

Barrier-free Europe:



S1E7: Barrier-free Europe

Description: The EU TRIPS project examined accessibility barriers and innovations in European countries. Sarah talks to Laura Alciauskaite (the European Network on Independent Living) and Dr. Tally Hatzakis (Trilateral Research) about their important pan-European research work. This episode also looks at the Accessible Cities Network – Brussels, Stockholm, Bologna, Sophia etc. - and lessons learned from the research that might be applied in Ireland.

Guests: Laura Alciauskaite and Dr. Tally Hatzakis

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Hello and welcome to All Aboard TII's accessibility podcast this is a podcast about accessibility and sustainable public transport brought to you by Transport Infrastructure Ireland I'm Claire Scott and I'm joined by our All Aboard podcast host Sarah O'Donnell throughout the series we'll be hearing first-hand accounts from people who use and design public transport systems and specifically the role accessibility plays in these experiences and who is this podcast for in the first instance we hope to connect with people with disabilities who use our services but also it's for anyone who is drawn to human interest stories and has a curiosity to learn more and of course we hope to attract listeners who are designers and decision makers for Transport Systems who through the podcast might get a better understanding of some of the problems and potential solutions that are out there so without further Ado let's give this a go and get all aboard TII's accessibility podcast.

Hi Sarah so I see we're taking a virtual field trip to Continental Europe today who's joining us hi Claire today we're chatting to Laura Alciauskaite and to Dr. Tally Hatzakis to get an insight into the TRIPS project TRIPS is a Europe-wide EU-funded research initiative focused on accessible public transport enjoy!

So Laura is a board member of the European Network on Independent Living and is a leading coordinator of TRIPS Dr Tali Hatzakis is a research analyst with trilateral research which looks at ethical AI solutions to address complex social issues now the ambition of the TRIPS project is to make public transport more accessible for persons with disabilities elderly people and indeed everyone Laura and Tally welcome to All Aboard TII's accessibility podcast I hope that that introduction captured what you're about and obviously we're looking forward now to hearing about the project in detail and about all of your fantastic work so I think maybe Laura if we start with you and it might be useful for people who are unfamiliar with the TRIPS project to maybe get a short summary first of all about the research itself and then maybe we can go into more detail and I'd also be very interested to hear about your own background in the European Network on independent living or IL as it's referred to how you subsequently got involved in TRIPS yes Sarah thank you very much for your nice introduction uh indeed I think you summarized the project very well if I need to say it very shortly because obviously I can talk hours about TRIPS it's a three years long project in the European Union and it's funded under Horizon 2020 program and the main idea as you already mentioned is to make the public transport more accessible and more inclusive in the European cities we are having a lot of people involved coming from the different fields so we're having researchers we're having disability NGO's which enables is representing we're having transport providers we're having City municipalities and in general I think we have 11 Partners on board so there's a lot of expertise in the project but our most activities are taking place locally so there are seven European cities where most of our activities take place and these cities are Brussels, Lisbon, Cagliari, Bologna, Zagreb, Stockholm and Sofia. so we're having like quite a huge variety among the cities and each of the city they have like the local groups and those groups are combined mostly by the core user teams which are represented by a person having

different types of disabilities and we also named in the lock to have like very diverse groups as diverse as possible so making sure that every access needs it's important to the consideration and those groups are led by the local user lead who is in the most cases a person with disability themselves but they're very have to say experience in leading such groups the very known disability activists and that was the idea that you know to make sure that the process is actually led by the users so but of course they're not working alone they're having transport providers both local and National they're having City municipalities on board and also some of them are even contributing with universities for example Stockholm they're having very close working really relationship with London University so like there are a lot of people on board and what they're doing is basically looking and designing the future Mobility solution or some kind of digital solution on Innovation to make sure that you know we can do something to make transport easier to use for persons with disabilities but not only to them you know we ensure that and that you know everyone who's facing barriers in transport that they need are also addressed so that would be a very short summary about the TRIPS.

