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Appendix E: Interview transcripts

In-depth interviews

Thursday May 28, 2020 (5 pm). In-depth interview with interviewee 1.

First I will ask three questions about your perception of the Begegnungszonen in the Mariahilfer Straße, note that this is about the situation before the COVID-19 pandemic. yeah. After the first three questions, I will ask you a question about the current situation during the pandemic. okay. Okay, so the first question is that in 2012 the political party Die Grünen initiated the implementation of the Begegnungszonen in the Mariahilfer Straße. But not everyone responded positively to this idea and eventually, the transformation has been finished in 2015 and now there are two Begegnungszonen and one pedestrian zone, or FUZO. Could you describe the Begegnungszonen in the Mariahilfer Straße to me?

There are two, at the beginning and at the ending. **Yeah**. And for me they are really different cause one is on, sorry for my English I try to. **No worries**. Okay, one of them is really flat yeah, and the other, the second one, there is its going up you know. **Yeah**. Up, not flat. And I think the flat one works better than the other one cause I don't know, this difference between you go down or you go up. I think for the car drivers and the cyclists, and the pedestrians it's you know. I try Google Translate. **Maybe it's easier for them to find their way in the Begegnungszone when it's**

flat? Yeah. **Okay.** You know, cause the pit needs more concentration for the cyclists, also for the car drivers and the pedestrians are going cross. So, I think it's a little bit more stressful to move on this the pit. The flat one it's better, I think there is more flowing together. And it's also different cause on the flat one there are more shops and the pit there is one big Museumsquartier and there are no shops so the people are going straighter through.

Yeah, okay. And is the behavior of everyone in the both SHared Spaces different because of this? Ehm, I think with the pit the car drivers are more concentrated because they have to solve the pit and the cyclists, of course, cause it's more power to move. The pedestrians are the same yeah. The cyclists are more ehm not so. **Not so careful?** Not so careful yeah, not so careful cause they are in doing to pit. **Okay so.** And the other direction when they go down, they're very fast cause they have to break the time and not everyone does it yeah? So it's for pedestrians more, you have more to look around is there a cyclist? Cause they're very fast, faster than the 20 kilometers they're allowed. They're really fast. **Okay, so it's less safe then?** Yeah, I think so. **Okay.**

And, could you also describe the spatial environment of the both Shared Spaces to me? Spatial? So, how is how are the Shared Spaces designed? Designed. Ehm, there are ehm there are spaces to sit around on both, on the sideways. Ehm are there more or less? I don't know. Hmhm. It's the same. And ehm the cars have a way they can go through and it's in it's not straight. It makes ehm I don't know. **Yeah, it bends.** It bends yeah, it bends. Ehm and in one of them is going a bus also through yeah, a bus line. Ehm so there is the space for the cars a little bit larger. And straighter. Cause the bus, for the bus it's not so easy to bend. Ehm I prefer the flatter one of them, cause more space to sit and more space to relax and ehm yeah maybe there are more shops, it's a little bit ehm cozier. **Yeah.** You feel better there.

Yeah, and are there elements, designed elements, that you do not like that much?

No. **Okay.** No, no, it's okay. **Okay, and when you are in the Begegnungszone, how do you feel when you're there?**

Ehm, it depends. I have three roles, I can I was on this Begegnungszone. As a car driver, as cyclist, or as a pedestrian. And in all of this three roles I feel not safe. **Okay.** Eh, yeah. Also in the car I feel safe, but I am afraid to hurt someone. **Hmhm.** Someone on a bike or someone who's walking by ehm as a cyclist I feel really unsafe cause I, I'm afraid that someone walks in my way and I, I fall. And when I just walk, I have to concentrate. On the both sides, nearly near by the shops there are no ehm cyclists or cars. There is okay. **Yeah.** There are no. It's like normal pedestrian way. But when I have to cross, walk in the middle it's not, yeah. So in all of this three roles I not really feel safe. The worst is on bike and, yeah, car and walking have different problems. But it's also, I have to concentrate.

Yeah, and can you tell me about a situation where you felt really unsafe? Hmm, when I was on bike, when I drive on the Mariahilfer Straße I the fastest I drive is 8 kh, how do you say? You know. **Yeah, kilometers per hour.** And, yeah, they're going the people from left to right, crossing my way. There are other bike, cyclists they're beholen, go, take over me? **Cross the street?** Yeah, crossing and the worst I remember is I the void the people there walking and bend through them and there was an other cyclists who was standing ehm on the side. And for me not, I didn't expect it. He started to drive really in front of my way and I had really to bark and it was, I hardly fell from my bike and I thought, o my god, why didn't he look back? Yeah, this was the unsafest moment I, yeah. **Okay.** Yeah, this was it.

And ehm so, this was a feeling of unsafety due to the behavior of someone else. Yeah. Are there also things in the Shared Space, for example how the street is designed or something like that, that create unsafe situations? No. It, the design that everyone has the same space maybe. But not ehm specially the design of this area that this was happening. It was a place. Shared, with all the

people. **Yeah.** It was the behavior of the man and the behavior of the people they walk around cause they didn't look.

Yeah. And, how would you describe your own behavior in the Shared Space? My? Own behavior. What, my own behavior. Ehm, yeah cause I hm, as a this three roles. In the car, I'm very highly concentrated. Ehm I look around and give the other more space. Let people walk, let people ride on the bike. Ehm, and in the car I'm standing more than I drive. I need much more time to cross this, I avoid this area but sometimes I can't avoid. Ehm, when I'm, I'm walking it's like normal street, I, I go on the side, on the outside, on the by the houses, by the shops. Not on the middle. And when I cross, I look yeah. But then I'm more concentrate then to a normal street cause there are many cyclists and cars and there I, I'm not, how do you say, I let them the others before me. I wait. **Yeah.** And, on the bike I'm really slow, I try to, sometimes I go off of the bike and take it beside me. Ehm and walk with the bike because it's too, it's for me too, maybe my reactions are too slow, I don't know. It's too heavy to manage it yeah, **Yeah.** So, also all in all my behavior, my own behavior is I'm very concentrating, and take a step back and let the others go cause it's better to let them do their things than what to do before we crash.

Yeah. And for what kind of activities do you visit the Mariahilfer Straße? Ehm, of course, okay, it's a shopping street so I go for shopping and ehm yeah, for shopping. Sometimes, for meeting friends. There are some bars and restaurants too, what I'm doing there? Yeah, mostly shopping and visiting restaurants.

Yeah. And do you also use the places to sit there? Eh, sometimes yeah, cause when I have when I have then an appointment with a friend and I'm a little bit earlier I sit there, or what I really like is to go to a coffee store. Where they selling coffee you know. Not a coffee shop. **A coffee bar.** Yeah, coffee bar. Sitting and drink my coffee and but not, this is in the shop. The Shared sitting areas, ehm yeah seldom, not too long, but I use it.

Yeah, okay. Well this went a bit quicker then I expected because I'm already at the last questions so it. Really? Are my answers too short? **Oh noo, no worries. But I didn't do a test interview, so an hour was just an estimation. I didn't know for sure.** Ah, okay, it's fine. **So, the last question will be about the current situation with the COVID-19 pandemic. Because in March this year the pandemic started and a lot city streets became very empty in many countries. And ehm, to enable to physical distance between people in the city centre, the city of Vienna is currently transforming several streets into Begegnungszonen. Could you describe to me if and how your feelings and behavior in the Mariahilfer Straße have changed due to the pandemic?** Ehm at the first weeks I wasn't at the Mariahilfer Straße. I think then it was really empty. Ehm I saw some pictures that I think till four weeks, it's there are people there. And I was on the Mariahilfer Straße last time last week on Friday yeah. And honestly, there was no different than to before the pandemic. There are many many people in the shops, of course they wearing the masks and yes, there were they cared about the distance, you know the one meter. But, it was, it yeah it wasn't not that much to see you know, what is different is that before the stores people are waiting in, I don;t know how to say. **In lines, in a queue.** In line, yeah, in queues in queues yeah. And the other people making walking not to close by. They're thinking about the distance. But from the frequence on the street there was not different to before.

Okay, and you said that you didn't go to the Mariahilfer Straße in the first weeks of the pandemic. Did you avoid the street? Eh, not really we had this from the government 'Ausgangsbeschränkung', exit restriction. **Yeah.** And we had the rule only go for buying eats. **Yeah, groceries.** Something to eat, or for work, or ehm to take a walk with a distance alone. And I'm not living so close to the Mariahilfer Straße that I say, okay, I make my walk on the Mariahilfer Straße. So, of course, of this rules we had from our government I didn't went there. **Okay.** But because I avoid it, cause I felt unsafe or

so, cause I didn't have to so. **No.** And yeah, yeah. And last week I was in the Mariahilfer Straße I had to ehm buy a new mobile phone and then I was there. **Okay.** I only walk through the Mariahilfer Straße when I new clothes, or technical things, or something really special, shoes or so.

Yeah, and when you compare the Mariahilfer Straße to a normal street where you have a driving lane and sidewalks along the driving lane. Is it easier to maintain the physical distance in the Mariahilfer Straße when you compare to the normal street with the sidewalk? Eh, this is in the Mariahilfer Straße easier, it's better. You can manage better. Cause our sidewalks regularly are hardly two meters so you have to go really close by the wall or nearby the street and on the Mariahilfer Straße you can flexible avoid the distance. **Yeah.** Yeah, you flexible can make the distance.

Yeah, and do think that is a especially due to the design of a Begegnungszone? Ehm, yes cause you have when you walk you have more space to move on. But on a how do you say 'Fußgängerzone'? **Pedestrian zone?** Yeah, pedestrians area it's the same. More easier than in the Begegnungszone. **Yeah, so ehm the main reason is that you have more space as a pedestrian in the Mariahilfer Straße?** Yeah. **Okay.**

Thursday May 28, 2020 (5:30 pm). In-depth interview with interviewee 2.

I've send you alresdy the map of where the Begegnungszonen or Shared Spaces are in the Mariahilfer Straße, hmhm, to visualize it for you. There is a long process of these Shared Spaces because in 2010 they were initiated by the political party Die Grunen, and this led to a lot of political debates. And eventually, in 2015 these Shared Spaces were finished. And now there are two Shared Spaces and one pedestrian zone, and I'm interested in how different groups of people - so users and experts - are perceiving these Shared Spaces. And therefore I'm wondering if you could describe the Shared Spaces in the Mariahilfer Straße to me.

Okay, well I bike and walk in the Mariahilfer Straße every day because I live there. And, I didn't even really think about it until now that you pointed it out to me, but yeah, how do I see that? It's quite annoying. Especially for bikers, I feel like nobody really knows where to be on the streets. There are just people walking everywhere and bikers are going everywhere. Nobody is watching out for each other and even cars, you always see cars riding around where they're not supposed to and there's always police everywhere so, overall, it's pretty chaotic.

And, how does the Shared Space look like? How do you see the environment there?

Like, how the street looks like? What do you mean? **Yeah. So, the spatial design of the streets.** Ehm, so in the middle, there is the road where the cars are supposed to ride I guess. And then on both sides, there is the zone for pedestrians, but there is not really a clear distinction between the two of them. I think if, I mean it's logical, but, there's not like a really clear mark that it says 'okay, this is where cars are allowed to be and this is where pedestrians are allowed to be'. **Yeah, okay, and because you said 'okay, cars drive everywhere where they're not supposed to drive. Do you think they are supposed to drive in the middle of the street?** Yes, they are. But then, some of the cars, the zone for the cars just ends and if you don't see the sign you just drive through and where pedestrian zones are. A lot of cars don't really notice it, I think. Especially, if you're not from Vienna and you're a tourist then you're like 'huh, where am I supposed to go now?'

Hmhm, and you said that people do not watch out for each other. What kind of activities do people do in the Shared Spaces or in the Mariahilfer Straße?

Mainly shopping because the Mariahilfer Straße is really just a shopping street, it's like the Herestraat from Groningen. And there are like a few benches where you can sit, so there are a lot of homeless people sitting there as well. Yeah, it's just mainly shopping people and I think there are a few offices in the Mariahilfer as well, so people go there for work and a few people who live there of course.

Hmhm, and if you look at the design of the street. Are there elements that you like, and elements that you do not like?

Hmm, well, usually I really like those streets, where pedestrians are allowed to go everywhere. But, like I said, this street is a bit confusing about where it ends and where you can walk freely and where you have to watch out for cars then it becomes a bit more annoying. Both for, if you're a pedestrian but also if you're a driver or a biker. What I do like about the street is, yeah, just the fact that at some places you are allowed to walk freely and that there are some car-free zones. And overall it's just a very nice street with some trees and it's green and yeah.

Okay, and when you're in the Mariahilfer Straße, in the Shared Spaces, how do you feel when you're there?

Hmm, that really depends on the time of the day. If you are there on, for example, a Saturday, on Saturday afternoon and it's super busy and you just don't wanna be there. But if you're on your way to work then it's fine. You just always have to watch out that you're not, hitting somebody with your bike or that you're not hitting somebody when you're walking. It's just always a bit, you always have to watch out.

Yeah, and do your feelings in the Shared Space also depend on the role you have, so if you're a pedestrian or a car driver or a bicycle driver?

Yeah, overall when you're a pedestrian then you're a bit, then you have the least stress. Then you're like 'oh, I'm pedestrian and people have to watch out for me so I can go wherever I want to'. Ehm, I haven't driven there, so I'm not sure what it's like to drive there. And on a bike, yeah, it's. Also it really depends on the time of the day. When it's busy, you just don't wanna bike there because you really have to watch out. But, in the morning when the stores are still closed, then it's fine.

Yeah, and do you think that your Dutch upbringing plays a role in how you behave in the Shared Space?

Hmm, yeah, because we are used to riding on bikes. Ehm, a lot of the people here in Vienna, that are Austrian and that use bikes, they drive like crazy. They pretend that they're riding the Tour de France haha. So I think, I just drive very slowly and I'll make sure that I don't hit anybody and then it's fine but you, some of the bikers they're just crazy.

Yeah. And when you're riding a bike in the Mariahilfer Straße. Do you behave differently on the bike than when you're in a 'normal' street, where you have your own cycling path or when you're driving on the driving lane when there's also a sidewalk?

Yeah, like overall in the Mariahilfer I am way more careful and you, I can't go faster. There are a few normal bike paths in Vienna where you still have to watch out, but not for, not as much.

How do behave when you're a pedestrian in the Mariahilfer?

I mean, I personally watch out for the bikes because I bike a lot myself. But sometimes you just forget and then you don't really think about the bikes and the cars. I think it's really easy to forget when you're a pedestrian that you are, like, vulnerable, and that people have to stop for you. You pretend 'oh I'm walking here, people can just go around me'. But, yeah.

And do you deliberately walk on the side parts of the Mariahilfer when you're a pedestrian? Ehm, well, sometimes not really. Because on the sidewalks it's super busy all the time, so then I would rather go in the middle where there're not as many people. Which makes it probably then even more dangerous for cars and bikes that ride there.

Hmhm. And, I have a question about the current situation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Because many cities became very empty due to the pandemic. Also research shows that especially commercial streets became very empty. And the city of Vienna is currently transforming a lot of streets into Shared Spaces or Begegnungszonen in order to ensure the spatial distance between people. Do you think your feelings and behavior in the Mariahilfer Straße changed due to the pandemic?

Yeah, I think you try to avoid walking close to people a lot. And, in the beginning, when all the stores opened again, it was really difficult because it was super busy all of a sudden. Like everybody wanted to go shopping and then there were just too many people so then I just avoided going into the Mariahilfer at all. **Yeah.** But now, I am more aware that I shouldn't bump into people.

Hmhm, and do you think that the way the Mariahilfer Straße is designed, ehm, is better to keep distance from other people than normal streets where a pedestrian walks on the sidewalk, for example?

Hmmm, I don't know, that's difficult because I don't really go into the other shopping streets a lot because. Usually, like the bigger streets in Vienna where are the most people are the shopping streets. And then, if you go into a side street that don't have those 'Begegnungszonen', then there are already way less people. So, yeah, usually the streets that do have like these different, special pedestrian sidewalks, there're just less people.

Okay, and when there is a traditional street with a driving lane and a sidewalk, is it more difficult to keep distance from other people there?

If it's busy, yeah. Then you have to go onto the, on the road where the cars have to drive. Otherwise, you can't avoid them. **Yeah, and in the Mariahilfer Straße that's easier, to avoid people?** Yeah, because it's a very wide street so if you pay attention and you want to, you can easily avoid bumping into people and keeping your distance, it's. If you want to, than it can work.

Yeah, and you told me that you drive a bike a lot in the Mariahilfer Straße and sometimes you walk, are there also other activities, except from shopping, that you do in the Mariahilfer Straße?

Hmm, no. I go there because I always have to go there when I go to work and I go shopping there. But otherwise, no. Like I would never go sit on a terrace or something there. **Okay, and also not on the benches?** No.

And, do you think the culture of the Viennese people is different in a sense that they might go to the Mariahilfer Straße to be seen for example?

Hmm, no I don't think so. But I, no. Not that crossed my mind. **Okay, no. Okay because I read something about a culture of 'flanieren' or 'flaneren', and that that is more Austrian than Dutch for example. And I was wondering if people maybe go to the Mariahilfer Straße to just walk around, stroll a bit, and maybe be seen. So therefore I was wondering about that.** Of course, people walk around there and just walk around there not because of, they want to go shopping. But just they want to go for a walk, because it is quite a nice street. But I haven't noticed people walk there because they wanna be seen or something. **No, exactly.** And also, it's just really easy to end up in the Mariahilfer, so yeah, it's just really a main road that kinda leads to the inner city. **Yeah. Okay.**

Sunday May 31, 2020 (10 am). In-depth interview with interviewee 3.

