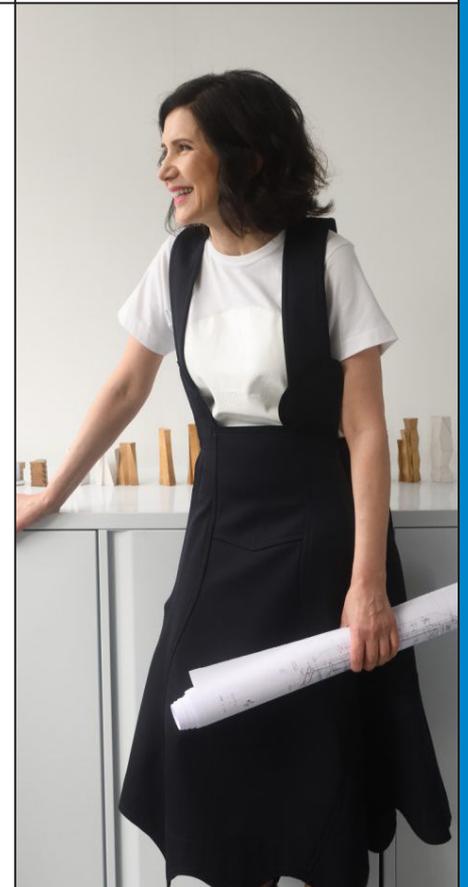
Goals:

1. **Make women visible in urban planning and architecture.**
2. **Introduce the gender perspective into urban planning and raise awareness about it.**
3. **Reflect on city-neighbourhood-home relationships.**
4. **Propose alternatives that integrate gender and social diversity in urban planning.**
5. **Compile information: create participatory processes to improve city neighbourhoods.**

Objectives and activities:

1. Raise awareness of the gender perspective in urban planning and architecture (goals 1 and 2).

- Organize debates, seminars, and lectures for young people on the historical invisibility of women in urban planning and architecture.
 - How many names of women architects or urban planners from today or other eras are you familiar with? Jot down a list of women architects and urban planners throughout history.
 - What general knowledge do you have regarding architecture? And urban planning?
 - Reflect on the primary objectives of good urban planning. What is the starting point? What are the aspects that must be taken into account for the public space? And for the private space?
 - Have you heard of the gender perspective in urban planning? What do you think it is? Search for information.



- Once you have learned about the gender perspective in urban planning, do you think your neighbourhood has structural shortcomings? Discuss your opinions.
- What icons and symbols are used in urban planning? Compile photographs with examples that demonstrate the invisibility of gender and social diversity.

2. Analyse public and private spaces (goal 3).

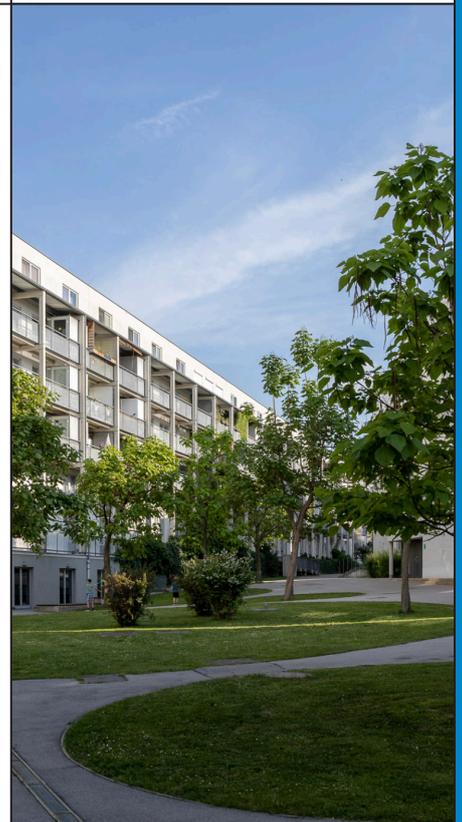
- Conduct an observation and analysis of public spaces:
 - What is your neighbourhood like? How is it oriented? What services does it have? Are all the essential services for daily life present (shops, medical services, schools, playgrounds, leisure areas, safe places for citizens, etc.)?
 - Does it have green spaces? Neighbourly connection spaces?
- Analyse the mobility of your neighbourhood:
 - Are there public transport stops?
What kinds of public transport?
 - How far away are the bus stops, for example? And where are the stops located (that is, what is near them that highlights the importance of their services)? What is the access to public transport like (is there enough space to get on with wheeled shopping trolleys or baby prams? Are they all adapted for people with reduced mobility)?
 - Observe the frequency of public transport service: is the frequency only at peak times (the start of the work day, lunchtime, and leaving work, or is there regular frequency throughout the day)?
- Conduct an observation and analysis of private spaces:
 - What is your building like? What common spaces are present between the homes? Is the space flexible? (In other words, can it be used to hold meetings or store common items for the neighbourhood community, for example?)
 - What is your private home like? Are there hierarchical spaces (in other words, are there spaces that are larger, more important, or more well oriented than others, and what's the reason for it: the easy access, the tasks that are carried out there, the person who handles them, and so on)?

a) How is it oriented? Is it flexible (does it enable spaces to be adapted for different tasks and stages of life)?

- Analyse the safety of your neighbourhood:
 - Is there sufficient lighting? Is access to transport well lit?
 - Is there sufficient social activity in the neighbourhood?
 - Are there points of poor visibility between homes (dark or dead spaces and so on)?
- How are public and private spaces connected in your neighbourhood?
- Is mobility in the neighbourhood dependent on vehicles? Where are the car parks?

3. Outline, draw, and design plans/proposals for public and private spaces with more flexibility (goals 2, 3, 4, and 5).

- Based on the objective listed above and the proposals for activities that have been related to it, propose ideas or alternatives that improve mobility, safety, and the uses of public and private spaces.
 - How can the burden of domestic work be reduced, thus improving the quality of life of caregivers?
Can the quality of neighbourhoods be improved by reducing vehicle traffic? And is it important to create places for leisure, open spaces, and playgrounds? Why?
 - Regarding the tasks handled by those who are responsible for caring for others, what basic day-to-day services does a neighbourhood with a gender perspective need to have?
- Design a participatory process in your neighbourhood (secondary school, classroom) to hear about and compile elements to improve the lives of the people who live there.



4. Analyse urban projects that have been conducted with a gender perspective (goals 1 and 2).

- Learn about projects and experiences in neighbourhoods and homes designed from a gender perspective, such as the Frauen Werk Stadt in Vienna. Produce comparative discussions.
- Select a project and compare it with your city and/or neighbourhood.

- Similarities and differences?
- Is Manresa a city that is open to new urban planning?
- Do you think that proposals can be compiled and carried out?

5. Prove that new urban and architectural design that integrates all social diversity is needed (goals 2, 3, 4, and 5).

- Create lessons, Sites, and presentations with graphs, surveys, summaries, proposals, interviews, plans, and more in which all the reflections and observations made by young people are compiled.
- Analyse and justify the proposals that need to be carried out (resulting from the previous activities).
- Present the agreements from the participatory processes that have been held to entities, associations, and/or institutions that can plan, manage, and design improvements in the public and private spaces of their neighbourhood and their city.
- Discuss the importance of public versus private land.