I will also try to be very short because ANU is well probably one of the most known European networks which is led by the members and we have members both individuals and disability organizations from all over the Europe and what it represents is mostly working on a disability movement for human rights and social inclusion based on solidarity based on peer support the institutionalization democracy self-representation and self-determination and our main vision is to say shortly is that we aim that all persons of decided disabilities or abilities are able to have choice and to have control over their life so empowering them in a way that to be sure that they are having the same opportunities as everyone else despite the abilities and that they are valid members of the community and can enjoy all the human rights as it has been set in the United Nations convention on the right of persons with disability so that would be very short about TRIPS I didn't know Sarah if you would like to add something maybe I forgot something important yeah of course everything as a nurse it starts with the users and any the whole project was designed to you know like represent that motto of nothing for us we without us and we took it to heart because there is of course a lot of accessibility consultancy and projects but often the solutions come from experts for the users in the absence of the users and this is just like not right we wanted to create the process and the tools to facilitate individuals with its disabilities to participate in open Innovation so the process itself is an innovation of the projects if that sense because yeah not only we had to do that we had to do it in the time of covid so we've had to do it virtually obviously the co-design element is hugely important that's the kind of foundation of the work that you're doing and I know that from some of the user group sessions that we have that that's hugely important yes this is this was a fundamental but fundamental for the approach of the project and not only in the design phase but also at this strategy at the prioritization we didn't want to develop Solutions because transport Authority or strategically you had in mind that this is what is needed for them but let the users decide which solutions should be prioritized and Laura how does that work in practice then the co-design yes indeed when you read about co-design and that's another topic I could probably speak for hours but I personally really like it I find it like very important that everyone is considered as equal partner

and for example me you know I'm representing the NGO of persons with disabilities so I'm sorry in advance that I will speak a lot of on our perspective and I find it very important and who finds it very important that persons with disabilities are considered as the experts of the accessibility so they not only short-term Consultants you know or someone who's like providing one-time feedback but it actually involves from the very beginning from the very end to having the same right to say that okay I don't want this I think that's what might not work or also on the other hand say that okay this is very needed this would be very useful for me this would make my journey more comfortable more accessible I would I would like to have it you know and then when you're involved from the very beginning you know it's really like encouraging you to make sure that okay my voice actually matters you know.

I can really find the dialogue with the transport providers I can you know I can make my voice heard to the city authorities and so on but it's you know the co-design is like it's very nice but in practice it's sometimes very hard to implement and we noticed that in the cities that for example it was a bit challenging in some of the Seven Cities I mentioned because it's very non-hierarchical way and the many you know transport providers or city authorities they want to do it but they're not used to do it and for them it was like very new approach but what can we say that when you give time and you give effort and if there's willingness from both sides and that's very important that the willingness would be from both sides and from the users as well and there's a possibility to do great things you know because it's actually beneficial to everyone who's in in terms of your research findings today the foundation of the project is based on the mobility divide index and also on methodologies of co-design which you developed with the sample Seven Cities in which you hope to apply to other cities but Tally and before we get on to that do you want to talk about your own background with trilateral research and how you came into the TRIPS project okay so a trilateral is a UK SME or we specialize in socio-technical research because we are looking at the social aspects and the social impacts and the social consideration of the introduction of Technologies in society and of course the ethical implications so to make sure that the process of developing is ethical but also the introduction of innovation Society is ethical and it leaves no nobody behind and this is where it kind of so if you like social Innovation is at the core of what we do even though projects are more or less commercial so just if we if we talk a little bit about some of the research findings that have come back so on the mobility divide index do you want to maybe talk about the six dimensions of public transport experience and what that means okay so the MBI was you know if you want to change something you need to measure it yeah and we looked at what was out there in measuring accessibility and a lot of the stuff a lot of the metrics that come from the industry we were not sure whether it reflects the user's perspective how the users see accessibility so for example to measure distance between somebody's house and the bus stop is not necessarily the same for somebody who has disabilities and somebody who doesn't have disability and so this we wanted to find out what is it about accessibility how people think about accessibility from their own perspective so literally we gathered our groups around the city and our working TRIPS around the city that okay guys if we want to measure accessibility from your point of view what is it that matters to you what is it

that matters to you when you plan your journey when you go to some stop when you board when you wait like you get information all the stages of the journey from leading from before leaving your house planning your journey to arriving to your destination so we took all of these stages and we literally brainstorm all the factors that stop you or it's difficult for you or deter you from you know from deciding to embark on a journey and literally when then by logically and brainstorm factors of importance and once we did that we kind of clustered things together what is it that is common in terms of the two yeah so the mentions were Comfort like everybody needs to be comfortable like when they're traveling because if you reach aboard a threshold of inconvenience he's just not going to go right yeah and so it was convenient you know how convenient something safety very important and of course time was really important like we on average and our journey takes about 20 minutes more for a person with disabilities because they cannot board on a particular platform yeah I mean come on that's unacceptable and of course affordability which we didn't test because affordability was affordability so it's a common thing the whole idea of the MDI is that the persons with disability should be able to travel on their own.