Speaker 1: I think it will take about half an hour, a bit less. And it's all about the Mariahilfer Straße. And first, I will ask you some questions about the normal situation of the Mariahilfer Straße. So before the whole COVID-19 pandemic. And then in the end, I will have one question about the situation during the pandemic. And as you know, there was a lot of political debate around the implementation of the shared space or the Begegnungszone in the Mariahilfer Straße. And in 2015, eventually they

implemented and it was finished. And yeah, I read a lot of diverse opinions about it. So I was wondering first, how would you describe the Begegnungszonen in the Mariahilfer Straße?

Speaker 2: Like it is now?

Speaker 1: Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 2: You know, first of all, before they changed it, there has been four car lanes. One parking lane, then two lanes to drive in each direction, another parking lane. Then at the other side there was a broad walking space for the people. And what I can remember a lot is that first of all, this driving lane was very narrow. So it was highly stressful to drive through it because every lot of people and they were the parking cars and there was not much space for driving, so. And it was very packed. So there was so much there every day was traffic jam. And it was actually not very funny to drive there. And I also remember when we went shopping for Christmas or it was was a Saturday. It was a shopping day. You know, there was so many people. And did you even though this sideways sort of people were broader than somewhere else because it just been a shopping street and it needed broader sidewalks. They were so packed that it was really exhausting and it was totally easy for pickpockets you know. And now this parking lanes kind of diminished. I mean, there are areas where it's only walking space, only walking zone. So then nobody is allowed to drive through, but most of it it's that you are allowed to drive through those slowly. And there's no they're not just parking lanes anymore. There is not this street light there. There's not the pavement, which is like higher ten centimeters higher than the streets, so it's all even. And I think that there is way less traffic. Like, but like almost nobody who drives the car really wants to drive through it because he knows there are cars there and there are a lot of people walking, although it is all over the place and there are a lot of cyclists. So people, car drivers they don't use this that much anymore, only the ones that really need it, like the closest neighbors or for example, the stores. They need their suppliers to bring their stuff, but usually there's not much traffic. And this is really relaxing, like it's really relaxing to walk to and the made it also very beautiful, like it's open, the stones they used. I think it did not just make one like a street where they just, I don't know, the German, the English word. Make just one area. But they had like many different stones that put my hand in it. And it looks very nice. And they also made a lot of places where you can sit for free. I think they can make more. I think it's still not enough because a lot of people use it. And I'm generally very, very happy with it now because it's it's it's so relaxing to walk there. It's nice, it looks nice, . There's no, there's a better area because there are not so many cars. And yeah, it's more space for the people who walk and it's also for the, if you own a bicycle or something, you're really fast in the city. I mean, that's the only problem. I think that some cyclists are driving way too fast. And also these people we got this some I don't think that you have that in the Netherlands where you can rent scooters, electric scooters. They are also pretty fast. That's the only problem, I think. But it's much better than it does before, so I really like it.

Speaker 1: And how, what kind of activities do people mainly do in the Begegnungszone?

Speaker 2: Yeah. Like Shopping is still one of the biggest thing they do. But I think a lot of people are just strolling around. Yeah. Like even even on Sundays when all the shops in Austria are closed. People are strolling around, there are a lot of cafes and ice cream stores. And these stores also have now they have huge outside sitting areas where you can have your your lunch or your ice cream or whatever. Your cake, your coffee right in the street. And people do a lot like strolling around, drinking coffee outside, do some window shopping. Even, that's also, there's cycling. A lot of people use it as a cycling highway right into the city. And also, I think also a lot of people from the inner districts they're jogging there. They're doing some ???. Because, you know, Mariahilfer Straße at one end there's the Gurtel and one of our main train stations, and the outer district. And the other side is the first district. And right after, at the ending at the Mariahilfer Straße is also a lot of parks like Hofburggarten, Folksgarten.

And a lot of people do jogging there. And then from the other districts, they just use the Mariahilfers Straße as a jogging highway into the city, to the parks where it's more greener.

Speaker 1: Yeah. And are there also elements that you do not like that much in the Begegnungszone?

Speaker 2: Yeah. What I do not like that much is that there is still not enough place to sit I think. It's used so much by people that if there's a hot summer day, all the banks and the sitting areas and then they could have made it a bit greener. But it's easier, you know, the day that they laid the stones all over the place because, you know, you don't have to do anything with it. You don't have to water it and you do not have the problem with dogs going to the grass. But I think that's something which is according to the climate change, we should make each space more green, a few grass or more trees. There are a lot of trees. So that's cool. But I think they could have made it a bit greener. More space to sit. And what I do not like that much is that some cyclists and some scooter drivers think that they can go as fast as they can. Yeah, that's it.

Speaker 1: Do you think those cyclists and scooter drivers are stimulated by the way the area is designed? So does the design enhance their speed?

Speaker 2: Yeah, definitely, because there's much space. They know there are no car drivers or way less. And car drivers are very cautious and also the stones they laid, it's a very even ground. You know, it's very even and smooth. So I think it's, also if you like do some rollerskating. You need even ground so you can really slide smoothly. And this is given there. So. Yeah.

Speaker 1: Yeah. Yeah. Because I was observing the whole street through Google Earth. It took me a while. And what really stood out for me was that the. Yeah. How do you call it the feet of the trees, that the area around the feet of the trees was. Well, I don't know, concrete or something like that. I thought, why don't you make grass or flowers in there? It makes it a lot greener, right?

Speaker 2: Yes. For example, that would have been an option.

Speaker 1: Yeah, and I was wondering about the strolling, do you think that it's a cultural thing that is specific to Austria or Vienna, to stroll in a street or do you think that's everywhere the same?

Speaker 2: That's a good question. No, I think Austrians are really in favor of strolling around just for leisure. I think in way poorer countries that do not have the time or energy for something like that. I can't imagine people in Tanzania or Zanzibar just strolling, because also the areas are kinda dangerous. I think that at least of Europeans or also some Americans in cities like New York, they do that for fun. Yeah. Yeah. So if I look at the Mariahilfer Straße, I mean, it's not the most diverse area in Vienna because a lot of people from outer districts like migrants, which are living in more of the outer districts that do not go there that often. But I do have a feeling that a lot of different people are walking there, it's teenagers who are just bored sitting around eating ice cream or listen to music or is it is it's I think a lot of people in Vienna from different socioeconomic backgrounds do the strolling yeah.

Speaker 1: Yeah. OK. And how do you feel when you're in the Begegnungszone?

Speaker 2: I like it there, so every time I'm there, that's one of the areas I really like in Vienna because it's modern, but it's it's it's. It's beautiful. You can do shopping and also the houses on the side. They're old, almost all of them are pretty old and they have a lot of very beautiful balconies and windows. And I love to look at them as well. And I often think about that I want to live there. I mean, it's it's seven and the sixth district. These are the districts bordering the Mariahilfer Straße, they're very beautiful. They're very clean. There is low crime rate, in Vienna it's basically a low crime rate. It's low. Everything's

beautiful. I live in Zimmering, it's the 11th district and it's not so nice district like old houses, but it's not so beautiful houses. And also, like you have so many cafes and bars and you are very fast in the city. And yeah, but it's very expensive to live at the Mariahilfer Straße, I think often like it would be nice to live here.

Speaker 1: Yeah. And do you think the design the way it is now, honors the beautiful buildings there more than before?

Speaker 2: You mean, that the design now, gives the buildings more presence?

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Speaker 1: Yes. Actually yes. Because now it's an open space where you can walk. Oh, my there one thing that I forgot to tell you, is at one. One part is also bus driving. There, you have to be careful for the bus. Yeah, that that's that's one thing. But the bus usually is also very cautious about people. So I have never encountered any negative of that. But yeah, I think yeah, when I picture the Mariahilfer Straße how it used to be with the cars. It's in my mind, it's more it's darker than it is now. Yeah. But I don't know if that's really the case. Know, it's just that the memory I have. But yeah, I really think when you have more space and do have even ground and you don't have to you don't have so much noise and, and, and bad smells from the cars, It's easier for you to just stroll around and watch the surroundings because you don't have to be careful about. Oh my God, am I going to be run over by a car? And yeah, in my memory, it appears a bit darker than it is now.

Speaker 1: And how would you describe your relation to the other road users or the other users in the shared space?

Speaker 2: How, what do you mean with other users?

Speaker 1: The cyclists, pedestrians, the cars.

Speaker 2: I mean, I think for the car drivers it's a bit stressful because the neighborhoods, the districts between, they're not very car friendly. Small streets, old buildings with no garage. If you live there and have a car, I think it's pretty it's pretty annoying. And now it's even more because you can't drive through the whole Mariahilfer Straße, so you now have to drive all around the district and to get to your place, because I've got a friend there living and sometimes I drove there by car before they moved it to how it looks now. But I still got the impression that when you drive straight through Mariahilfer Straße, and you drove straight through Mariahilfer Straße, there was so much traffic jam that it did not really cost. It was no faster. It was the direct way but it was not the fastest way. And now, to be honest, I've never driven through Mariahilfer Straße because I do not like car driving that much. I'm not comfortable with it and I do not need to because also Mariahilfer Straße has the underground directly underneath it. So you don't need it to get there. And my friend doesn't live there anymore. So it's it's I never drive, drove through there because I think it's very stressful and I never would because I would be so afraid to to to drive somebody to run somebody over because yeah pedestrians are getting a bit loose, you know. Now they know that there's not so much traffic. So they do not watch that careful anymore. I think that they forget that most of the Mariahilfer Straße is not a pedestrian zone only, you know, and the cyclists are driving so fast that this can also be a problem. And which, what I remember and I think that's what happens still now is many people were so confused at first how to use it. And it was not seldom that somebody was in the pedestrian area because this is not really understood that it stopped because the pedestrian area only and the Begegnungszone area they look kind of the same. So if you do not really know, when you do not notice the sign, a sign was invented. People often driving through the pedestrian areas as well because they had not really

understood 'It's over for cars here' and also now, I think we need people, the ones who are living there now. They got it, but still tourists, people they don't have that concept. And they got lost there. I think car driving is, I think the quality of car driving kind of sunk because now you have, as a car driver you have to be very careful. You have to be slowly. You have to know the new rules and I think the best thing to do is to not drive through it. Yeah, that that that's the thing. And that's the thing which which a lot of people are criticizing, the people who are using cars way more often. They don't like the idea that there was a lot of space taken from them. But I don't have a car. I don't like car driving that much I really use public transport very often. So I don't have a problem with that.

Speaker 1: And did you ever experience situations in the Begegnungszone where you felt unsafe or uncomfortable?

Speaker 2: I mean, let's say. It never really happened. But there were these many terrorist attacks, remember, in Berlin where somebody just crashed with a truck, into people. And yeah, if a terrorist wants to do that, that would be the best area. There is no obstacle at all, to drive into it. There are many people at let's say Christmas shopping day, Saturday before Christmas. Thousands of people are there. And there is no obstacle. There are no other cars which could block you. There's no parking lanes to block you. There are also a lot of, as I said a lot of cafes, having an outer space to eat. So this is actually I often thought about that this is actually really dangerous. I don't know if the kinda also maybe lock it up for cars in Christmas time when there is a huge mass of people, but never, nothing ever happened, you know. But when this terrorist attacks happen, you always got 'hmm, that's really a high risk area'. I mean, it's it's a pity because it's a very nice area. But also if one terrorist has a bad idea.

Speaker 1: OK. How would you describe your own behavior in the Begegnungszone?

Speaker 2: Yeah, I am mostly there for shopping. Sometimes I'm sitting eating an ice cream, sometimes at night when I've been out, drinking in a bar or one of the clubs in the area. I walk through it to the next underground station to get home, but my behavior, it's, not, it doesn't really differ from anywhere else. I mean, yeah, you can walk in the middle of the street instead of the side but. I'm walking there more freely, I guess, than in other streets before. Stressless.

Speaker 1: OK. And do you ever cycle there?

Speaker 2: No, I do not have a bike. In Vienna, I mean, some people are cycling, but it's not like in the Netherlands. Most of the parts of Vienna are not very bike friendly. So where I live for example, there is this street, which is horrible to drive. No matter what type of bike or car, whatever you have. And so in order to get away from here, I have a radius of two, three kilometres around me. What there is not bike lanes which are safe to drive. So, no, I never cycle through it.

Speaker 1: And would you say that your behavior in the shared space is being influenced by the behavior of other people?

Speaker 2: That's a good question. Well, let's see it's influenced by the cyclists because sometimes I have to kind of jump out of the way. Because they're so fast. But no, I don't have. I don't really think. Not that I know of you know. It might be not conscious influence.

Speaker 1: No. Do you think you're more careful in these shared, in the Mariahilfer Straße than in another street? Normal street?

Speaker 2: No, I think it's the other way round.

Speaker 1: Ok, You're more careful in other streets?

Speaker 2: Yeah. Where cars are.

Speaker 1: Even though you're on a sidewalk?

Speaker 2: Yeah, because like in other streets, there are sometimes crossings. And Mariahilfer Straße has one real crossing, where Neubeugasse is. Because there is the bus going through. But also there it is a very small crossing. So you don't have to be paid much attention.

Speaker 1: Yeah. So this crossing in the Mariahilfer Straße makes you more cautious? But the other areas in the Mariahilfer Straße are less stressful.

Speaker 2: Yeah, it's the only way you were. There's a light, a traffic light, and it's good if you stop when traffic lights right, because the bus goes through there very fast because it's for the bus it's a normal street, crossing. From ..gasse down to ...gasse. And yeah that could be dangerous if you do not pay attention there. But on the other real crossing, I mean there's streets, out of the side and cars can drive in the street. But usually we do not really stop. As I said, traffic is not, there's not much traffic anymore.

Speaker 1: No. And every car is driving very slowly, right?

Speaker 2: Yeah, they should. Most of them are, some are pretty fast. I think that the pace is not a real problem. I don't have, I mean, what is what is dangerous? And you really have to be cautious, which is something I do not have to do. And I have streets where there is the normal sidewalk is, in the morning when all the suppliers are bringing the new stuff for the stores. There's sometimes really huge, huge trucks. Huge trucks compared to that they have to drive all through the city and they are all over the place in the morning. So there's a lot of traffic with trucks. And those trucks, they are they can not see that well. And in that case, if I'm here in the morning like nine a.m. or earlier than that, I really stay on that original pavement. Not on this new Begegnungszone, street thing because there are so many trucks and if they just return and they drive backwards. They sometimes do not see you. And that's actually that's bad. And even in a normal street, they would stay directly on the lane. Because they have to be on the street and you on the pavement. This is this is something which is. Yeah, but it's only in the morning at the time, not so many people are around it. So it's doable to stay on one side.

Speaker 1: Yeah. OK. And. So small question about the shared spaces during the current situation with the COVID-19 pandemic. You already referred a little bit to major events that can happen, like a terrorist attack and a pandemic is kind of such an event as well. And you see, in many countries, that the streets became really empty because of the pandemic, because you have to keep distance, et cetera. Do you think your behavior or your feelings in the Mariahilfer Straße have changed because of this?

Speaker 2: Well, no. To be honest, I only have been there once during the whole pandemic because, you know, staying at home and stuff like that. In Austria, it's the first two weeks, where this strictest lockdown has been there was dirty weather. I think each street is very empty. Also in the first district, and most touristic areas there was not a lot of people. But I think that once in April, there was that was when some shops were allowed to open up again a bit. So, for example, I was at a bookstore and we were, I was allowed to order a book in a bookstore, but I had to pick it up in front of it. It was before we were able to go into the store. The stores had some certain concept like that. They were

allowed to open up and then I was there. And I was surprised that so many people were actually around there. I thought it still is a bit less crowded. I mean, it wasn't that crowded, so social distancing and this one meter of distance it was, it was doable. We could have kept our distance. But still, I was surprised that so many people were walking around. I think that's because, as I said, these districts bordering the Mar, they are very urbanized. There is not enough space, not enough parks and nowhere to go. So if and you taking a walk was every time allowed because people need to get fresh air. And the neighbors all over the place, they had no other if they had no space to do a nice walk there. And I think that's the reason. And it was still more lively than probably other neighborhoods.

Speaker 1: And I saw that many normal conventional streets are being transformed or appointed as shared spaces right now by the city of Vienna. Do you think this is a good way to maintain distance on the streets?

Speaker 2: Yeah, I mean, there was a time when we still were under strict lockdown that they were so there were no many not many cars around. Why not open it up like they did with the Ringstraße. It was a pedestrian area for two or three weeks. They also built in the second district, one street was transformed into a bike lane. And that's a bit not, because that street, somebody put nails on it. So the car, the cyclists, they ruined their bicycles. That was not nice. Somebody was not happy with this transformation. It was on the second day or something. Yeah, it was a nice idea. If, you know, if you can only do walks, if you can only go for a walk and nothing else. I think it's also very refreshing to to go around the city and see it from another perspective, because if you're not been at the parade or a demonstration, you have no possibility to walk on the Ringstraße really, on the middle of it.

Speaker 1: Yeah. And since the Mariahilfer Straße already was a shared space. Do people visit the Mariahilfer Straße more often because the street allows them to keep distance from other people.

Speaker 2: Might be. Yes. But I can't I can't really give you a hundred percent answer because I don't know. I've not been around lots of Vienna during the lockdown.

Speaker 1: Yeah. And also it's a shopping street and people just keep shopping of course. At least that's what I see. That's what I see in the Netherlands on Saturday. The street is or the city centre is so crowded like there hasn't been a pandemic at all. It's really weird to experience that people just ignore everything and just go out because they want to shop or something.

Speaker 2: And that was not possible in Austria as all the stores were closed. But they also, the cafes were closed. And as I said mostly the neighbors that were walking there because there was space. But yeah, I don't think that a lot of people from other areas really went there. Because if I want to do a walk, I got to park right around the corner. I got many parks right around the corner. I live a bit on the outside of Vienna. So I didn't took the underground in pandemic times to go for a walk at the Mariahilfer Straße. So I think it only the people living there did that.

Speaker 1: Yeah. OK. That's were my questions. Are there any things you want to add?