Whether they are blind on wheelchairs have a hearing impairment like they need to be traveling on their own preferably without stopping a bus driver stop the truck Transit and come and help you so we wanted to measure that can be embark on it on your journey on your own to a known and unknown destination and this is what we try to measure and what stood out for you from that comparative analysis a lot of the biggest and we did a survey so this corresponds with our survey the first and last mile issues of a journey are really important I really are really difficult for people and not so much the first mile because often Journey starts in somebody's house so you kind of choose where you live and you know your area and where you need to go but the last mile in particular because especially when you veer off to a new destination let's say you some friends invite you to go to this coffee place and you're meeting and you've never been before so for Laura who is on weekends a waitress you might be thinking okay I'm coming down from the station can I really get on to that Cafe from my bus stop yeah and especially with new destinations you'd never have the certainty that this will be suitable also a gathering issues from the survey more than the solutions was the public attitudes and the driver attitude towards persons with disabilities and this is not just the Practical right which cannot be fighting with a mother about with a pram for the space on the bus it's just like it's we need to develop some sort of Transport etiquette with how we how we coordinate with other passengers with disabilities and some disabilities for example if you're a deaf nobody knows you are deaf really so they don't they don't look after you yeah if that makes any sense so that's the interesting subject we don't really think I was yeah I was really interested in reading your through your research to hear about the idea of a transport etiquette and of course there are infrastructural barriers and digital barriers and all kinds of barriers but there are also social barriers which can't necessarily maybe be solved through rules or regulations and it's maybe more through people becoming more aware and then behaviour and etiquette developing out of that.

So Laura in terms of the co-creation side of things you developed a methodology of co-creation which included people with disabilities and included researchers and municipalities transport providers and so on and that methodology was applied to all aspects of the project so it applied to setting up the project to carrying out the research and to developing Solutions do you want to talk about that side of it so yes your very right Sarah it was what we imagined to happen in TRIPS and as I mentioned we had this local teams and they were supposed well we had two different groups of cities so four cities which was Bologna, Cagliari and Lisbon they had like a few Partners on board for TRIPS so they were expected actually to develop a solution and for the remaining three cities which is Brussels, Sofia and Stockholm they were not expected to actually develop it but the idea was like to design the concept and maybe prefer some mock-ups so what we aim you know that they will do it in our co-design method from the very beginning so from the you know generating the idea and during the workshops and then you know developing it and then even testing it so we just finished that part you know so most cities are actually doing the already the first testing and some cities already finished so we created a lot of a lot of interesting Solutions so each City had a set of deliverables and objectives and do you want to maybe give some examples of what came out of the city studies I think it's fair to say that a lot of them developed different assets of Travel Planning because I said as I said before work this was something that was feasible to actually deliver on in the you know in the time frame of the project but more importantly is because irrespective of what type of disability you have it's important for you to know that the end-to-end journey is accessible and that and there is no real time information about a that we can be given to Laura to know that this is true and so we try to yeah to make sure that yeah different solutions that can Safeguard you know and give it confidence to people that can reach their destination yes and the journey planner seems to be so high up in terms of its importance to users so are you looking to develop a prototype planner or is it is that a recommendation that will be picked up by others and if so how might it look and how can transport providers and municipalities work together to develop a really good quality Journey planner from a technical point of view we didn't want to create a standalone Journey planner because we know that different operators and different cities have their own Journey planners right so there is no point developing a standalone other Journey planner for is a you know disabled users we wanted to create even like a technological layer you know something that can be superimposed that'd be a functionality of existing Journey planners so there's a journey planner in Brussels you take our layer you superimpose it you integrate it in that existing Journey planner that everybody uses yeah and provides and provides users with accessibility information in an accessible manner and what I mean they say you know Laura is in a wheelchair but you can see and you can hear if you can use that but maybe a blind person needs to have an accessible Journey planner with a wayfaring like to the ability to be directed step by step that may not be useful for Laura but it would be absolutely necessary for a blind person so you need to be specialized personalized depending on the type of disability you have as well yeah and Laura just in terms of other aspects and issues that came out of the city studies or what's coming to the fore besides the journey planner Brussels which is one of the most inaccessible cities unfortunately in Europe they were like very much focusing on having the accessible vehicles and real-time information that you know