Speaker 2: I think that Mariahilfer Straße was so criticized. It's almost everything. It was a project from the Green Party. In Vienna, we got a coalition between a social democratic and the green one, and it was their baby that was their big project. And they were so criticized. And there was so much hate against them. And I think that has evaporated because now people see that this is actually right. And it's such a good. I think at this first project, You know, it took years. It took years. It was so it was so weird when they build it. It did. It was it was when they built it that was really exhausting to walk there because there was, you walked over a construction area. It was also the shopkeepers. They were so pissed because they were afraid that this construction area. They do have losses. But I think now, now

everybody likes it and everybody accepts it. And I think it was very important because I got the feeling that more and more Begegnungszonen are now built. I have the feeling that in the newest districts like ?? and ??, where they built it completely new. They actually do have streets where there was never a car driving. So they really build the street, just as pedestrian area. And also like Rotenturmstraße, it's from Cathedral down to Schwedenplatz. It's the very Center, really touristic center, also built now a Begegnungszone. And I got the impression that there was way less needed to get more. It's a very small street, so it's not very long. It's not that huge as Mariahilfer Straße. But I think that since Mariahilfer Straße works out that nice that everybody got used to it. The acceptance for new pedestrian areas like that or new Begegnungszonen is way higher. And this is this is something which really. Which really is important. And I also think that the green parties like generally they try to take away space from cars. And also Austria is just a very car-loving country, almost like the Germans. And this is never very popular. But once they did it, and people saw that it's actually nice. It's it's accepted, for example, also in Austria. Car drivers pay high taxes. But public transportation especially is cheap as fuck. I don't know any kind in any other city that that big that has such cheap transport, and it's also high quality transport. So I think that's a really great development, you know. Yeah. I'm generally not in favor of cars. Not just not just from an economic or ecological perspective, but also it's it's way nicer to be in a city where there're not so much cars. Not so much traffic.

Speaker 1: Yeah. Because then the strolling became nicer. Especially now I walk so much more since the whole quarantine stuff etc. And well, I lived in the same city all my life and I've seen so many new places because of it. And I think when there are less cars, you just start to walk more so.

Speaker 2: That's what happened. Me, too. I'm leaving here since a year in that area. And I was exploring the neighborhood so much in that time. I think it's it's a very great thing. And I hope I hope that they'll do that more often.

Speaker 1: Yeah, well, maybe maybe they see my thesis one day.

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Monday June 1, 2020 (11 am). In-depth interview with interviewee 4.

Speaker 1: So I prepared some questions and we will just have a conversation about them and about your answers. Generally, the first three questions are about the situation before the Corona situation, because I also have one question about the shared space during the Corona situation. And just let me know if you don't have a clear answer or a clear picture about something. But the first question is if you can describe the Mariahilfer Straße and the shared spaces for me from your point of view.

Speaker 2: Okay, um. You know this. That's space. This is a kind of eh, before it was a shopping area. Shopping street, where people go and even up to now. But now, since it's been made a shared space for both pedestrians and cyclists and motorists. So it's no longer so, shall I say so accessible, so friendly, like before? From my vantage point, from my point of view, as I say, a visually impaired, as a blind person. Oh, before I had then, I have two more. Two modes, two systems of mobility. The, with the guide dog, guide dog. And with a guide dog I have no problem there because the dog will negotiate its way, through the many people around. So I never noticed that, except when there were somebody standing in front of us or so, or the dog stops at across the road. But, um, so that is one system of mobility for me. Goodness, I have no problem with that. And so I can use this, the shared space just like everyone else with a guide dog. But then with the traditional assistance, help for mobility for a blind person. That is, when negotiating my way with a white cane with a cane, white cane. A long cane. Then, it is very, very problematic. Because, although they have made a lot of effort to make it accessible to include accessibility, support for blind people in this zone. Well still, it is still with a cane

alone, it is very, very difficult to negotiate. For instance, I can't use the wall of the buildings as a guide. You know? Cause you know what it is. You have the path, the road where the people go. For cars and for cyclists and for motorists. They have made a good effort, I must say, to include these, you know, tactile guide on the on the ground. So even if you come from, the tip of your cane, it's like a rail and you can be moving, you're pushing your cane along and walking along instead of like walking along the walls at the left. You can just use the guide on the ground. It tactile ground like a rail to move. And then left, right, left, right are these rails, that guide. And in the middle you have the cars and the bicycles moving, all right. Okay. But they've done a very good job here. The people that constructed this area, this shared space environment that if I follow this guide on the ground. This tactile guide. I followed it with my cane. And whenever there is a brick, let's say on the left hand side or on my right hand side where, you know, cars can just stop. Or you can just can kiss and ride. I mean, drop somebody off because there the cars are not allowed to move faster than 20 kilometer, 20 kilometers per hour. Right. So you will see it right there you will see a brick in the in this guide and. Sure. Telling you that going to get left, going to the left, to the side. Then you will enter this parking area. But. There is no how, if I'm walking in the right on the road on this path. There's no how I can know whether, since I'm not walking along the wall. There's no how I can know whether I've entered a different building or not, you know. And that is one. And then. I also have the risk of being a, how do I say it? I never collided with a bicycle because they always, the cyclists are very fast. Even with the electoral bicycle, you know, which you can't hear. And then the cars, since they are at, they are running at low speed, 20 kilometer per hour. That's not how I can hear them from far away acoustically. You know that, too, to get tempted to pay attention. You know that pose a big risk for me, you know, because I can't hear them. And not only me, but I mean even for people who are severely visually handicapped. Yeah, there are. And such people, if they don't have such a, usually they don't have something to identify them, which you can see from the distance. And, you know, the philosophy behind the shared zone. This shared space, is that motorists make eye contact with pedestrians. So they can already know or know whether the pedestrian has seen them. Or what the pedestrian was about to do. But there somebody is severely visually handicapped. This eye contact is not there. That can be a misinformation that the driver, the motorist may misunderstand. The what the visually impaired was about about to do, you know? So that's one thing. And then, you know at this Mariahilfer Straße you have two crossroads there. Because I think it's about three point six miles. And on both, on either of these junctions you have acoustic traffic light. And they've done a good job here because they've made it possible for a blind person to be able to stop traffic, to stop the cars at his own, when he wants to. He or she wants to cross the road, you know. But with the EU key, we have this EU key, that is an EU key which whatever the, for public conveniences, public toilets, public bathrooms, even at the airports within the EU. So you have these key if I arrive, if I come in, if I arrive in, if I come to Holland. I can use any public facilities there, toilets. I mean, for handicapped people with the key, you know. But this key is problematic for, since we have an open society nowadays for visitors, for tourists from other countries outside the EU. They won't be able to use this, won't be able to use this shared space environment, you know, because they cannot operate this. I mean, they can use it. But I mean, using the, operating the, controlling the traffic light. They won't be able to do it. So, and then a universal key, you know there's also a universal key, which you can use all over the world. Such a key would be more practical for blind visitors coming to Vienna, and then using this area. So I mean, it's a good idea. But to be honest with you, miss Lankhorst, to be honest with you. I would prefer, at home, it's more practical for me to negotiate my way in the Kelnerstraße, that is, let's say German Fußgängerzone. So there are no cars at all. There are no cars. So it's predictable. You can move and you know, you can only bump into people. And bicycles, I think the bicycles, I don't know whether they are allowed there. But that wouldn't. This has that, that I can face in the Mariahilfer Straße, shared space environment. I don't have that, and the normal Fußgängerzone, you know, shopping precincts area, you know, for pedestrians. That one is safer for me. These are, of course the idea is good that the pedestrians, cyclists, motorists and then everybody can use a common place. But there are advantages and

disadvantages. But for me, as a visually, as a handicapped person, I have more hazard. It's more hazardous for me at an pedestrian only area.

Speaker 1: Yeah. And does the shared space make you feel unsafe?

Speaker 2: Yes, because, independent mobility for, unless I have that, I go with my dog. That's a different thing, a different matter. That's when I feel more at ease. But with my cane alone, I'm just lost, you know.

Speaker 1: Yeah. And I read in an article that dogs, guide dogs are trained to indicate the curbs and navigate their way through a street by, for example, to curbs. And when the curbs are not there, like in a shared space, that dogs might choose the way with the least people. Is a dog, is a guide dog doing that?

Speaker 2: Yes, I know what you mean. Yeah, yeah. That is the problem we have, because it is not only in this Mariahilfer Straße shared space zone, environment. Also any way in the city where there are crossroads, where there are ramps. You know, we call them ramps. Because these ramps have been constructed to help wheelchair users, you know, to be able to go to the 11th District level and go back to the other side. But for blind people, it can be, it's difficult. Except, if the dog is well trained to use the, to know the markings, these yellow markings on the street, you know. Otherwise, the dog would, my own dog usually moves a little bit to the left where there is still a curb. You know, where then we can step down. But where you have the ramp, it's always very difficult for the dog to know where the street stops. Where the, we call it in German Fahrbahn, you know, where the cars are driving and then where it's safe, where we should be standing? The dog if, but if there are people that is okay. But if one is alone, there, and two cars rode that lawn and the dog is not able to differentiate between the boundary, the curb and the street and the driving area. Then it can be problematic. So my dog is, my present dog, he's trained in the United States. Where you have so many cars and all that. So he's trained to sort of crossing the road from where you have that ramp. He moves to the left where you have the curb. Which is safer, but in this shared space environment in the Mariahilfer Straße, you don't have that.

Speaker 1: No. Because actually your dog are your, is your eyes. And you said that he negotiates the way for you. And when there are a lot of pedestrians on the side, ways of the shared space in the Mariahilfer Straße. Does the dog choose to go via what is driving lane in the shared space?

Speaker 2: No, because because of this markierung, this tactile thing, which also has a contrast color. I think is yellow for people who are who have residual vision. So, they can see it. And the dog doesn't go beyond that. Just as on the tube stations, U-Bahn Stationen. So because there is a similar marking, yellow marking. So kind of a boundary, so that you don't. Passengers cannot fall over into the rail where the train is running. Yeah. So the dog trained to observe that and to respect that and not to move further than that. Yeah, that's exactly what the talk also does in the shared space area, because it follows the tactile mark. It is that tactile marking on the ground. Of course, it's a bit tricky, you know, because this color, this yellow color attempts, if then they're not renewed. The dog may not see it and made the walk on the Fahrbahn. With cars that run on the road and the of course, the drivers, the cars, the motorist sees they are driving only 20 kilometers an hour. So it's not so it's so risky they can stop and let a blind person when they see the dog in walking gear. They would take notice. They pick up contact, establish contact with the dog or with me, and then maybe let us go, move over to the other side. Because people are running here and there, you know. They don't wait, you don't wait until at the junction. The crossroads to cross to the other side. So along the road, pedestrians, cyclists just, you know, helped us get that bit from one side to the other, you know? It's a very risky business. Very risky and very dangerous.

Speaker 1: Did you ever experience a specific situation, a specific dangerous situation?

Speaker 2: No, I've never, I've never since I'm not that very often in the Mariahilfer Straße. And when I go there, I go do shopping or and then I go with someone. And so I've not had experienced such a situation where I could say, I would say I was in real danger.

Speaker 1: And how would you say that the shared space influences your behavior differently than in other conventional streets?

Speaker 2: Yeah. In other conventional streets, yeah, there I don't have to be so alert because of the movement of people. And the shared space area is, the movement of people, the pedestrians, the cars, the cyclists is unpredictable. So, yeah, that makes it even more tricky for me to move, you know. Yeah, but in conventional streets, conventional areas, that the movement of people is predictable. For instance, the cars, they have the area where they are running. Even bicycle's have where they are supposed to ride. And then people coming from the people in front or behind you. They are predictable. At that same time, you have the, if you if I'm using a cane. I have to guide with the houses, you know. It's much easier. It's not so stressful for me as in these shared space area. I mean, I can imagine that even for sighted people. It's not that it's not so simple to have to be on the alert using the, only where they have the advantage of vision, you know, so they can manage. But for somebody who relies only on feeling and on hearing. With these limitations. It can be tricky, you know. Yeah. Very, very tricky.

Speaker 1: And with the whole development of electric cars and such. Are you more worried about that?

Speaker 2: Yeah, because I'm worried about that, because I, well, because the before I hear an electric car. And, you know, it's already very close to me. And I mean, it is the noise because I rely heavily on hearing. Acoustic, so if the noise is not loud enough. And that's for sure when the cars moving very fast, you know, by the time I notice, I realize, it's already very close. Maybe a few meters away from me. So that is the danger.

Speaker 1: Yeah. I can imagine. Yeah.

Speaker 2: That is the risk, yes.

Speaker 1: And how do the other people in the share space determine how you behave?

Speaker 2: The people are very, very cooperative. Since I live here, in a very enlightened society where the people are very supportive of handicapped people. So I am. I always get the support I need from the people. And whenever I'm confused, you know, I just stop and wait. And either someone will just approach me, you know? 'Can I help you?' Yeah. You know, or someone passing by I say 'excuse me'. And then I can say my, ask the person for support of where I am. But nowadays you see a little bit much easy, you know, since we have all these technology. So I have the navigation app, you know, navi's and the way different kinds of them that I can stop and ask my, ask them online help assistance, assistant 'where am I?'. And it will tell me where I am, you know. Or what about my surroundings. I could use my iPhone, my and then point my camera to everything around me. And it can describe the area to me? It's much easier nowadays. It's much easier with technologies. Compared with technologies. With the dog. With the cane. So yeah, we can manage it somehow.

Speaker 1: And when you enter a shared space or when you exit a shared space, are you aware of that always?

Speaker 2: Yeah, when I enter. Yeah, if I did it. No, if I didn't plan it in advance, and I enter there by chance. Then, because of the many people around. Because of the movement of people. Unless it's on a Sunday and if it's now because it's not possible because of the lockdown. But it's because of people are there, running up and down. So I immediately know, 'ah the movement is unlike else'. Unlike on a traditional street because you feel immediately, because I'm totally blind, you know, you feel immediately that the space is wide, the street is like, what we call an Avenue. All the roads in the United States, you know. They are wide. And so I immediately know 'ah this is, it is a different zone'. Then I would know. Yeah. Unless I haven't used my technology to either check my phone. I could still hear by voice than I would know where I am. I realize that is the Mariahilfer Straße, the shared space environment, area.

Speaker 1: Yeah. And when the you share space transforms into the FUZO, by what kind of elements are you made aware of that?

Speaker 2: That is, if I try to see it from, because the continuation of Mariahilfer Straße. Because then the whole situation changes. Okay. You don't hear, I don't hear cars passing by. I don't hear the cars and it's a lot, of course the terrace and the shops and where people drink outside, sit outside. It's more or less the same I think in the shared space area, but I noticed immediately the change, especially no cars.

Speaker 1: Yeah. OK. And when cyclists are driving very fast. What kind of troubles does that give you?

Speaker 2: Yeah, the trouble is this that, if I'm with my dog. My dog might want to go to the left or to the right. My dog will not know how to avoid the coalition with the cyclist, with the bicycle. If I'm with my cane, it is the same, you know, it's very, very dangerous. I remember some years, a few years ago, we from our Verband, from the blind organization here, we converged there in the Mariahilfer Straße to protest. Yeah, the dangers. The people understand, aware of the dangers that these cyclists, these bicycle's posed to us blind people using the Fußgängerzone.

Speaker 1: So the cars are not that much of a trouble, but the cyclists are?

Speaker 2: Yes, the cyclists.

Speaker 1: And for what kind of activities do you visit and the shared spaces in the Mariahilfer Straße?

Speaker 2: What kind of activity?

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Speaker 2: I do or what?

Speaker 1: For shopping, or different?

Speaker 2: I go there for shopping. You know, I go there for shopping and attempts to meet with friends before coronavirus problem. To sit outside and in summertime and have a drink or coffee, you know, or meet for a chat. Yeah. To do shopping. To buy. To buy things there. That's what I do there. Yeah.

Speaker 1: And in the shared spaces also a lot of benches are placed.

Speaker 2: Yeah they have. These are what they're called here 'Schanigarten'. You know, its like a terrace. These are those shops, are those in coffee shops and they do have benches and some seats in front of that shop, you know. Where people can sit and relax and they eat and drink or something like that, chat.

Speaker 1: Yeah. But there are also many general benches in the street itself that are not owned by cafes and restaurants.

Speaker 2: Okay.

Speaker 1: Do you use those?

Speaker 2: I have not, I do not use that one. Normally, when I go to Parks it's in connection with relieving my dog. But there I only go there only to socialize with people, you know. And then I sit in front of the shop or something. But another area where you have all these public, I mean, area we have beaches and the parks and all that. It's just that park, you know, it's just so relieve the dog, and killing two birds with one stone, sitting down there enjoying the environment and just letting my dog play with other dogs around.

Speaker 1: And did you visit the Mariahilfer Straße since the pandemic?

Speaker 2: No, I've not actually, because of the lockdown. To be honest with you, I have not travelled to Vienna this much.

Speaker 1: No. Okay.

Speaker 2: I don't know when we could get the confidence to be able to live normal again. And the distance, because of the distancing rule you know. I always wear my mask. Because as a blind person I cannot see my distance from the other person you know. Sighted people they can see their distance so they know how to behave, but for a blind person, I don't know. So that's why I always wear my mask. When I'm going to the city at the moment, I don't have the confidence, you know.

Speaker 1: And do you think you would be more confident about that when a street provides enough space to keep distance?

Speaker 2: You mean, I didn't catch that question.

Speaker 1: Well, on a normal sidewalk. It's very difficult to keep distance from other people, especially when you don't see your distance. But, for example, in the Mariahilfer Straße there are no sidewalks and you can walk anywhere. Would that enhance your confidence?

Speaker 2: Somehow. But I should, I wouldn't as yet leave my face mask at home. Even if I have my face mask, I can dare to do that. You know, I can attempt to do that. But the confidence as such, it's still like for many people, many of us, you know, it's a question of confidence. It doesn't mean that I would catch it, catch the virus. But from what we hear around that, the way the virus behaves, so it is still a little bit difficult for one to feel so free. Freedom, to move around. And because we don't know who's out there. Yeah, especially when many people are moving around. But here in the village where I am, where I live. It's a lot easier because we have enough space here, you know. You have baby

killer?? as a distance between you and daddy next door neighbor. So, yeah. But, um, hopefully by next year or sometime we'll have that vaccine. If I have a vaccine that would give somebody, if I'm vaccinated, inoculated, I can go, I wouldn't mind. Go anywhere. Travelling, flying, that's would be a good solution for us, but we we still have to wait. But meanwhile we are doing all we can. Hygiene, washing your hands, and distancing. And that's all we can do right now. You know, and then the mask. To control the danger as much as we can. But the danger is still there. That is the fear we all have you know.

Expert interviews: politicians

Monday June 1, 2020 (12 pm). Expert interview with interviewee 1 (SPÖ).

Speaker 1: I was wondering if you knew about the political challenges of these shared spaces in the Mariahilfer Straße back then.

Speaker 2: Yeah, well, the political challenge back then was a little bit bigger than we were. As the result was that positivity ended because, as you know, it was the first coalition between the Social Democrats and their Green Party at this very space. The first legislation period. And at that time, it was not really clear what is going to be implemented there. The first discussion was not really recognized by all, that it was about shared space of Begegnungszonen. We started to talk about shared space. And that shared space is a terminal we can't use because it's protected. So then we started to talk about Begegnungszone, well, the first thing that people realized and that part of discussion was, is that the Mariahilfer Straße was going to be turned in a Fußgängerzone. So absolutely a place where no normal traffic will be. And that made two things that normally the Viennese and the Viennese population are very anxious to reluctant when hearing about new changes that could happen. The Mariahilfer Straße was a street which was renovated with a lot of money during the implementation and the construction of the underground beneath. So it was in a very good condition, it was not a street which we had to refurbish and or to build again. There weren't any wide places for people to walk, and it was one of the most important streets in the city where there's a lot of shops there. So it was great really at the beginning a little bit a thing that nobody really knew. Mariahilfer Straße lies between the border of two districts. The 7th districts, which was hold by a green majority in the Bezirk. And the 6th district, was owned by the Social Democrats, which are also know that they're really urbanic party there. And than we had the big discussions, from the shops from the commerce chamber. Which said 'Oh, my God. We will lose a lot of customers there if we do this. And it was a challenge for the budget of the city because the budget of the city was also of the government before, where we promised two big Fußgängerzonen in the 10th district and the 12th to refurbish and build again. So a lot of resources were took there and then they started the discussion Wienerlinien. This is the authority of the bus lines, who said 'what are you going to do with our bus moving there?' There was the discussions 'How about the crossing in this street?' Because there is a big street connecting the two districts. Well, crossing the Mariahilfer Straße. 'What's going to happen there?' And then a big discussion started with all the stakeholders. The district said, 'OK, when we'll do it then we'll try to reduce the traffic that is crossing this two districts. The Kroner said, this is one of the most important and influential newspaper in Austria, which is like Boulevard. Well, they started a big campaign against the street. Then we have to bring all these politicians of local districts, 7th and that 6th District. We have to bring the people off that commerce chamber. We have to talk to the people living there. And then at the end, we decided to make a mixture there. So we said to reduce the fears of the people, that the Fußgängerzone was only being a short place, a short length of the street. The rest would be Begegnungszonen, nobody knew what is Begegnungszone. And then we had to find a solution for the bus and than the union of the bus driver said, 'well, it's for us impossible'. And we had to tell them, 'okay, then we will have a second driver', or a guy sitting with them because they said this will be a danger for the people. Then a lot of bicycle riders said, 'OK, that's good'. Then they started to drive very fast in this street. So we had to be careful. And as long as you didn't rebuild and

construct it in the street. So just to implement the Begegnungszone without a fearing the passes where people walk and the people give them the impression that this is really a united space, then people would still not like to walk on the street because as you see that there's there's a construction borders, then you're not really feeling well walking there. And even though the car drivers want to drive less speedy this 20 kilometer per hour, if they saw it's a right space. So I think it was a really a very big , complex experience. We stand there then we decided that we make a public Burgerbeteiligung, so the people could speak. And then we made even, how do you call it? So we ask that people in there. And then we start with, of course, the discussions about who are allowed to vote? Only the people living there or the whole of the Viennese people. So that's was interesting to see that people living there were they were accepting it while the discussions was about all Vienna. So people who maybe never goes there or they seldom are there, or maybe they go three times a year to the Mariahilfer Straße. They were against the construction, while people living was not against it. And then the commerce chamber said that all the shops on the second and third street, they were the ones who are going to die, and that they would not have any existence anymore? But at the end the result shows that it was a better condition for all the place. Because the life quality was backed up. But then we had, of course, the whole budget from the street innovation where then concentrated on the Mariahilfer Straße. So we had of course the district and the 12th District and the 10th District who we had promised that their Fußgängerzone will be renovated. Their public space had to wait longer years. So it was really impressive. But at the end, when everybody saw this result nobody is now talking one second and criticizing this decision, but also, it was a very interesting situation to see that you can win a thing, even if the Kroner Zeitung is campaigning against it. This was one of the biggest challenges that happened.

Speaker 1: OK. And what was your own stance in the whole discussion?

Speaker 2: Well, I was at the time not the one who initiated it. I was was a member of the Commission for Urban Planning and Traffic, but we had a spokesman who unfortunately passed already. It was really sometimes very interesting because sometimes we had already a solution. Then there came, because we thought that the Green Party would like to have more and the Social Democrats to have less. But then we noticed that the chairman of the Fifth District, which was a social Democrat, she's the one who wants more shared spaces and more reducing of traffic than the Green Party. So sometimes it was a very interesting experience, not even knowing where discussions would lead to. There was, of course, a personal problem. She should get a serious illness at that time. So she was in treatment. So, the one who made the discussions and the negotiations was her deputy. Then she came healthy back and she was not really very satisfied by the result, and she opted more. So it was a really interesting challenge, how to get the interests of the traffic association which belongs to Vienne, to get the interests of the people living there and how to deal with a media campaign of the Kroner Zeitung against it and how to get the interests of the whole political decisions, which has the whole Vienna in its focus and those of the local, at the place. But it was interesting to see if there were some differences, which I thought it would be very difficult and impossible. Why, for example, cutting this crossing possibility. So I thought that would lead to our traffic chaos in Vienna. But that didn't happen fortunately. So it's interesting to see that sometimes you could be a little bit more brave and try to make decisions that, at the end, everyone would accept. So we know that it's one of the possibilities, one of the good things that if you want to reduce traffic and impose life quality, this is one of the most important things, Begegnungszone is one of the things that you should implement and you could really fantastic use. And it's less controversial than than a Fußgängerzone, where you cut the traffic for all. Now I'm sure that it's very, very important to make a participation, to let the people living there have their minds, maybe make a temporary solution that they could see what is the benefit of it? And then also to have the participating of those district entities, of a small district, to their will. Because you have to communicate and to show the people on how it's happening and you can really, like it is now in the Medlingerhauptstraße. We have a Fußgängerzone and we have a very beautiful market

and there is a gap between that two. And this gap we connected it now with a Begegnungszone, where there's a metro station and there are some shops. And if you go there, then you just see the life quality and how beautiful it became. People who live in the urbanic, the cars, and the pedestrians and the cyclists have the same rights and really live together. That's really a result what you can show the people, it's for more benefits than because of the impacts it will have.

Speaker 1: Yeah. And the next question is about the functioning of the shared space nowadays because it's functioning for five years already. Could you describe these shared spaces in the Mariahilfer Straße to me?

Speaker 2: Well we have, a parts of the street which is a Fußgängerzone, that's functioning fantastic. And the place where the shared space is, is also very interesting because we saw that cars avoid this place as long as they really could, because for a long time they didn't really know where it's allowed to drive. And where is not allowed to drive, everybody driving a little bit much slowly and reduced their speed. And nobody drives in, only those who really have to go there, because they live there or they have to bring products there or to connect someone, or the taxis. So if you go to the Begegnungszone, you will have more the impression it's really a Fußgängerzone than it's a Begegnungszone. So the result is fantastic and the way how we invested and we are built and we refurbished the street. It became fantastic. We have more space to implement trees again, to green the place. So you will see, it's very vital functioning street and and nobody of the shops died, and nobody of the commercial spaces have to suffer. Of course, during the construction. But we didn't make it in one. But we made it on three steps. And I can only say it's a fantastic good experience. And we have the good thing that, it was at the beginning of the legislation period. So the first or second year after the elections, we started so when we went to elections five years later, it was not an issue anymore. None of that political opposition was strictly against it. Just to make it to an issue. And this is the best result. It was accepted and positive because otherwise opposition parties, which would otherwise make it an issue during the election.

Speaker 1: And to what extent does the shared space contribute to the active mode of transport in the city?

Speaker 2: You mean that public transportation?

Speaker 1: Do people walk or cycle more because of the implementation of t shared space?

Speaker 2: Well, they cycle there more, yes you notice that. They walk more, but unfortunately, I don't have to know the details of how many? It exceeded or? It's just a personal impression that the streets became more used by the people. At the beginning, when the construction was not made, you still saw the people that were still walking on the side of the street because they were not sure how to deal with them with a strip in the middle. Now, the space is unified and there is only where you can see this is the place where a car can park, people are using it. And because the people are now using the whole space, that helped also the cyclists and the cars to reduce their speed and not to use it. But at beginning the cyclists and, you know, there is a slope in the Mariahilfer Straße. So the cyclists they were using it really as it was an Autobahn. So really, very fast. This is one the, a problem in our culture in Vienna that we have to learn everybody to have more respect and take care fo the other traffic participants. And so I have the impression, yes. But I don't have the precise details on how many percentage.

Speaker 1: What's your impression on the safety in the shared spaces?

Speaker 2: Well, I think this is very good because I never heard about a accident. So it was never a discussion in the. I think at the moment, Well that people, where you show exactly by your construction and rebuilding, replanning the street, then the people will automatically take care. As I mentioned before, the cars show definitely because the cars, they are avoiding it. Because they are not sure 'is possible to go there or not?' 'What am I going to do there. Maybe the police will punish me'. So it brought a reduction, and any reduction of car traffic, that means that the safety will be higher. And the second thing, it shows that the cars are really obeying to the speed limit. They're not allowed to drive in the city more than 20 kilometer per hour as a speed. And everybody knows, if you reduce speed, then the security will be higher. And the Mariahilfer Straße is a very, very wide street, so it's not a small one. So really, really big space. And if you walk there then you will see that you have actually really the impression, as if it was a Fußgängerzone with some cars out there. And you see it also in the Medlingerhauptstraße, in the 12th District, where we implemented in my constituency also a part of this Begegnungszone. That rebuilding the space makes the security higher. That's very interesting. If someone doesn't have the impression that this is my space and I can do what they want, but they have the impression this is a space where three different kinds of humans are using it. Pedestrians, cyclists, and me as a car driver. So everybody is really taking care of the rest. And there's a lot of respect. And I would call it coexistence. We all have been the same rights. Nobody has has the impression he's done wrong on crossing the street. But like I said, nobody is also provoking the other one. They're just walking slowly in front of a car to avoid them to. On other side the car is not coming a little bit faster to tell him, 'hey, what are you doing here?' Everybody is really relaxed and in his behavior. And that makes the situation a little bit easier for too easy all of us.

Speaker 1: You said before that the Mariahilfer Straße already was in a very good condition. What would you say about the quality of the public space now?

Speaker 2: Well, it's better off course because it was rebuilt again. It was also interesting to see, you never notice the topography, but we saw there's not only a slope by, in the length direction. There's also a slope in the wide direction. So they had to sort of rebuild it again to keep the water come. Also they had the logical problem when raining. So it was interesting to see that you have also slope on the wide axis. For many people this was 'oh my God. What's this. Is this something new?' This was really built by very beautiful stones again. And and of course, the possibility to make new more green spaces. And those spaces for the Schanigarten, so there where restaurants and coffee shops could have space for their tables, trying to serve on open air. Now with Coronatimes it's one of the most benefits, sitting open air and not inside. So, it definitely increased life quality and the condition of the street and its infrastructure.

Speaker 1: There was critique on the idea of a shared space before, because of the influence it could have on local businesses. How did that work out?

Speaker 2: Well, I think that it's not an issue anymore, this is the proof that it didn't was negative. So lots of shops still there. I don't know if you even heard that we implemented, the Mariahilfer Straße is a very long street, we talk only about were it is a shopping street in the 6th and 7th District. But after crossing the Gurtel, this big street where the Mariahilfer Straße the 15th District, which was in a, let's say, in a second class direction. We you have 1 euro shops or even empty shops and there on this place, we implemented now or, we are constructing now the first IKEA in the world that is not on the outskirts of the city, but it's in the Central city. This is the first IKEA in the world where you don't have parking spaces for customers. So the customers go there to shop, but they don't take, only the small things, for instance if they buy glasses. But you don't take the furniture you bought from there. That would be sent to your by a logistic system. Or you can go to the main store outside Vienna and collect it yourself. So this is the first IKEA where you drive there with the public transportation and this is already on the place where it was that fantastic, good place of the Mariahilfer Straße. So that shows

that even these places which were already originally in a very bad economic situation, they are getting now even improving attractiveness for the places. And if you were walking now from the Mariahilfer Straße on the seventh district side, then you will see that the streets leading there, for example, the ??gasse and those seats. They even got an upgrade, an improving possibility because the shared space works, where it was a little bit built. Or on the other side, we have on the Liniengasse, which is a street on the Mariahilfer Straße we have now a fantastic construction activity where even new flats, new households are built. So I think that the profit is expanding because of this reduced traffic, improved the life quality, improved the quality of air. And this place, people can walk safely. You have a lot of new restaurants, new cool ?? places. So I think there is no discussions. I'm sitting in the city council and I remember 10 years ago when we started to discuss about the Mariahilfer Straße all the time, the conservative party was all the time saying that this poor commerce areas will not survive, they will have problems. And this is not coming anymore. Never, never, not even once. And that is for me the indication that it's not an issue. Otherwise, they would use it every time. Even in the elections of the commerce chamber it was not an issue anymore. At the beginning, they even wanted that the employees working there should also have the right to vote for their for their street. And then the city says, no, it's democratically not very easy just to decide who has the right to vote. You can't say those who live there now have the right to vote. So those who are willing to have had the right to vote, including the members of the European Union. Than the conservative party say 'oh come on, you're allowing foreigners to vote, but you're not allowing those working there to vote'. So it was, even at that time, a big discussion how to decide and how to explain the people who has the right to vote and who doesn't have the right to vote, and the participation.

Speaker 1: How would you describe the impact of the shared spaces onto the climate change?

Speaker 2: You know, the climate change and the reduction of traffic would help to reduce the emissions. But I think as long as a reduction of traffic using cycling to move, but also in our strategy in Vienna is that we're talking almost about the model ???. So we were always talking about the people who should implement in their moving everything, even walking was in there. And if you want to tell the people to walk, you have to give them an attractive pass to walk, if you have the impression when you are moving from one place A to B. You're not only moving, but you are also, we say in German 'flanieren', just go and walk, enjoy your life quality. Enjoy the beautiful houses, the beautiful environment. People will walk because it's a combination not just moving from one place to another, which is also improving your life quality. You are breathing in air, you are in a psychologist mood. It's a big benefit and I think well, why not? We have one of the biggest discussions now since two years is about the climate heat. I used to live in a city where we were all our lives discussing how to heat the city. In Austria we have very cold winter, so we have that good windows. Maybe it's different to the Netherlands. We have really this two or three layered glasses. We had to make the isolation of the building. How to reduce heating, heating, heating eh reduce cooling. Well, our challenge was how to compete with the cold winters. And now we have a perfect change that we're talking about the heat. It's too hot. If we don't do something, then Vienna will be in 70 years like in Africa. And now we're talking all the time about cooling zones, how to make the cooling area, how to cool and reduce the heat in the summer. So and one of the strategies is not even reducing traffic, but also to regreen and make a lot of green space. You know Vienna, is usually 50 percent of various green area. But that doesn't mean that there is everywhere enough green and that there is enough shadow. So we need shadowing, we need trees. We need a lot of the green spaces. And if you want to implement all these things that almost only help you, also when you have Begegnungszonen because with the Begegnungszonen you get a lot of space and other space, because if you implement the tree on the place where usually the pedestrians, you have to walk. So you're not taking space from them away because they have another space to walk around the tree. And around the tree beyond the sides where the cars drive. That means, for the climate change, it's one of the possibilities where you can implement your measures, how to get, help the challenge to reduce the heat from the city is winning

more space. For when it's raining and building shadows, shadowing the area, and even building some cooling points where the water sprays and the people feel a little bit cooler. And this space you can easily gain when you implement a Begegnungszone than if you have a normal street where this is where they drive and this is where they park. And so you don't have really the possibility how to move around these places.

Speaker 1: Currently, of course, we have a different challenge, the COVID 19 pandemic. And I read that the city of Vienna is transforming several streets into pedestrian zones, and Begegnungszonen in order to enable physical distance between people. What is your view on this?