you actually can get on an accessible tram or an accessible bus which is a bit more advanced when it comes to accessibility they raised the issue that's very annoying every time to enter the details you need for example like the what is the measures of your wheelchair if you're traveling with a wheelchair or what the assistance you might need at the station so they wanted like to have this Improvement that you provide some personal information and it's stored and it's passed on and the information you're receiving back as the user is related with what you actually need so for example okay if you're traveling with electric wheelchair to make sure that you have enough space on a vehicle to Embark yourself and so today focusing was on that and Sofia besides you know having the working on the accessible Journey planner app they also made a mock-up of the accessible bus stop and it was a very nice concept and we have very nice mock-ups how it should look like but it's also how to make this more user friendly and making sure that everyone decides their impairment they can check you know the information which is relevant to traveling by bus so you know when you see it like it seems very similar solution like focusing on a digital Journey planner but then you if you go more into depth people are raising different aspects just as Tally said so it was very interesting and to see you know how it's actually developing throughout all the months.

The mock-up of the accessible bus stop sounds so great and I was also very interested to read about the so-called intelligent bus stop which was developed as part of the accessible bus stop mock-up in Sofia and but in terms of assistive technology generally and maybe tell me more about the intelligent bus stop and about the viability of some of the other more futuristic Technologies yes so for Sofia I can answer your question yes the intelligence accessible bus stop basically are intelligent like you need to use these Smart Technologies to make a better job intelligence it's not only about a ramp it's about how the especially if you have sensory disabilities how you relate to finding information identifying if your blind that the bus in front of you if the bus you want to embark on without the need for example to ask somebody next to you or the driver so it's so intelligence is part of the requirement for an accessible Journey for an accessible bus stop and in terms of other future Technologies I mean you know I suppose maybe you'd agree that sometimes they can be a mask for other failings maybe or you know that the probably the primary goal is to have a universally designed intuitive and accessible public transport system you know with really good infrastructure that everybody can access but there is a role I suppose for Smart Technologies and for future Technologies and you know so you know in some of the literature that I was reading this discussions on the sonar glasses the smart bracelets that have a navigational element you know even smart Mobility canes and all of that I mean in in your opinion Tally and Laura what you know what role does that kind of future technology play in finding Solutions yeah I was looking at Tally because that's I think that's a big part of your survey which we did as one of the activities of the project we just I can say shortly that actually users the ones they're very keen to use the assistive Technologies if they really reflecting their needs and if they're making you the person more independent actually they like if I remember well and tell me please to step in and remember that users were very favourable towards for example wearables so for example if you have like bracelets which helps you to open doors or you know to move the ramp like we have these kind of questions like

would you use something like this you know and in your daily life and then describing the assistive technology the users were very fond on this you know which is not making a big deal out of it but also you know making your life easier so I think that another favourable thing was for visually impaired people who are like saying that virtual reality glasses with something that they would like to have to provide the real time information about the environment to help you like to do the housework or for example if you go shopping they can carry your stuff you know or the things you have bought so I think it's I think users are very up to use this if they're innovative it's easy to use and it's reflecting the needs you know it's not something like I was not very surprised because I represented this book Angels but I know that some of our partners were that exoskeletons were not a very common you know choice among the persons with disabilities because they say like you know then I said it's very important to make sure that the Dignity of disabled person is you know represented and when it comes to a specific solution you need to be sure that you're when you're creating it is that the purpose is to make a person more independent not that make disability more like visible or making you know something like innovative about it because many people they feel very good with their disabilities and the only barriers they're facing is not you know with software acceptance because that's certainly fine for many people where they've got the real issue for them is that there are lots of barriers and especially social barriers to them to have a fully independent life with the equal opportunities and then you know when you create something you need to be sure that okay you're actually contributing to the person to be more independent as I said not you know to making like I don't know bringing you to close to the norm which is a medical model and we're not really fond of that.