Speaker 2: Well, that happened exactly in this time, but it was a little bit, it was of attention how the way it was communicated. We have, as you know, in Vienna that I mentioned, a lot of green areas. And then when we had the position that people should reduce their contacts and not leave your house. There was one other thing that was allowed. It's just go walking with our family. So a lot of people had the chance, the possibility to have a lot of green areas nearby to go. But we have also some areas, which was a very dense building district and there was a beautiful big parks nearby like Castle of Schonbrun, or like the Augarten or like the building there are the historic big palaces of empire time with a big, big open space area with parks and green. And the government just closed them. They didn't allow people to use these parks that was under the control of the federal government. All the parks that were under the control of the city of Vienna was, of course, open. So we were all the time asking the federal government, why are you just closing these parks? There is not really an explanation that they could use the parks of the city of Vienna, but not allowed to use the big Schonbrun castle. And it was you know, I was sort of a bit ? between the conservative government, working on the federal level and the social democratic government, working in Vienna. And the Green Party had the problem that they were in coalition in Vienna with the Social Democrats, and that they were in coalition with the federal government and they were actually on our side, that they couldn't just explain to their coalition partner, the federal government, why are we closing the park areas and then we started with this discussion 'okay, we will implement Begegnungszonen temporarily in the city of Vienna, just to enable the people that walk. And it was really I think that our position, our opinion was if we want to do it, then we have to do it in accordance with the local district government. In every district you have an elected, small mayor of the district. And we have also a small city council in this district. So they should be involved, they should be a part of this implementation. We'll just tell them I'm going talk on this district, and this district. We thought that it could just change the discussion 'Why not open it? Why not open the big green area spaces nearby' So, if I'm living in the Second District, we have this Augarten, then I could walk out on the wall of this big parking area around Schonbrun and just tell me, 'OK. Then we will open the streets for you.' Walk on the street where you have more social distancing, but inside it is more social distancing. And inside you have trees, you have a beautiful way of living. So this was a controversial discussion about the country that was chosen, didn't really bring some improvements. Or sometimes I have the impression just for the statistics tried to find that I don't know, let's say 20 streets. So I can say I opened this space. But if you ask the people living there, there were no improvements for their life quality, just now using the streets additionally to the working paths of the people.

Speaker 1: And the Mariahilfer Straße already was a Begegnungszone. To what extent does the spatial design of this Begegnungszone support this distance between people?

Speaker 2: Well at that time when the measurements were implemented. It was very interesting to see that people for very, very long time, just avoided going out. So it was really a very big ???. So you couldn't do, even if you went to work with your car, because of the virus the Autobahns were free. There was a big reduction of people using public transportation. And we even reduced the trains and the public transportation, because there at the beginning not very much people going out because

there was a sort of off big, not really sure enough to know that if it's allowed or is it not allowed. At the beginning at the Mariahilfer Straße was really very empty, although it could be a very good place for people to use. But those who wanted to walk and go to the green areas of spaces they use the parks nearby. And it was at the beginning, even not allowed to travel, for example, from one side of Vienna to the other side just for walking. So I had a friend who went, for example, with the Underground to the very big island on the Danube, which is 40 kilometers long. Fantastic, great places where you can live your social distanced for the next thirty years. And when the police ask them, what are you doing here? If he would have said 'I came for work or I came to visit my uncle', that would be OK, but he made mistake and he said 'o I came t walk k on this green spac' and they saye, you know it's not allowed for you and then they punishedd.t , the beginning wa really y a big discussion. Why no allow pPeople just t walk outsides At s the han, now we have , a big discussion with the law about allowing this punishmentt. And it wa not really forbidden not to walk k because I think the politicians were communicating on the TV or something. Bu the written c law was different .

Speaker 1: And this COVID 19 pandemic is probably not the last pandemic we will have. With this in the back of your mind, what are the future challenges for cities?

Speaker 2: Well, it's very interesting because I'm always writing on the smart strategy and I also all the time writing about the city development plan for the next 10 years. And one of these very important fantasies, while this use is talking about the resilience. And despite that, it showed how resilient is a city. So I think to see there's a lot of things. Well, I've got this. One of the sequels that all the time the Rechnungshof, the institution that controls investment all the time, telling us stupid shit. You have a lot of beds at the hospitals, you have a big capacity. You don't need so many hospitals, you have to reduce the beds. And now we were so glad and proud that we had this capacity because Vienna never came in a situation that no sick guy or lady or gentlemen had to be told to go back home. One of the second things that we were all the time talking about. The city of short distances, so we implement it all the time. The schools, Kindergarten, social infrastructure, hospitals, shopping should be always within walking distance. This is one of the things that helped a lot the COVID 19 pandemic that you didn't have to go from one side to another to bring a child to the school or coming back. So that's helped a lot. We were all the time talking about 50 percent of the city should be green area. And we changed our strategy since years when implementing and building new construction places where not just planning construction buildings. We would take the whole quarter. That is going to be developed. And then all this developed area has a shared green space. Have a shared open space. Have a shared kids playing areas, so that brought for all these people, you have some on the quarter, I don't know 1500 households that are living. And they're all sharing this green and open spaces together. Not every 200 project has a small garden, but it's a very open space for all of them. So that is, for example, showed us that it's fantastic. We talked about urban garden. That helped a lot. And if you see that one of the most change, where to allow you have new infections is if you have very bad living. So, for example, oldest workers where it started again. The situation of the ?? in Germany where they're living in a very close area. So our system in Vienna of having a very high quality of social living found that 61 percent of the Viennese lives in a household that is subsidized by the city of Vienna. That means that living space is affordable, with a very high quality, if you can afford it to the people so that you don't have this clusters. Where people have to live in a very bad situation. And so this is one of the things that we we were very proud that we implemented that helped us also to drop ? And last but not least, that our commitment that public utilities should always be a thing that the city belongs. Our energy, our hospitals, our schools, our water, our environment, our garbage. All these things are offered by the public administration and was not privatized to some companies. So that still functions, we have no problem with our energy. We have no proplem with the garbage, which wasn't taken away. We have no problem that our heating system still function. If you would have had all these things in private companies, you would have the discussions that they'd become bankrupt. They don't have enough resources. So the people had, although the pandemic was there, and that there was a shutdown and

a lockdown. But nobody had once to be afraid that you will not have enough water to drink and they will not have enough food to eat. And and also our commitments that the Vienna's still stays a agricultural city, where we had till the end the possibility that a lot of the food that we had to produce and feed the people on from vegetables to everything from potatoes, tomatoes, to green that was still also possible to be produced on the space of the city of Vienna and the surrounding of Vienna. So I think all this very, very small steps should be left.

Wednesday June 3, 2020 (12 pm). Expert interview with interviewee 2 (Die Grünen).

Speaker 1: I'm wondering if you were aware about the political challenges of the Mariahilfer Straße when there was lot of political debate about it.

Speaker 2: We are. I was aware about that because we had a lot of preparation. Since 2010, there is a red green coalition in Vienna, has been red green coalition in Vienna. In preparation of the election campaign, we did kind of research and planning and we had but a program which said that the Mariahilfer Straße should be, let's say, a pedestrian zone. Or a mixed thing with a shared space. Before that, we had a debate because the Social Democrats said we are not allowed to use that name 'Shared space' because it comes from the Netherlands from Groningen, and we should find that Swiss name for the Begegnungszone. So, in fact, it's the same thing. OK. So we always refer to it as a Begegnungszone and not a shared space. But it's the same. And in Austria, before there was, we thought that the mobility, politics about mobility or mobility policy was very conservative, always focused on cars. We had already got in Vienna some pedestrian zones. But no shared space zone. Not even one. And because there was no legal basis for that in the Austrian Republic. OK. So this basis was made in I think in an 11 or something like that at the beginning of the coalition. It was possible to kind of do that. That had been certain certain flies in inside book and in Styria, two provinces of Austria. And then we made plans for that before that, before the election campaign. In the election talks after that, when red green was established, we had made up our mind. So the reds and the greens made up their minds that the Mariahilfer Straße should be a combination between pedestrian zone and shared space zones. In fact, the whole the whole street is divided into three parts. And the beginning is a shared space and then there's a pedestrian zone and then there's shared space. The reason for that is that in Austria, if you are the owner of a garage in the street, you must be allowed to go to this garage by car, by your car, not another car, but by your car. And luckily, in the inner third, there was no garage. There is no garage at all. And so we could do that. The problem we had, we had certain researches done on how people behave, what people think about that, what kind of ideas they've got. It was a kind of participation process with a few thousand people involved. But, I would say that the Conservative Party and the German nationalists were so astonished about what we were doing that there was no resistance in the beginning. Almost no resistance. The only resistance which came was from, let's say, a social democratic car owners. There's two different districts. The Mariahilfer Straße is the border between the sixth and the seventh, and the seventh is dominated by the Green Party and the sixth is dominated by the Social Democrats. But the Social Democrats in the sixth, they're very much in favor of that program of the Mariahilfer Straße. But the Social Democrats in the 7th were in opposition to that. So it was in fact, it was also an argument when arguing within the Social Democratic Party. So that was the main thing, because in Vienna, the districts, Vienna is a bit decentralized and the districts have certain powers. So one of the powers is there has to be a majority in the district about measures like paying for the streets, for the traffic signs, for the traffic lights and stuff like that. And the Social Democrats in the 7th District, together with the conservatives and the German nationalists, have found out about that and stopped the negotiations about that. There was no majority for money for the traffic signs. And so normally it would be reasonable to say, 'OK, then the city government pays for the traffic signs'. But that's not allowed in the decentralization in, let's say, in the law of the city. You're not allowed to do that. So we were really, let's say. In the beginning, we didn't fancy that that could be possible. You know what I mean? It's it's so strange that there's

such a small thing can hinder you. And they kind of postponed the whole thing for one year. So. And in the meantime, the political weather had changed. So part of the Social Democrats and the Conservative Party and the German nationalists, they ran a campaign against the Mariahilfer Straße, against the things over there and said it's going to be the Chinese wall. There is no there's no traffic possible from one district to the other and stuff like that. They said, let's say one of those in Austria. It's a I don't know what you will have. You'll have that definitely in the Netherlands. It's a car association which is running for the rights or the maybe rights of the car owners. And they said it's not possible to cross the Mariahilfer Straße and if you want to go by car from the six to the seventh district, it will take your three quarters of an hour. That was very weird because if you walk that distance, it takes you two minutes. So we had that kind of, they built walls with boxes in a demonstration. So in the end, one of the tabloids in Austria together, this is social Democratic mayor of Vienna said we had to make a plebiscite on that again. And we had in fact, we had to accept it because the coalition was crumbling and we said, 'OK, we are going to do that'. And the Greens made the campaign together with NGOs for the Mariahilfer Straße. And we won, I think it was fiftysix to fortyfour or something like that. It was only in the 7th District and in the two districts involved, six and seven. And we did canvassing. You know what canvassing is? You go to the doors of the people, try to persuade them and give them arguments and stuff like that. And I think we went to maybe I think fortyfivethousand households. So I think I personally was at let's say 300 doors about that, ask people about their opinion and found out that there was a big, big rush towards the new Mariahilfer Straße. And in the end, we won that sixtyfive to fortyfour that the Conservative Party of the Sixth District split on that issue because part of them were in favor of that. And at the moment there was a poll on the Mariahilfer Straße on the issue. And it turned out that I think about 80 percent are in favor of that. So the only party, the German Nationalist Party, tried to stop that. And they tried, in the last but one session of the city parliament and all of the parties voted against that. Just only the German nationals swayed. Kind of can bring back the old times like going by cardstock. Yeah. And that was one one more thing we had to. Yeah. There was one concession we made and we said that there have to be two possibilities to cross the street from the six to seven. One going north and one going south. And the bus line, number 13 bus.

Speaker 1: And so this whole situation is quite a while ago now and the shared spaces are functioning for five years already. How would you describe the shared spaces like they are now?

Speaker 2: The Shared space in the Mariahilfer Straße is a bit different from others because the surface was renewed in a very good way. That was the one thing. And the other thing is there is no permanent parking possible in the Mariahilfer Straße. So it's just for loading and unloading and it's for the handicapped people and taxi's. That's it. And you can, delivering services is just as possible up to, I think one o'clock in the afternoon. Yes. And other shared space zones have got permanent parking. And the thing is, when you have got permanent parking for just one parking lot. Let's say, 100 people think they got this one and the only one, and cruise around until it's free. So we've thought about that. But that's not possible because, I would say, I don't know. I was to Utrecht and Amsterdam two years ago. And you have got no permanent parking in the city centers or in a place like the Mariahilfer Straße. There is no permanent parking. But Vienna is way back to other places in Europe. Even in Austria, because there is more or less three car friendly parties in Vienna. The Social Democrats, the conservative parties and the German nationalists. And only the liberals and we, are kind of trying to get out the cars from the city center and bringing them into garages. We made a research on the garage policy in the 6th and 7th. And it turned out that half of the lots in the garages are empty. There is no car in there. So people don't get there by car anymore. They take the underground and take the bike, the take the buses. And I liked it because I was very much involved in the planning and stuff.

Speaker 1: How would you describe the spatial design of the Mariahilfer Straße?

Speaker 2: So I would say there is trees in the Mariahilfer Straße. People didn't realize that they are trees before, you know. One lady came up and said, OK, how did you manage to bring in those big trees? And I said, they are in the street for about 15 to 20 years. So she didn't realize that. Then, there is gadgets for playing on the streets. And it's kind of, you know, those tables with water fountains. There's benches and there is stone figures, where children can ride on. And there's lots of facilities for parking the bikes.

Speaker 1: So the furniture of the streets.

Speaker 2: There was a second plebiscide, side by side with the first one. And it was should bike riders be allowed to go by bike through the Mariahilfer Straße, through the pedestrian zone. And it was I think it was sixtyfive to fortyfour. Same thing. It was very astonishing because those car parties always campaign against bike riders. You know, you might not be able to fancy that in the Netherlands, but in Austria, in Vienna, it's I think seven to eight percent of the ways are done by bikes. And that was one thing. And the other thing is that at the moment, we built an underground station on the Mariahilfer Straße, so part of the Mariahilfer Straße was kind of broken up to build the underground. And the pavement is granite, where are the cars. And in the shared space, it's not granite but it's concrete. Concrete pavement. And there's one level. And we had big ideas about what to do with the water on the streets. So we tried to, in Zurich for instance, they have to have a kind of gutter where the water is running in. And we did the same thing. So there's not very much water when it rains. If it's heavy rainfall, then of course there's water, buy in this way there's not. There is a lot of benches. Sometimes people complain about the benches. And people, young people who are loud.

Speaker 1: And how would you describe the safety in the shared spaces?

Speaker 2: It's okay. Vienna is a very safe city, you know. In Austria, you can walk as a woman, you can walk the streets also at night. No problem. And of course, there are pickpockets when there are many people there are pickpockets. That's the way it goes.

Speaker 1: And would you say that car drivers avoid these shared spaces in the Mariahilfer Straße since it was transformed into a shared space?

Speaker 2: Yeah, that's true. I think the car drivers are brighter than the Conservative Party thinks because they say that, you know, I can't go there, so I use another route. And in Vienna, car driving is going down and public transport and walking is going up. In, let's say I think twentysix percent of the ways of the ways of the Viennese is done by car and 28 percent is walking. OK, so about 40 percent is public transport. Corona has changed public transport. But Corona has also changed the use of bikes. At the moment, bikes has doubled. So it may be a bit of 14 percent or something like that.

Speaker 1: Yeah. And because I also had a question about the Corona situation and the relation to shared spaces, because I read that Vienna is implementing temporary shared spaces in the city. What is your view on that?

Speaker 2: I was involved in that, in implementing. But the trouble is that you can, there's a law in Austria that says you have to mark the parking lot in shared spaces. If they are not marked on the street, then you can't implement the shared space zone. Which is strange. Really strange. Laws have to be changed. So we had we have implemented temporary shared space, but some of them worked, others didn't work. Those we there are lots of cars parking. So when you walk on the streets and the car is coming, you can't slip away. So that makes people nervous. So they don't use those lanes, which let's say, when there's a row of cars on either side of the street, then you then you feel a bit strange, because if you walk there and the car comes and the car speed, the speed limit is 20 kilometers. So when the car comes and you're walking with a pram, for instance, then you can't you can't go

anywhere. Because when it's a one way street and than there's always no space. So when there's only a few cars parking and there's trees. People like to use that. And if we are going into the election campaign, which is going to be in October, and we are trying to bring in shared space zones into every district center. That's our main issue, mobility issues.

Speaker 1: And do you think that shared spaces are enabling physical distance between people very well? Or that they are a nice way to enable physical distance.

Speaker 2: The trouble with the physical distance is when you are cycling. Because when you have the small cyclepaths, then the people have to line up in rows. So we try to establish kind of pop up cyclepaths at the moment and the temporary shared space zones might enable people to kind of use social distance, because when let's say when the sidewalks are so narrow, people can't do that, you see. But I would say Corona is changing, we are at the beginning of a change in the mindset that cars are not the main center of everything. So that's a good thing. But at the moment, people are afraid to use some of the of the temporary shared space zones because there's danger: 'I'm not used to live there. What about the cars?' And then there's so many, so many garages and people don't park cars in garages because they think the entrance is so narrow and basically too expensive.

Speaker 1: And if you look at the Mariahilfer Straße, which was already a shared space, and people walk and cycle more due to Corona, do you think people are attracted to the shared space that was really designed as a shared space?

Speaker 2: Yeah, yeah, that's true. In fact, it's when shops opened in the Corona period for the first time, there were masses of people. But I think social distancing didn't work so well at that moment. But in Austria, we had a lockdown very early, just, I think, weeks before you had the same thing in the Netherlands. And at the moment people have to wear those masks. But it's going down and there's a lot of things allowed which haven't been allowed, let's say, two weeks ago. But I would say the shared space is a good way to kind of deal with with things like Corona and social distance. It's good, really good, because the small sidewalks don't make it possible for people to keep that distance.

Speaker 1: And people say that the Corona pandemic is probably not the last pandemic in the near future we have to deal with. What do you think are the future challenges for cities with this in the back of your mind?

Speaker 2: Concerning epidemics?

Speaker 1: Yeah. Or maybe other big events that can happen, for example, a terrorist attack. Are those things to think about? In the City council, for example?