In annual if it arises from the needs and it tackles the barriers then this would be something probably the people will use and if it comes you know like without doing the proper research without having those people the users involved in the from the very beginning then you it might be risk you know it might be that people will not accept that yeah and I think it comes to any other product right it's not only about the person with disabilities it's like why would you need use something that's not needed you know so absolutely very important to have that in mind sometimes we have with experts have this idea that the users want X and we don't ask them if this is something that they would ask to actually form so I remember I was talking with Frank Laura's colleagues or writing the proposal please also on a wheelchair and we were talking about exoskeletons right this is an Apple car main emerging technology and stuff like that I'm sorry for people who don't know what is the exoskeleton how does it work briefly so it's almost like it's a mechanical if you like body structure yeah you can really a little bit like Robocop like you wear this on top of you and it's it uses technology and smart technology to help you lift yourself to help you walk sure and also to sometimes to help you even lift stuff so yeah it would be a little bit like a Transformer when you're wearing it and so I was talking to Frank who was a on a wheelchair and said like would you wear like other wheelchair user would you wear this you know would you would you like to have something that I teach you to actually walk and the answer was no I am comfortable with my wheelchair this is part of you know my identity and what I'm used to kind of go around yeah and that would be completely for it so there's no point investing in this

technology unless we have the market for it and we should be asking the people whether this is something their solution for them not assuming that it will be assumed that they would want it so I mean I just was interested on in terms of infrastructure and the role like cycling infrastructure has been rolled out all over Europe and in Dublin and Ireland we're a little bit late to the party on it but there's a lot of investment in cycling and you've got some interesting feedback in terms of the role that you know the but the role that that the kind of cycle infrastructure and the e-mobility and all of that can play but also the kind of conflicts that can arise there is a an actual UK NGO that is called wheels for well-being and it's a disability NGO in London that is all about kind of providing alternatives cycling alternatives for people with disabilities as well as writing trainings so people get their confidence and writing in groups and stuff like that so there's the schemes side of cycling any scooters as well right so it's the same but it's all and they don't and but on the flip side is cycling infrastructure so with the cycle infrastructure we know from our studies that says a lot of people in wheelchair piggy back on this infrastructure because it's scheduled free right but also it's very scary for them because it's the same lane as with short Lane for very fast-moving cyclists and also people on wheelchair and also people on mobility scooters so there's a mixed bag of users in very short space yeah so we need to do things up also for example some very easy solutions but also like we need to think about there are no ramp scene too the cycle lane and of the cycling so how do you do that yeah there are also no kind of parking layouts the people can safely Embark and disembark so these are kind of infrastructure solutions that can complement the existing design of cycling yeah if we just think a little bit different and it would be useful for mothers with kids that want to ride that's on them bike with their kids right yeah in safety so it's not just for disabled it's just for other categories of users absolutely yeah I know that with the introduction of e-mobility faster bikes faster electric bikes faster electric scooters.

You know there's a whole new conflict between maybe vulnerable Walkers elderly people all of that and yet there are there's a whole kind of world of possibility as well so I guess it's back to that kind of empathetic co-creation and understanding all of the users you know around that point what I have to say is who is this infrastructure for because I'm sorry but Europe is growing older by the minute right so it's close the elderly people with disabilities which are not in this group we are 100 according to Who We Are One 135 million registered disabled users in Europe yeah so it's not like a small Niche number so you exclude the elderly the disabled the mothers with kids me because I'm not going to get on with the fast you know like I'm not considered elderly but I wouldn't really want to ride really fast thing yeah or cycling no I don't want to endanger myself so who is this infrastructure for at the end of the day and in terms of the United Nations convention on the right of persons with disabilities would you say that it's been a game changer in terms of how people are talking about disabilities and in terms of how people think about disability for example like you say you know things have generally moved more towards the user and towards people's own experience and towards people's rights so Laura how has how has it made a difference are has that difference yet to be felt ERPD we call it CRPD with a convention on the right of personal disability it's one of the core documents to have it and we are at a very big fan of it and we're really promoting it hard because yes truth is that many European countries have signed it and not only