Speaker 2: You know, Vienna had no terrorist attack. But Mariahilfer Straße have got local metro posts which coming out of the streets? But one year ago I was in Liverpool and they have tons of those posts, metro posts. Really tons. And you can use that if somebody wants to stab somebody out of terrorist feelings, nobody can stop him really. No shared space, no sidewalk, no policeman. Otherwise, terrorist attacks in places like in Paris or where there's so much police on the streets, it wouldn't be possible. That's one thing. And the thing is that our idea is to reclaim the streets for people, not for cars, you see. So at the moment, let's say normally cars have got two thirds of the space in streets from house to house. Two thirds. Cars driving or parking. And the rest of the people were not driving cars actually, but walk go by bike or use the public transport. It's about three quarters of the people don't use the car, but the car drivers have got two thirds of the space. So that's kind of unjust. And we have the right to to reclaim the streets, do more public places and bring in trees, for instance, to fight the heat islands. That's our main thing. In Austria, I think last year we crossed the 40 degrees barrier

in one place. And then the thing is that old people or sick people die easily from the heat. And I think the heat is much more dangerous than Corona. So we have to kind of tackle the heat with trees, with place, with water, with fountains and with benches where people can rest. There has been a period in Austria where people were afraid. Lots of people were from homeless people who were living on the benches. That has changed. Because when you are walking the street with the big bags, there was no room to sit down. You had to go into a restaurant. And had to pay for that. But there was no kind of space for many, many people. So people stayed at home. And that's, I think, for democracy. Staying at home and not walking the streets is not good.

Speaker 1: And you told me that because of the garages in the outer parts of the Mariahilfer Straße, those parts became a shared space and the inner part where no garages are became a FUZO. So if there were no garages in the other parts as well, would the entire Mariahilfer Straße be a pedestrian zone?

Speaker 2: It would be a pedestrian zone. I think shared space is a good matter. But let's say, in Switzerland, pedestrians are very much favored by the laws in Shared Space zones because car drivers and bike riders have to take care of pedestrians. And they have kind of you know, they have an advantage on the streets. But in Austria, it's different. It's we've got cars and walking people and bike riding people are at the same level. So, in fact, you're not allowed to walk slowly so that the car driver has to stop because of you. That's not possible. But the thing is, the center is the pedestrian zone. And when there's lots of people, then you can you can watch that the people are moving from either side to the center of the street. So they really reclaim, they retake the streets. And that's good. And the closer to the pedestrian zone you are, the more people are on the streets in the shared space. And I think that if you have long street, not just a small place, if there's a long street like the Mariahilfer Straße, which is, I think, one and a half kilometers long. Then if you have streets like that, for instance, I was in Paris recently and there is a street like the Mariahilfer Straße in Vienna and there the city government is taking out the cars. So then you really use the street. Otherwise you are on the sidewalks because, let's say three quarters of the people are afraid of cars. And there's a reason for that because, you know, many, many people die on the streets more than from Corona. Many more. There's a saying that if cars were disease, they would have been forbidden because so many people died from it. But that's not possible. So we have to reduce the speed and find shared spaces and also. And let's have some some pedestrians. Yeah. Okay.

Expert interviews: experts from academia and practice

Wednesday June 3, 2020 (14 pm). Expert interview with interviewee 3 (Professor Public Space, TU Wien).

Speaker 1: So, as you know, these shared spaces have been implemented more or less five years ago, after a lot of political debates, and I was wondering if you could describe these shared spaces in the Mariahilfer Straße to me.

Speaker 2: OK. Thanks for the question. I guess, first of all, I mean, you know that my formation is that I'm teaching public space. I've also been working with the Mariahilfer Straße couple of years ago with Rob Sheers together. We did a picnic with the students on the Mariahilfer Straße when the political process of turning it into a pedestrian precinct actually was implemented. I would not have conceived it to be a shared space. So that's quite interesting that you come with this conceptual lens for me. For me, the Mariahilfer Straße, in order to describe it, basically it's one of the, let's say, most frequent and commercial streets in Austria. Yeah, with the highest turnover in terms of commercial turnover. I guess also in Austria and the Mariahilfer Straße, I guess once it's not, let's say, a complete shared space in all the different sections. Yeah, you have some sections where people can walk in the middle of the street, although most do not do that. That's interesting because there was a change in the pavement,

of course. So they managed to get the pavement in that section clearer to be dedicated equally to the pedestrians. But nevertheless, if you would be in Vienna, most of the people still stick to the sidewalks, to the old sidewalks. Because every now and then bikes pass and there's busses, there's taxis. And in the morning, this also a lot of cars coming and doing the delivery work for the shops. So I think it's a matter of habit. And when I'm there, I usually walk in the middle of the street, but I have to force myself to do that in order to get a different perspective. So I guess it has not yet arrived in the culture. There are some good opportunities to sit for free. Yeah, that's good. And I guess that has been highly appreciated because otherwise you just have to use commercial seatings. So this was important. But I guess in terms of ecological quality and I mean, they planted some trees, but basically all the trees that are not in hedges and trumpets, but the trees that are the same and the street level they really have been. They even put like a rubber Tomic there in order to help the cleaning. And it looks horrible. There's not even a turf bed there. So they have reduced nature to its utmost necessity. So I think that in that respect, it's done very badly, to be quite frank. And I guess the rest is coming and maybe. I have to think about it. So there are some, this was concerning the step, the section that's most used and that's the most frequently. And maybe you consider this a shared space. So but the other sections, they have already some sort of motorized traffic. And so in that section, it's just the same as before. Yeah. So it's really a small section. And I think it's nicer for the cyclists, although they are not allowed very often to drive through. But they do. So they should, at least in this central part, not be on their bike, but be with their bike. And if it's of course, if you have the commercial days like Saturdays or the advent Saturdays, or the peak days. When shops are still open but people are not at work, we have that on the 8th of December, for example. It's a Christian holiday and people are at home, but the shops are still basically open. And these days, of course, the whole street is full. Yeah, but this is very much not due to, let's say, normal use or community use. It has much more to do with commercial use. So I think it has been implemented in a very commercial climate and it sustains that commercial climate very much.

Speaker 1: OK. And since there are two parts that are Shared Space and the middle part is a Fußgängerzone, and you said that you didn't conceive it as a shared space. What makes it that you do not conceive it as a shared space?

Speaker 2: I guess, first of all. I mean, because there's still a slight predominance of motorized traffic, and I guess it's the frequency of the traffic. Yeah, because if I understand and correct me if your understanding of shared space is different, shared space as a space in which all the participants in the traffic can equally participate, then this is not the case, at least from my very humble experiences of going shopping there every now and then. This doesn't come from the proper study. I did not do any study on the public space, but it's just I guess there is too much frequency of cars. The higher the frequency, the more the other users feel like also there is fears of being hit by a car, etc. So they go back to the sidewalks.

Speaker 1: Yeah. And so there is quite a high traffic flow in the shared spaces.

Speaker 2: Yes. I think even if they drive at low speeds. I mean, imagine you are a dad with a stroller and the baby and you have a second toddler that is just running, like three or four years old, and you're walking there in the middle of the street. But the buses and taxis are passing by at I don't know, fifteen kilometers per hour or something. So this is just not feasible for those that are more vulnerable.

Speaker 1: And so you said there is a car dominance still in the shared space. Would you say that the objective of making a space for people and cars can be there as well, is not achieved?

Speaker 2: Yeah. I mean, I guess I'm a bit more radical because I think there's in that region, so many streets for cars. And although I see the need to get public transport through at some point and to

get to delivery services in the morning and maybe in the evening. I think that they should have been more radical and really making it a pedestrian precincts throughout the length. And that's, you know, I don't know how that is in the Netherlands, but I know that in Germany, I mean, they have introduced these conceptions of pedestrian precincts in the 1970s. And Vienna did that now in 2010-years. So I guess in that sense, they're 40 years behind that. And they could have been more radical in just declaring all of it a pedestrian precinct. So I guess in that sense, the shared space, if you have a pedestrian precinct next door, is a bad compromise. It's like a Trojan horse because you have the option of having it fully. Why should I give any priority to cars if there are, I don't know how many, If you if you see it on a Saturday, it's packed with people. So just the number of crossing pedestrians and cyclists would be sufficient to close that street down completely for car transport.

Speaker 1: Are you familiar with the Dutch concept of shared space since it was invented in the Netherlands?

Speaker 2: I'm not so sure. I mean, I read a bit into shared space a couple of years ago, and I guess there are different conceptions around, but I'm not that sure. Maybe you can expand to me.

Speaker 1: The Dutch understanding of shared space is that by the lack of all traffic control the insecurity on the streets increases and people behave more cautious because of that. And that increases the safety on the streets. And it is implemented in both residential areas as more commercial city district areas. And what is central is that the street is meant for people. And cars are kind of a guest in the streets. And because every traffic control, every traffic sign, curbs, etcetera are lacking. That influences how people behave on the streets.

Speaker 2: OK, I got that also similar to what you now summarized. So the conception I had from shared space was the same, but I think it doesn't. Actually, if you consider it first in terms of vulnerability and also in change of social and ecological conditions towards nowadays times, it doesn't really work. I guess it doesn't work in terms of vulnerability, because if you're in a car and there is a let's say, my question would be what happens in times of conflicts? Like what is a conflict? If a car hits a stroller or if cyclists hits a pedestrian or so. So I guess the idea about the different vulnerabilities, so not everyone has the same resource in terms of protecting him or herself. If you have just a car around, you have much more protective force. So although you might pay more attention and you might drive slower, the risk of being yourself embodied injured is far less than the one, the risk of the pedestrian and the risk of the papa with the stroller.

Speaker 1: Would you say that the shared spaces in the Mariahilfer Straße deviate from the Dutch understanding of shared space?

Speaker 2: I think I should go back to have a look. It's very hard to tell now because I would have to have a look at, for example, the layout of the surface, especially in these two sections and how it's negotiated. But I would maybe bring in the second aspect of the term I mentioned before, the term of everyday cultures and routines. And how how these routines actually shift or how quickly they may shift. And even though that the shared spaces and the pedestrian precinct has been in place, let's say, five years or longer. I think we did the intervention in 2011.

Speaker 1: And it wasn't finished in 2015.

Speaker 2: Yeah. And they started with the process of constructing it in 2011 because we were part of the construction site. And we did, maybe I can tell you about finalizing the point on the social cultural everyday life patterns and the routines. So I guess whereas you can change the pavement

quite quickly. Although I would have a look where the trees are positioned just from my memory, I think that the way the truck beds and the trees are positioned still marks the street.

Speaker 1: Yeah, definitely.

Speaker 2: And if you would have put the tree beds in the middle, for example, so that cars cannot directly cross through, this would have differed, but it didn't. So this pertains the people still in their old walking habits I would say. And only if it gets too dense. And now, of course this Corona, if it gets so dense, people may use it more because they are likely to have more distance to one another.

Speaker 2: And the second point, I think also with the overall ecological debate, I think a debate that's now going on in Vienna, as regards especially not just the passing transport, motorized transport, but also the parkings, is that there is a need of really getting rid of parked cars. And so we stop talking now in Vienna about system relevancy of parked cars. So I guess the whole conception on this ownership aspect of owning a car and going through the city is changing and just sort of through Corona is devaluating, which might have an influx on also how shared space concept is perceived. I would say. But it takes takes a time.

Speaker 1: So you already said that the role of culture is very important because daily habits from before the transformation of the street still are there. What do you think of the role of the context of a shopping street?

Speaker 2: I mean, and I guess the basic idea, although it was I mean, it was especially sold by the Green Party as having achieved something for the community. I guess the wider motive behind it was very much also doing a big favor for commerce because it would help commerce and to really increase their. And so I think the whole story in the back is one of a strong commercial lobby of shop owners in the Mariahilfer Straße, because I'm not so sure, I would need to talk to people living nearby. But there are some parks there, and I would rather suspect that people used the parks. But don't so much spend their everyday life in pedestrian precinct because that should be, I mean, that should be the sense of such an important street as well. Not just be there for daily tourists or general tourists or consumers, but just offer something, a place that can be appropriated by the community. And maybe you can see, that's likely on Sundays when the shops are closed.

Speaker 1: Then people just go there because they want to take a walk instead of they go there to shop.

Speaker 2: Yes. And I mean, they might meet and some coffee houses that are open or an ice cream. And so they go there rather for leisure. But there are still some options for consumption. It's not completely consumption free.

Speaker 1: And how could this be enhanced, that that happens on other days as well or happens more?

Speaker 2: I guess you would need to take it into consideration with the ground floor zone uses. Because, of course, if you have the whole street with ground floor zones and even upper floor zones used for shopping, then it would very much determine also the uses of public spaces. So the functional distribution of the uses of the ground floor zones, you would need for example much more space for NGOs, for associations, for community centers in the ground floor zones in order to change the character. But just by changing the design of the public space it won't work.

Speaker 2: OK. Yeah, because. Yeah, I understand. And you already referred to it shortly. The Corona situation, that people might go there for a walk. To what extent does the spatial design support the physical distance during a pandemic?

Speaker 2: I mean, that's quite clear that I mentioned that, I guess, because, of course, in. First of all, you have not so many parked cars in that street. That's very good, because then people feel free-er to walk, to take more distance when they walk, which is nearly impossible in other districts in Vienna, where you have not even 1 meter 20 wide sidewalks, but just one meter sidewalks. And then you have three meters of parking lot and then you have the street. So people don't just take to the street because this interim zone is just stopped by cars and parking cars. And that's, of course, better on the Mariahilfer Straße. But I guess people, on the other hand, think that a high influx of consumers is also a high risk for getting contagious. And so that's why there is also another side to that. And I guess people might go more to the local district centers to do their shopping than before. Not so much centralized shopping where many people would buy each day.

Speaker 1: So maybe it only applies to how the Mariahilfer Straße is on Sundays? Then there are no consumers so the street is really just strolling around and then the spatial design of the Mariahilfer Straße enables to physical distance more than normal streets. But it doesn't apply to the Mariahilfer Straße when there are a lot of consumers.

Speaker 1: Yes. The question is. I mean, in Paris has this fifteen minutes conception of public space, I guess now there might be a general shift because people had to stay in their homes. They rediscovered their really close by consumption facilities and maybe they went to shops they have not seen before because they are just in their district but they usually go to the Mariahilfer Straße. And so I would rather see that then the Mariahilfer Straße could become, or could gain a new importance for the local district population. And I guess that that's a question I always have. What do they offer not just for the consumers that come in, even from the whole of Austria and from other countries, but what benefits does a local population living in the surroundings and direct surroundings has from that street? And this might shift.

Speaker 1: Such a thing as the Corona situation is, of course, a very big event for every society basically. What kind of future challenges will cities have do you think? Because this whole pandemic is a major challenge because cities are so packed.

Speaker 2: I guess, I mean, this issue of cities and disease and epidemics is not new, and that's the whole reason why planning came into being so, I guess planning in modern times was very much to help prevent people getting contagious and ordering space in order to create light and air, the living conditions, et cetera. So and you see also that I mean, that's interesting that there was a podcast on the urban political, on the dimension of COVID 19, and there was some urban researchers that did investigations in where it happened in China, which was actually not in the city center of the big Metropole, but it was also at the fringe of Wuhan. And where did it happen first in Germany, which was at the fringe of Bavaria, on the fringe in the region of Munich and not in Munich itself. And where it happened in Italy, which was Bergamo, which again, is not Milano. So I guess, and you see also that, of course, in cities there are many people. But I mean, pandemics doesn't stop at cities. It might reproduce more quickly, which is a special issue, but it also goes through the countryside. And so I guess both, or also to the region that they all have to deal with it somehow. And I guess what studies have been proving is that the main point of contagion is the living conditions and how tight families and people live and in what type of flat layouts. And once there is spring and people can be outside and even in winter or when it's raining, they can be outside in public spaces. The risk is far lower. So I guess we need to interrelate the connection between public spaces and housing conditions much more in order to understand that.

Wednesday June 3, 2020 (15:30 pm). Expert interview with interviewee 4 (Traffic engineer in Vienna).

Speaker 1: The first question will be about the perception of the shared space in the Mariahilfer Straße before the Corona situation, because, as you know, there was a lot of political political debate about the implementation of these shared spaces and eventually they implemented it. And I was wondering if you could describe the shared spaces in the Mariahilfer Straße to me.

Speaker 2: How it looks like or how it functions?

Speaker 1: Your own perception of it.

Speaker 2: My own perception is, but that's in general in shared space also in Austria, that the shared space in Austria isn't shared space like in the rest of the world. Shared space is normally, like you know, creating the feeling of unsafety to create safety. And the Austrians put it into a kind of law. So they made laws for it, how to deal with it. So in the Mariahilfer Straße they gave it about 150 meters, to give back the space for all inhabitants. They call it shared space or Begegnungszone, how it's now called in Austria. For me, it is just more like pedestrian area where it's also allowed to cycle and a cab is allowed to drive through it, a bus. But normal cars are not allowed. Which is in normal shared space allowed. And also the cyclists, they are also institutionalized. So they're just allowed to drive with five kilometres per hour. Otherwise, they get fines. So for me, it is not real shared space. It is more like a very nice pedestrian areas where they except a few other traffic modes.

Speaker 1: OK. And in the rest of the world, in shared spaces, there is a lack of any kind of traffic control. And you say actually that in this shared space there is no lack of traffic control because they also give fines to people.

Speaker 2: Yes. So in the beginning you have to sign, which says 'it's Begegnungszone, you are allowed to drive 20 kilometres per hour'. And I also know of cyclists who got fines because they were driving too fast. And then the question was, why am I driving too fast? And then it was really by the policeman that said, no, sorry, you are just allowed to drive five kilometres per hour. Cyclist said, how should I know how quick I am? Because I don't have a targo speed measurement. I could see it. It was much faster than five hours. So you get a fine. So I also really know about people who got to fined their.

Speaker 1: Yeah. OK. And you mentioned that only taxis and buses are allowed as motorized traffic in the shared space. Aren't normal cars allowed as well there?

Speaker 2: As far as I know, the normal car has to make a small detour around the one a 150 meter, so not the whole Mariahilfer Straße is shared space. It's just a small part. As a normal car driver, you are detours around it.