European countries and they made some promises for persons with disabilities that you will have access equal access to all the human rights you should be having but I must say that you know on paper it sounds way better than it is in reality and unfortunately changes are not coming very fast but at least when you have you know the legal paper and the countries legal responsibility to do something I think it also can help to move the change a little bit faster and it's really a line that I would say with what they're trying to do the in the trip project and with all the co-design of public because when the country is ratified the convention they have committed to respect the rights of persons with disabilities and although as I said to provide equal opportunities to enjoy acceptable and independent traveling as well and it's stated in the Convention as well that you cannot create something without having persons with disabilities involved in the process involving the process of creating the future Mobility Solutions and improving the accessibility because they're the ones who are experts and they're the ones who know what exactly it's needed and I think the message is carrying the role you know all our talk but that's very compliant with the with the convention itself because they're also bringing it okay people with disabilities exist that's a lot of them the facing barriers here is the tool you know what you need to make sure that that they can enjoy it right as they should so I think it's very important document and in TRIPS we also been bringing it to whatever where it's possible and what I also really like it like it's focusing on a social model of disability and which is you know not fitting or contrary to the medical model which the medical model claiming that okay the person with disability is not normal like not normal and we need to fix him or her or them to make sure that they fit in in the society and the social model is all contrary because I'm telling this to The Listener who maybe not familiar with the models that shortly thing they saying that okay everyone is unique everyone has different abilities different strengths and maybe something that you know some issues you are facing but the we as a society we should be open-minded and to make sure that we reduce the barriers as much as we can you know to allow everyone to have equal opportunities I think also it you don't mind me saying I think the intuition of users in the in the conversations something else for me that I have out there I think transport operators think that they need to spend a lot of money to make accessibility happen because they just cannot think with they cannot emphasize with the users like you don't if you don't have you're not faced with a condition you are not you can't like physically because but I found like the users are so reasonable about what they're asking and some of the solutions is not about spending a lot of money is about maybe even spend like very little money that will make such a big difference from their point of view.

So this conversations can actually help us save money from the things that they don't want and put money into the things that they it would actually make a big difference I strongly support what Tally said if I might add there was also you know because in TRIPS we also did the research and we do many things we have in time to talk about but one of the reasons was to identify the barriers and even myself I was very surprised when I found out that people you know came up to us and said that the government is spending lots of money to have this accessible taxi or special Specialized Service for persons with disabilities when people say that if I had just I would never use it because I want to go with my friends I want to go with my family I want to go you know use the public transport is fine just make it

accessible don't invest millions in creating something that you know it's segregating and it's not needed just talk to us and we will see what's needed and finally something is super reasonable you can even you know sometimes name it Point by point you know what can make it you know instantly you know more accessible so just talk to the users that would be my main takeaway you know and they will and I think that would be very beneficial to find out you know what's actually what's actually before we just get on to where people can find out more information on both research on possible solutions on how to get involved to follow progress and all of that we maybe let people know about that in a minute but before we do you want to maybe just sum up like obviously the co-creation the listening the role of assistive technology the feedback from cities is all very important but is there anything else that you think it's important to say based on the research and findings that you've carried out to date so I would like just mentioned some of the systemic changes that we feel are required to change the mindset and set up the structures that will facilitate the adoption of accessible innovation in society in the transport sector but maybe in society more General so we are going to change the buses of the bus fleet across Europe to make them green yeah yes that's a reality let's make sure that all the buses all the new buses in the green fleet are accessible they are designed to be accessible period and no bus that is inaccessible with the procured in any City in order to do that we need to change the standards of procurement of vehicles in cities so we change the standards we make we make part of the procurement standard a bullet point needs to be accessible in that that respect and therefore a municipality is allowed then to buy or license the best value for Market value for money service assuming that it is accessible so no non-accessible vehicles are in the Market at all yeah Baseline requirements yeah we realized that.

A lot of Transport operators shy away from engaging the users in co-creation because they don't know how to do co-creation usually take infrastructure projects are top down project management so we need to change the you know like they need to be trained in a different way of doing project management which is why we developed the MOOC but also we realize accessibility research or even you know like there are nothing else disabled people who are well versed in co-creation because nobody has actually engaged them in co-creation so we need to develop persons with disabilities to be designers yeah and then consult train become a resource for company to do accessibility initiatives so one of the things that we're trying to do is to set to establish a to establish a centre for Access like a centre of excellence for accessibility if design yeah so we gather the academics We Gather their experts like it becomes a hub like a network of hubs that become a consultancy a trainer and mentor to support organizations who want to do accessibility initiatives practically yeah and the other thing that we try to do with the MBI like that we have developed you know because what gets measures gets done so that's the way we are trying to do is the MDI is not just a framework we have created the app for it like in a mobile app for it so people can go and audit the accessibility of their of the transport yeah in their cities every day they will be also given the opposite the capability the functionality to take a picture and upload it and create an incident a comment you know this is my this was my barrier this is where when it happened where it happened and it's geolocated so then all this information is visualized for disability so transport operators can see what were the problems