Speaker 1: Yeah. And how would you describe the spatial design of the Mariahilfer Straße?

Speaker 2: Like I said, as a pedestrian area, I like it. It is, they gave back a part of the city towards the slow traffic, to the pedestrians. More also for the, not just as moving through the street, like it like it was in the old days. You really are invited to spend more time there. In this way, the design is quite OK. Yeah. It's attractive. I've been there a few times, also after it was changed. So that part is well done.

Speaker 1: OK, so there's not so much traffic flow anymore, and there's more. There are more pedestrians, more active mobility forms.

Speaker 2: Yeah. And also during, for example, the time before Christmas, you have the Christmas markets there. So people really spend quite a long time there. And it's not like the rest of the Mariahilfer Straße, you have the pedestrian areas, to both sides and Main Street is dominated by the cars. Here it's really given back to active mobility.

Speaker 1: Yes. And do you have the impression that people also go there to spend time there, not only shopping, but just strolling around?

Speaker 2: Yes, I have the feeling. So there are a few benches and all those kind of things that you really see. Yeah, it's difficult to say if it's more than before. But the benches and everything is really used and you see people also standing there relaxed, talking to each other, which perhaps also could be on the whole situation on the normal foot path. But you didn't notice it because you just then really run through. So for me, it's now more visible and it has slower atmosphere. So it's not people in a hurry running from shop to shop. It's more an interaction.

Speaker 1: Yeah. And since the shared space concept in Austria deviates so much from the for example, the Dutch concept. Do you think that that's also visible, very visible in the spatial environment, the spatial design of the shared space?

Speaker 2: In the beginning, no. Nowadays. Yes. I don't know if you have looked at other shared spaces in Austria.

Speaker 1: No, I didn't.

Speaker 2: OK. A Very nice one. Is Sonnefeldplatz in Graz. This is really one of the first, was also called shared space. It was very nice design, really rich with colors and all those things. So it really had the impression, it was really shared space. Now it is Begegnungszone, they still have the same design. But at this moment, they also just use the Begegnungszone just to reduce the speed of cars. So there are lots of examples where shared space could be applied. But they didn't change anything about the design of the streets. They just put the sign Begegnungszone. So you have to 20 kilometers per hour and still it is just a small footpath for pedestrians. Cyclists have no space at all. And the cars drive on the normal streets.

Speaker 1: Yeah. So despite the fact that they transformed the Mariahilfer Straße very much, still there is something imposed on the road users, so they use traffic signs to, for example, indicate the entrance of the shared space, which you never see in other countries. And what about the other traffic control elements, like other traffic signs or lights?

Speaker 2: They have the parking spots really signed in where you are allowed to park your car and like I already said, the normal shared space is really that you change the public space into one space for all, where you can create your own space by getting into eye-contact with other people and say, hey, this is my part now, I'm going here so you have to slow down. With the Begegnungszone or shared space in Vienna, that's not the case anymore. So it's just the normal street which is completely dominated by the cars. And on both sides, you have a small foot path. When I was this weekend in a small city in Austria, they have also the Begegnungszone, which means 20 kilometers per hour, everybody is equal. It was an extreme high amount of cars. So I just wanted to cross the street knowing I'm in right if I just, because I have the same priority as other traffic. And cars didn't react on me, they just drove on. I really had to watch out not to be killed by a stupid car.

Speaker 1: Do you think that's an Austrian thing? That apparently this concept, this shared space concept like it is anywhere else cannot be implemented like anywhere else in Austria?

Speaker 2: How do you mean?

Speaker 1: Well, if we look at the share space concept, it is of Dutch origin. And it has been implemented all over the world. And oftentimes there's not a big deviation from the Dutch concept. The idea is quite similar everywhere. Do you think it's really the Austrian context that makes it deviate from the other shared spaces everywhere?

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Speaker 1: And in what way?

Speaker 2: That they really don't have to trust in the social aspect of humanity. And also the government or the politicians have a lot of fear that if something happens, they are to blame. They don't trust normal society to interact normally with each other and they have extreme fear for if something happens, everybody will pinpoint to the politician who decided this and 'you did this'. So as long as it's nicely written down in some laws, the politician can say, 'I just follow the law. So I have no problem'. That's just. Yeah, like I said, so the law is wrong or the people didn't follow the law. So giving back the responsibility to the people itself, which is shared space, is not done here.

Speaker 1: No. And since the rationale behind these shared space in other countries at least, is that you increase insecurity and therewith you also increase the safety on the street, does that apply to the Austrian version of the shared space?

Speaker 2: To the old ones, yes. To the new ones, No. Sonnefeldplatz there it really was like this. It was also designed partly with the help of the shared space centre in Groningen or Leeuwarden. The newer ones. No, they just follow nicely the laws, how it should look like, put the signs there. So for me the new shared space designs have nothing to do anymore with the real idea from Hans Monderman.

Speaker 1: And is the Mariahilfer Straße a new or an n old one, in your opinion?

Speaker 2: It's in between. They started it during the time it wasn't really the Begegnungszone, but politicians had a lot of problems because it was on two sides on two districts in Vienna. In the end, they nicely applied the new Begegnungszone rules or law. For me, it really would have worked nice if they had said 'all motorised traffic is still welcome to use the parks', but they didn't want that, so the motorized traffic is detoured around it. And only just like I said, the bus and cabs if needed and everything is allowed to drive on it.

Speaker 1: Yeah, but the frequency of the motorized traffic is still quite high in the Mariahilfer Straße from what I hear. Do you think, there is a car dominance in the Mariahilfer Straße?

Speaker 2: In the rest of it, yes.

Speaker 1: But in the shared spaces, in the Begegnungszone?

Speaker 2: No.

Speaker 1: Okay. And the rest of it is the other side of the Gurtel?

Speaker 2: No, like I said, the Mariahilfer Straße shared space is just 150 metre long, so.

Speaker 1: Yeah, that's the pedestrian zone.

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Speaker 1: And then the other sides of both sides of the pedestrian zone, you have the shared spaces, the Begegnungszone.

Speaker 2: Yeah, Begegnungszone. But this is for me, not really change. It's just a sign.

Speaker 1: Yeah. So in your opinion, those Begegnungszone are just like conventional streets.

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Speaker 1: OK.

Speaker 2: Which didn't change anything about the design. Which didn't. You can say invite the people to pay attention to the surroundings and adjust their travel behavior. It's just a simple, straight ahead street, for motorized car and they will never think about, hey, there's a pedestrian who wants to cross it. No, it's my street. My lane. So nobody's allowed to cross it or no priority.

Speaker 1: So the whole idea of traffic integration still is traffic segregation there actually.

Speaker 2: Yes.

Speaker 1: And I also read some things about that the city of Vienna is implementing temporary shared spaces in the city right now in order to enable the physical distance between people during Corona times. What is your view on that?

Speaker 2: Perhaps I'm a little bit too negative. Again, it has two sides, one that they give space back to pedestrians and cyclists, perfect. But at the moment, it's just like in most cities, they just blocked traffic in certain street segments. And for me, again, it's not really shared space at that moment. It's only local traffic who lives in that street who still can drive with the car. Going through traffic is blocked out of it. So for me, it's also not really the idea of shared space behind it. That they finally give space to pedestrians and cyclists, great. So. As traffic planner Corona is a big chance that they change the city design and also the priority of mobility within the cities. But how they do it, it's quite difficult. Again, they also discussed in Vienna and Graz the pop-up bike path, just a two lane street in one direction. Just take away one lane from the cars and just put barriers between it and give it back to the cyclists and pedestrians. The idea is very nice. But again, it's the difficulty of the politicians to convince them it's a good method because they just look at the legal aspects. Are we allowed? How should that be done? What if something happens? We have seen examples where they did it in Graz and now they say, according to the laws, we are not allowed to just easily change it from motorized traffic lane to pedestrian or cyclist lane because we have to take a traffic law decision. So suddenly they have big problems with it.

Speaker 1: So even though the idea and the intention might be there, it is all the legislation that hampers the great ideas?

Speaker 2: Yes. At least not the legislations itself, but the politician interpreting the legislation. Some they misuse it to convince people who don't have the knowledge about why they don't do it.

Speaker 1: Yeah, because what really stood out to me was that when I went looking for information about shared spaces and Begegnungszone, I did find the laws in Austria about it. So Article 76.C. And if you look for the same kind of laws in the Netherlands, it doesn't even exist. We invented the shared space in the Netherlands. There's no law about it at all. And that's typical Austrian then/

Speaker 2: Yeah, because in Germany, there are quite a lot of shared space projects which function quite good. In Switzerland because then I look at the German speaking countries, they have similar kind of, but they also didn't put it into laws. They have some small aspects where they can say, OK, if we can't just make it a space for everything, we just change the design and make sure that there are safe harbors for pedestrians crossing the street so they have the space and the cars to make small movements. So there are some kind of. Yeah, I don't know if it's written or unwritten regulations, but they go with a normal sense about it. Here in Austria, they completely follow the laws. Word by word. Because we have also the STVO and the Richtlinien Verkehr und blah, blah, blah directive. And the directive is just a guideline how it should be implemented. But it's not the law, 'It has to be like this'. And here in Austria, they just follow its word by word because if they have to change it a bit, then they can get the blame for it. And nobody wants to get the blame for it.

Speaker 1: Yeah. OK. And do you have the impression that since the shared spaces were transformed into shared spaces, that more people use the streets there? So in the areas where are also car drive, car drives?

Speaker 2: In the old ones, yes. Feltbach, Sonnefeldplatz Graz, where they really played with the design, like Hans Monderman really also intended. That just gives the impression you come into another area as normal. And you feel uncertain. What am I allowed to do. In those places, definitely. In other ones, no, there is no understanding of the people. What it means. No. Someone also the signs about Begegnungszone. They see it, they see they are allowed to drive 20 kilometers per hour, but that it is a space for everybody, they don't have to feeling for it.

Speaker 1: And that's also the case in the Mariahilfer Straße?

Speaker 2: Yes. And especially, Vienna is especially the most car drivers hate the cyclists. So also, there is some kind of friction between those those groups also.

Speaker 1: Yeah. Is there also friction between pedestrians and cyclists?

Speaker 2: Yeah. You can say that as well. It's the funny thing. I work already 40 years in Austria. And everybody always discuss with me about the Dutch way of cyclists. And why do the Dutch have so high amount of cyclists? And why isn't there any problem with the cars? Then I also say the Dutch cyclist is also a car driver or the Dutch car driver is also a cyclist. So they know both sides. Typically here in Austria not, the cyclists are people who are alternative minded or from the Green Party or the people who drive the cars and they say I'm a cyclist of course, they go with the mountain bike into the mountains, and they do it for sport.

Speaker 1: Yeah, yeah. Go from A to B.

Thursday June 12, 2020 (14 pm). Expert interview with interviewee 5 (Architect in Vienna).

Speaker 1: As you know, there was a lot of political debate around the implementation process, and I am interested in how different groups of people perceive these shared spaces. And I was wondering if you could describe these shared spaces in the Mariahilfer Straße to me.

Speaker 1: So I prepared a bit. So what I thought that could be interesting is that I, I moved actually into the Mariahilfer Straße in 2011 with my office. So, like, when the whole process started, I was there and then I kind of throughout the whole time of the planning and implementation. And then afterwards how it actually like was integrated really and perceives and accepted more or less, like by the people. And what I could talk to you about first is what I could observe just as an observer with an office there. Then I think it might be interesting to see like as a planner. Like what my opinion and thoughts about the whole project are. And also like what proceedings and instruments of planning mean to politics and the like kind of back and forth of politics and these instruments of planning. And then like I know how it turned out to be, you know, it was really a long process. And how it's perceived differently than before. So. In the beginning, like, I really moved there in 2011 and I think I was there one year or something, when the whole thing really started to be established more and more into being. So it was I find, a very political decision of the Green Party and there with Vassilakou, who was the Stadträtin für Stadtentwicklung und Verkehr to establish actually a very green project. So it was very politically motivated and there is already the first question that comes about is that a politician who is Stadträter of the whole city, you know. It's not a party, but actually you should distancing yourself from your party when you go into this public serving realm, like how we should think about that. But so it was executed also quite unilaterally and promptly. So it was really a, let's say, like kind of the possibility to establish something like a, and again, that's how I see it, as like a flagship. The question of how to deal with that is yet another question, but I find it actually quite interesting. To my knowledge also, there it starts to become truly like problematic, I find. There as a planner is that when you, like, decide, you know, make a political decision like that and then one to execute it. And then if you do not respect and understand the planning procedure is well enough and you do not surround yourself with experts who can consult you in the right way. And there it's I find it's really very objectively it becomes so difficult. Again, to my knowledge, and this is just what I heard, was, though, that like for the project, like very many different planners, and experts were contracted with different parts of the project. So there was no possibility of organically develop a whole project. But it was more like a patchwork of cards that were put together more or less after following somehow the lead of a politician, I think one can say. So, and the result was like reflected that because during the process like it seemed more like a learning-by-doing. So, the Mariahilfer Straße was a construction site for I think much over a year. And according to mistakes that were made, like giving no access to the like, the delivery for goods for the shops, but also bakeries, etc. Then this regarding the needs of access by car to, for example, a rather huge institution for public services. Where like kind of old people cannot access because they cannot be brought there. So depending on these kind of mistakes, the rules as to, for example, what can enter, what part when, was in constant change. And because the whole thing was a bit chaotic, policing increased in that period, which is very weird because you want to give the public a nice public space and instead you have to raise the police going around and fining cars, taxis, people. Well, so these are like the beginnings of actual the project and then the kind of in this year, one year and a half at least, the shops were suffering, the tenants very constant confusing. Where they can go, where they can, like, call the taxis or how long it takes to get from A to B. And there were a lot of people that would just not go there anymore. For example, if you would call a taxi driver, they would tell you that they really try to avoid the whole like place. Like not to only Mariahilfer Straße, but also the neighborhoods, because the rules change all the time. That was that bit the situation that in the beginning of the project where it was implemented. Perhaps now my professional judgement came in and like, kind of now here and there. But now in my intention, like in my professional judgement really, I think that the intention might have been actually a good one. They really wanted to give something to the citizen. They wanted to do something for the environment, etc. But the organization process of planning and execution was at least very weak, if not really partly a disaster. So and the reason why, as planners it's interesting and worth reflecting why, is that it shows the major problems that not only of our terms, but at least very strongly visible also in our times when it comes to issues of planning especially. But not only like when it concerns, the public realm. So because planning is something that

you cannot immediately see. It's more like rules, before it gets implemented. It's more like rules and it's perhaps something like a heuristic, in the sense of that it's there to create something, and the method, but not really something that the public, for example, sees immediately. So the politics has always this, like difficulty you know, they have to do things, but they know as well they like kind of. It's not so easy like to gain on it because the process of planning itself is not really visible. So people like try to make these flagships. Projects that are more to, like show off, than to really do something that is worthwhile. It's one of the things that we as planners should think about, how one could perhaps like educate politicians, administration, but also communicate the values of planning in a way that like, it's so obvious that, you know, the value is so high that if you do it well, if you use the right experts and if you see the technical but also the art part of it, that you can really gain a lot, even if in the beginning it seems invisible. Now, what could one have done differently? I think it really started with the difficulty of, when you start to project on political motivation and if you install a project as a flagship of, let's say, a party. And especially when it involves crucial needs for the expertise and knowledge of professionals, here mainly planners. But, of course, in this case, it would have been interesting to involve an interdisciplinary set of excellent experts from the very beginning. So not only different kind of planners, so spatial, traffic planners, city planners, architects, landscape designers. But also economic experts, on social aspects, etc. And at the end, like for a project like that, for example. Like an expert on public art might have been a good thing to have, you know, as an expert too. Well, would be the first, to involve the experts that you need. But the second is to give much more thought to the process and to the proceedings. For example, here it could you know, if something like that is done well, you will have a case study, made by specialists and experts. Generally and on this very special space and place, then it could have been converted into, like proceeding like a competition, for example. This competition could have been international even. That it even rises above the national level of knowledge. And then this, for example, competition should have had an international really respected jury that could have really reflected on all the different levels that have to be reflected on, mainly also the technical highest standards of planning, but also of the art of planning. So I think what is interesting in a case study as you are doing, is to not only look at what does it mean as a shared space or what does it mean, how does it feel? How does it look? But also as a profession, and we are planners, to think about what does the very proceedings and the way things are implemented mean for our profession and the way we reflect ourselves and how we are reflected by the people who use, you know, make use of our abilities. So I think one of the questions that really arise with projects like that, is that the respect that is due to our and similar professions, and instead of a politician patchworking with pieces of mediocre planning, to make them fit to her special needs, in this case, it was a she. Of course, a politician always will be a bit limited in knowledge and imagination about what planning can do. So how important it is to have good experts, good planning experts also for politicians and also for political projects. And the question that comes to us is, how can we advance in the sense of how could it be possible to make politicians and the administration value the expertise and the art of planning, somehow more than they actually do, at least in Vienna? You were asking a few times, how do you see in correspondence to Holland or like kind of Denmark, for example, has very nice project for shared space things. Even, for example, Graz in Austria had a few quite nice shared space projects. So it of course, always depends on where you are and how the culture is and how the correspondence between the planners and the administration, the planners and the politicians is. But I think this is quite a nice example of how one can study how all these things go together. And one is not to be thought without the other and also to think about our role in the whole thing and how we can implement ourselves in a better way, because at the end it kind of falls back on us. Yeah. So that would be to your first question. I know it's a bit different I think than you wanted to take it, but perhaps you have very special questions that you would like to have answered in your first question here.

Speaker 1: Yeah, you said it now is the result of a patchwork of different people working on the design of the shared space. Why did they choose to involve so many different people in this.

Speaker 2: I am not sure. Whether it really was in order to have everything under control. So if they would have given it really to one good traffic planner, for example, who would have thought the whole thing through. Perhaps a few of the things that they tried to implement. Perhaps the traffic planner would have said, I would not recommend that and strongly go against it. So if the patchwork really was done in order to control it better, it's a very sad story actually. Instead of having people at least sit together on a table. And that was at least what I heard when I asked that. It's OK that a politician has some kind of a thought and wants to implement it. But why did the planners go along with it? And I was told that each of the, like parts was somehow given to someone else. So kind of each of them just saw their thing and nobody oversaw the whole project. So it was not really possible for the planners to somehow control the whole thing at the end. I am not sure. That was just what I was told. But this, again, this is one of the problems of planning generally is, like kind of the scale. How little can be the scale of planning, how centralized does, even if you have parts that are planned. How centralized does it need to be at the end? So that like a group or one person at the end can control how the parts fit to each other. So it's a topic that again and again comes up actually.

Speaker 1: And how would you say that the shared space functions currently, well before the Corona situation?

Speaker 2: After a while people got used to it, by these mistakes, changing the rules, also, a few of the things were revised. So, for example, the access, it was possible for the shops to get their stuff, etc. And also people got used to it. So when somebody wanted to go from A to B, we knew then, well, we have to start with the car here. So we get on the other side. So it was a long process of adaptation, but at some point it worked. And actually the shops also that in the beginning really got much less the clients to visit them, at the end I think it was reversed a bit because a lot of. At the end, I think it was not bad for at least shops, because it was an attraction. And now you talk about the shared space, not so much the shared space, but this part that was really locked down for cars. So you would really see kids playing and running around, people like kind of with all kinds of machinery, little scooters or like rollers. So it became quite lively and actually quite well accepted. And also for like bigger holidays, for example, before Christmas, etc. They would close a bigger space, so people would really be able to go there without traffic. With the shared space, where the cars and the people that should share. First of all, it's weird because it's like on the downer part of the Mariahilfer Straße, and on the upper one. So it's not one space, but it's a again, like this space here, this space there. And also the transitions, so the crossing the street was on many parts. You know, you could not cross anymore. Somehow it was like an aisle where you could come with the car and go out again. But you have not the normal access as I'm crossing. So I think this is still a problem. But that's my opinion perhaps, because they could have very easily let them flowing through this shared space, would have been very well possible. At the end again, it took a long time. People accepted it. And it is used. There are a few, for example, with this shared space and there comes then also that you compare it with other projects and especially in the Netherlands they did not take the traffic signs apart, there was not really like some kind of a guiding graphics or something that would make people very intuitively use the space to the best possible ways. And when they saw, for example, that the cars do not slow down, they put weird things in the middle of the street. So that the cars have to go around. They did not design it well. So it was not done in a nice way. But they really puts like weird things in the middle. So to not, you know, kind of just stop the cars. So there are still problems. But as a whole thing, it's now much better accepted than it was in this in-between time. Where, like the whole thing, was a bit chaotic.

Speaker 1: Yeah. And you already referred to the Dutch cases of shared spaces. How would you say, except from the traffic signs that are still there in the Mariahilfer Straße, How would you say to the Mariahilfer Straße shared space deviates from the Dutch concept?

Speaker 2: I think, first of all, like the shape space, if I understand it right, it's like kind of it's a it's such a high value of public space. That the public space should belong to everybody and not only the car, etc.. So the Mariahilfer Straße is more a shopping street. So therefore it's also like much closer to the concept of a Fußgängerzone. It's not so much for the public, as a public space, it's more a shopping space. So that's one of the differences that let's say like kind of the definition of shared space, the way the original shared space was thought or defined, was not so much to make shopping more accessible to people who go by foot, but it had to more public meaning. So that would be the first. The second is the aspect of Gestaltung, of design. in all the projects that I see, be it in Holland, but also in Denmark, there are a few very nice projects, et cetera. That aspect of Gestaltung too is a highly reflected aspect. And if you look at the aspect of Gestaltung in the Mariahilfer Straße, let's say it's at least in comparison, very humble at least. So it's too little conceptual, it's too little extreme, too little like pleasure for the eye. Whatever you want to say, it's more like a normal public furniture that is put around it. And anyway, I find it, if you compare it with the good examples of these shared spaces, I put a few out. This urban park in Copenhagen that everybody knows. There are a few more. I actually sent you the word file where I wrote down and put a few examples. But in all these, the aspect of Gestaltung, and this can be conceptual. So it's normally highly conceptual. But also like design in the sense of the art of space. It's, let's say, not so well respected or highly esteemed in this project. So then there's this other thing, that with the shared space, again, if I understand it right, it was not about really get rid of the cars or to slow them down to like non-existence. It was more about that we need slower networks. Where like kind of different kinds of traffic can coexist together. But also there are places where you actually could speed up traffic in the sense of it was not about, it didn't have so much. There was this different public spaces and the togetherness of different ways of movement. And it seems here, the thing was more to get rid of cars, which, you know, to make it so difficult for them to even go there that they just stay at home. And again, this is I think even in the formally shared space thing, they really talk even about the fast and the slow networks. And for the slow ones to work, you need also fast ones. So it's very much about also a hierarchisation and differentiation of space. And, that kind of makes totally sense to me. It's not about making something not function, so everything slows down so nobody goes there. It's more about finding a way to have access to public space for everybody and kind of for the very different kinds of movement. So this would be the three parts I would say that did not get that level of quality, and also definition.

Speaker 1: And related to your third point about getting rid of cars, which is not actually the purpose of a shared space, because central to shared spaces is the integration of different modes of traffic, both pedestrians, cyclists and cars, to which extent do you think there is integration of traffic in the shared space in the Mariahilfer Straße?

Speaker 2: I think it works. I think it changed the forcefulness of, let's say the car, is the most powerful vehicle just because it's stronger and kind of less sensitive. So, like, it's changed because the pedestrian and also the bicycle driver feel empowered in this space. So it somehow changed the hierarchy of movement. And it does work. I would not say that it doesn't work. So when I like kind of I. So it seems to me that this thing of having together the cars, but the cars for sure don't feel that they only go slower, have to go slower and have to take care. But because Mariahilfer Straße combines this different Fußgängerzone, shared space, Begegnungsraum but also normal streets, etc. It's ruled very much by prohibition, not so much by enablement. It says 'don't enter the space with car', 'don't cross it', 'don't drive through', 'don't park', 'don't rest with your vehicle', 'cross only from X to', 'in a special time and hour', 'enter only as'. So it's like kind of a lot of rules that are put there and are mostly only for drivers and cars. And you see it also, and there comes this thing of the signs. There probably are more signs now than there were before.

Speaker 1: Because, actually the whole idea behind a shared space is that you get rid of all traffic

control. So maybe they kind of did that to a certain extent, so there are some traffic signs, but less traffic signs than before. But actually, they imposed more rules. So there is traffic control anyways. So in that sense, the shared space, is not really a shared space, because there are rules.

Speaker 2: There absolutely are and there again comes this, why I think the thing of Gestaltung and design is so important, because it's meant that the design on the on the streets etc kind of leads all these different people to coexist in a very intuitive way. And I think there was much too little focus on this aspect.

Speaker 1: So if they changed the design into a more self explaining street, as they call it. That would enable more intuitive behavior of people. So then the rules that are imposed would not be necessary.

Speaker 2: I think so and also like does it really need that you, you know, close all the streets that are access to the shared space or.

Speaker 1: I'm not so sure about that.

Speaker 2: And also, there are a few things that I think actually kind of one could have made a great project if one would have paid attention to quite a few points. When I look at, I took out again these great projects that I really like alot, and perhaps now, shall I share it with you? OK, so I will just send it to you. But that, you know, this pleasure that you get in these projects. First of all in Graz, there was this Jakomini Viertel where they made the red streets, which was quite interesting. The more elaborate projects like these urban graph, like urban graphics is one, then these Superkilen Urban Park in Copenhagen or there are quite nice ones also in, I think in Germany. It's called Aabenraa City Center in Denmark. I don't know whether you know this. Anyway, in all of them they put a lot of effort on these graphic and conceptual, like of the space and that what I find is totally missing.

Speaker 1: I was observing Mariahilfer Straße through Google Earth and it appeared to me that there still is a driving lane so to say. And there are sidewalks. But the only real thing that has changed is that it's all on the same level and there are no curbs anymore. But there is a driving lane, which is not really the case in other shared spaces I think.

Speaker 2: You'll have it sometimes. It's like, kind of it depends. But it's done much more, you know, even if you do it than you do it, there is this perhaps you can. It's called Aabenraa City Center in Denmark. There is this kind of you know, it's a huge Fußgänger, zebra this crossing for pedestrians, eight stripes. And they made it in very colourful and huge, you know, things that go over the street. So there are sometimes that you use these kind of lanes. But like in Superkilen Urban Park in Copenhagen, for example, for the bicycles there are lanes and also for the cross overs. But still you cannot compare it. In Vienna it's more or less like a street that is a bit different.

Speaker 1: Yeah. And do you also think that's because of the color of the pavement? Because it's grayish in the Mariahilfer Straße?

Speaker 2: There are beautiful examples of just using white and gray. You know, it doesn't mean that it cannot be gray or even there is a very nice project. It's actually black. Like they use black color, or in kind of the more landscape design before there was this shared space thing. There are these examples that really work with gray and white. So I don't think that it's the color. Maybe it's the concept. It's the conceptual, and it's these kind of symbolic graphics. It's a pleasure to the eye.

Speaker 1: Do you observe many people crossing the street anywhere or walking in the middle of the street in the Mariahilfer Straße?

Speaker 2: Yeah. I think like that was what I meant, that the pedestrians and especially also the bicycle drivers feel empowered. So they do like cross and go around. I would say less with joy, but more likely if it's their right. You know, they should take care of the cars as well

Speaker 1: And how would you describe the impact of this shared space-design on the safety in the Street?

Speaker 2: I think in the place itself, it's OK. But I have the feeling that also in the neighborhood of this shared space, bicycle drivers and pedestrians are less cautious? It seems to me that kind of the human mind seems to not change, you know like: 'Now I can walk as I want. Now I cannot'. So I normally see when they go to the neighboring streets where the traffic is normal also there they lose a bit of their cautiousness. That's somehow a bit what I find.

Speaker 1: That's very interesting because the rationale behind the shared space and the lack of traffic control, is that people become more cautious in the shared space. But you say that it's the other way around, actually, because they feel empowered and they become less cautious because they have the feeling that it is their space.

Speaker 2: I have this feeling, at least here in Vienna. It's an interesting thing that it's known that, for example, in the countries where the drivers are more chaotic and the rules are not so ?? that normally, like, for example, the security is much higher because everybody is watching out, the driver and the pedestrian, and everybody is watching. So therefore, you are right, normally one should think that everybody is more cautious. But I guess in a rule driven society. It might have another effect.

Speaker 1: Yeah. And what do you think of the relation between shared space design and physical distancing during the COVID 19 pandemic?

Speaker 2: So I have the feeling, I was thinking about it because, like I was, of course, me myself, I was much less there because I was staying at home, also working from home. So I have the feeling that what this whole time did was kind of just public spaces were not used, or like even streets, etc. And kind of people would not go to the streets so much anymore. So it was a bit very unoccupied for quite a while. And also that, when they closed down the shops, of course, for a while. So again, it was even less people on the Mariahilfer Straße. And when they opened it up, it starts now little by little to become more. But I was a few times now there. And it's no comparison with the time before. So people still go very little, you know, much less than they did before. The things that are, when you go into the shops, you have to put your mask. And when you get out. So I'm not sure actually whether you need this kind of huge shared spaces and enough space to move with a pandemic and kind of other crisis situations because people tend to stay at home and space is actually more available. There's more space to occupy. So I don't see really, you know, the benefits of such a huge space. Because there is no need for it actually.

Speaker 1: Yeah, exactly. And what do you think are the future challenges for cities with regard to, for example, pandemics, but also possible other big events?

Speaker 2: I really find, but this is perhaps, perhaps I'm very optimistic, but I generally find that you can not, you know, when there is something like that. Of course, you have to think about how to bring the best solutions to the table to deal with it. But I don't think that we should change our ways of planning and dealing with planning by like kind of rather small periods of time, it might come back or not. But I found it, for example, very weird that like this architecture associations were talking a lot about this issue. What it does to space and what it does. So, yeah, it makes sense to work with it as

we are in it, but I don't think that one should change you know, the rules and also practices of planning just because something like that can happen. But perhaps it's a bit you know, it's an optimistic view because I don't think that it will be something that will stay so long or will happen so often again.

Appendix F: code books

ATLAS.ti Report - In-depth general public Mariahilfer Straße

Codes

Report created by Ann Lankhorst on 13 Jun 2020

- Activities - using furniture
- Activities - bars, restaurants
- Activities - shopping
- Activities - social activity
- Activities - sports
- Activities - travelling through
- Activity - strolling
- Behavior - bus driver
- Behavior - car drivers
- Behavior - cyclists
- Behavior - other people confused
- Behavior - other people general
- Behavior - pedestrian
- Behavior - scooter drivers
- Behavior other people COVID-19
- Behavior towards other people
- COVID-19 situation description
- Description - SS
- Description Austria or Vienna
- Feeling - annoyed
- Feeling - anxiety
- Feeling - positive opinion
- Feeling - relaxing
- Feeling - stressful
- Feeling - unsafe
- FUZO - spatial distance
- Need to be cautious
- Own behavior - car driver
- Own behavior - cyclist
- Own behavior - general
- Own behavior - pedestrian
- Preference
- Safety not ensured
- Situation before transformation
- Visual perception - accessibility
- Visual perception - bars
- Visual perception - bus line
- Visual perception - delivery trucks
- Visual perception - driving lane
- Visual perception - environment
- Visual perception - furniture
- Visual perception - green space
- Visual perception - impact on people
- Visual perception - lack of traffic control
- Visual perception - other people
- Visual perception - pavement

- Visual perception - pedestrian area
- Visual perception - tactile pavement
- Visual perception - traffic control
- VP + feeling: safe place
- VP + feeling: unsafe
- VP + problems impaired people
- VP - Spatial distance enabled
- VP: avoid the area

ATLAS.ti Report - Expert interview - policy

Codes

Report created by Ann Lankhorst on 13 Jun 2020

- Active mobility - Beneficial
- Active mobility - not beneficial/no change
- Climate change - reduction of emission
- COVID - future challenges
- COVID - physical distance
- Functioning - active mobility
- Functioning - behavior of people
- Functioning - climate change/emissions
- Functioning - integration
- Functioning - local businesses
- Functioning - natural components
- Functioning - Quality of public space
- Functioning - safety
- Functioning - traffic area/staying area
- Functioning - Traffic flow
- Future challenges - other
- Future challenges - spatial planning and design
- Local businesses - Beneficial
- Local businesses - Not beneficial
- Physical distance - enabling
- Physical distance - no change
- Political challenges - awareness
- Quality of public space - Bad quality
- Quality of public space - Good quality
- Safety - not safe
- Safety - safe
- Staying area
- Traffic area
- Traffic flow - no change in speed + bad traffic flow
- Traffic flow - reduction of traffic
- Traffic flow - slow speed + good flow

ATLAS.ti Report - Expert interview – academia & practice

Codes

Report created by Ann Lankhorst on 15 Jun 2020

- Active mobility - no change/not beneficial
- Active mobility - shared space supports active mobility
- Climate - no change/not beneficial

- Climate - shared space is beneficial
- Confusion Shared Space & FUZO
- Context
- Context - role of culture
- Context - role of laws&rules
- COVID-19 - physical distance
- Functioning
- Functioning - active mobility
- Functioning - climate
- Functioning - local businesses
- Functioning - quality of public space
- Functioning - Safety
- Functioning - traffic flow
- Functioning - traffic/sojourn area
- Future challenges for cities
- Local businesses - no change/not beneficial
- Local businesses - shared space is beneficial
- Negative opinion about decisions government
- Observation
- Observation - people
- Observation - spatial environment
- Physical distance - enabled by shared space
- Physical distance - no change
- Political motives
- Preference for FUZO
- Quality of public space - higher quality
- Quality of public space - no change
- Safety - safer
- Safety - safety not ensured
- Segregation
- Sojourn area
- Spatial environment - no change/no shared space
- Traffic artery
- Traffic flow - Beneficial
- Traffic flow - no change/not beneficial

ATLAS.ti Report - Secondary literature

Codes

Report created by Ann Lankhorst on 22 Jun 2020

- Advantages
- Amenities and design
- Austrian Law
- Beloved elements
- Beneficial for local economy
- Budget
- Conflict in Shared Space
- Confusion among road users
- Critique concerning bus line

- Critique concerning cars
- Critique from shop owners
- Critique on process
- Critique on Vassilakou
- Danger for visually impaired people
- Description Shared Space
- Design
- Design for visually impaired people
- Desires before transformation
- Disadvantages
- Flanieren
- Furniture
- Grand opening
- In favor of transformation Mariahilfer
- Negative opinion car drivers
- Participation process
- Pedestrians stay on sidewalk
- Politics
- Prestige project
- Protest
- Reduction of traffic
- Safe feeling pedestrians
- Shopping
- Social activities
- Traffic calming
- Youngsters in favor

ATLAS.ti Report - Instagram analysis

Codes

Report created by Ann Lankhorst on 13 Jun 2020

- ADV: Functioning - climate change
- ADV: SS for COVID-19
- Bus lane
- Critique - desire for more green
- Cycle racks
- Functioning - integration of road users
- Loading/unloading
- No opinion - construction
- No opinion - reference to situation before
- No opinion - Shared Space
- Positive opinion - function Shared Space
- Positive opinion - scenery
- Reference "Spaziergang"/Flanieren
- Restaurants/bars
- Sarcasm/Negative - construction

- Sarcasm/negative - shared space
- Seasons
- Seating furniture
- Spatial design SS
- Street lights
- Tag - die Grünen (indicator positive opinion)
- Taxi stand
- Traffic sign
- Transition area
- Trees