with the buses when would this happen with service was it a problem that the blind people face was it the problem people on wheelchair face so they can actually have Hands-On information and to do and prioritize because that's the other thing with a with a quantitative you can prioritize to see how many people are affected yeah in their Journey so we want to establish these Observatory based on the NDI across Europe to understand how accessible our city we have liveable cities smart cities let's have accessible City I was just going to add to what you were saying Tally is so interesting you know they just kind of have you know these very strong concrete recommendations that'll make such a difference and that you know you've got your smart cities you've got your green cities you've got but ultimately all of these will interconnect and overlap because they're all about people using cities so you know your accessibility your smart technology your biodiversity your usability of cities and the kind of quality of life and for everybody and Laura did you want to add anything to that I mean I think that they're what Tally went through there were incredibly kind of concrete you know recommendations for everybody when it comes to persons with disabilities I would also like to promote the code design and to say that okay if you want to create something bring the users bring the users from the very beginning and make them as equal Partners in co-designing and co-developing something but also I find it super important and there's this topic that it's often forgotten that okay if you want users or a person with disability to bring their expertise it shouldn't be taken for granted because what I really like about the TRIPS because yes we had lots of users and all in all the Seven Cities imagine that each of the core users team have up from five to eight persons with disabilities they're actually compensated for being there and providing expertise in to the field and you know to arranging the meetings to providing feedback constant feedbacks to being in workshops because I think that it's very often taken for granted that okay the persons with disabilities they just come in you know deliver something while you know travel provider is actually getting paid for this because that's the job and I and I really much like to advocate for that that's okay if you want something to be done on an equal basis you need to you know to con like not to pay but to make sure that the person especially the efforts and wellness yeah and acknowledge and I find it super important because you know at any and other local disability Engineers we often hear hey but isn't it hard for you just to come you know and give the feedback it's for greater good yes it's for greater good but can you imagine how many times I'm asked to do this in the process you know and keeping in mind that we all you know have lives actually we have work study we have families Leisure Time anything so I would you know to say that you know if and it's also like very how to say the quality comes here you know like okay if you consider everyone equal that should be you know equal understanding that their work is also matters exactly and that expertise has value I mean I mean of course we're nice people and if you ask me like you know coming like Smalls and you know companies or something I would never say no but keeping in mind you know if you have opportunity it would be nice you know to be to make sure that you're giving something in return and that shouldn't be cookies and coffee you know I will I will not be very Innovative here but I would say when it comes to persons with disabilities and any changes either in public transport or whatever you implying to do is nothing without us nothing about us without us so I think it's really the heart of the of the message that okay if you want to do something and to make sure it works get the users involved from the very beginning and don't be scared you know if it's not going according to the plan

because it's not to eat as it might seem as a paper but I think it always pays off you know the effort if there's commitment and an effort and time dedicated to work in a cool design manner I think it eventually it's a workout so just do it just do it yeah and Tally yeah I don't think I would like dilute the methods of Laura because that is that is the message don't shy away of interacting with users you want to make accessibility happen it will save money it will save time it will have Maximum Impact so we can achieve more together and that's that and this is at a practical level at the sector level at the political level it just involves directly the users in all these processes to make things happen very well said so to finish you're both doing incredibly important work an incredibly interesting work so we'll post all of the information on our website so that people can learn more about TRIPS about the mobility divide index about the research about the possible solutions and I'm really looking forward to keeping in touch and following progress and hearing more and learning more and hopefully applying all of your good work to our own work so thank you thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to your audience and yeah thank you indeed we really appreciate your time and your effort and we look forward to Future engagement thank you so much thank you thank you so much for having us and for the flexibility for making the time it was a pleasure you know to speak about TRIPS and to bring the messages from TRIPS to you and to your listeners so thanks a lot that's incredible work so yeah thank you

So that's it for this episode we hope you enjoyed hearing from Laura and Tally and the great work on accessibility and Mobility across Europe for those curious to learn more we highly recommend checking out the trips-project.eu website where you can participate in Mobility surveys learn about the co-design toolkit and read all about the mobility divide index research we will also link to it in our episode notes and on our website thank you to our host Sarah O'Donnell to Trevor Cudden on sound to the production team Kathleen Jacoby Rachel Cahill and Claire Scott to Sinead Foley from TU Dublin who designed our fantastic graphics and to everyone else who helped make this podcast please send us your comments and feedback to All Aboard at tii.ie and for more episodes from All Aboard please go to Spotify iTunes or wherever you get your podcasts until next time...