

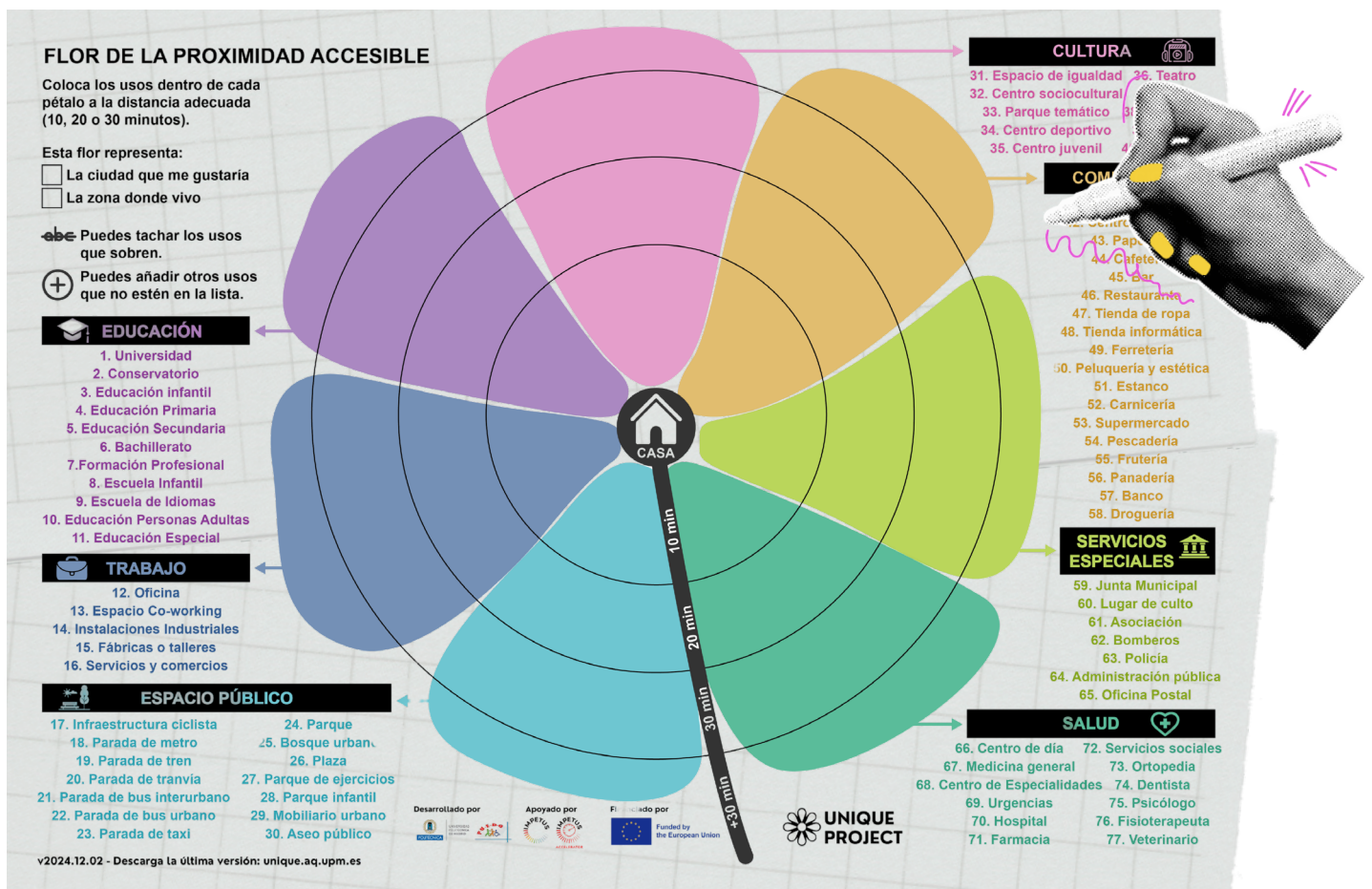
# Alba Ramírez Saiz

Alba is an architect and urban planner specializing in design for all and inclusive mobility for people of different ages and abilities. She has participated in national and international projects, supporting the development of inclusive design. She is also the founder of Seminars of Accessibility, an initiative that shares the latest trends in design for all with university and vocational training students, aiming to create a more inclusive future.



Madrid, Spain





Transport systems can be considered inclusive, feminist, and equitable only if...

... they ensure seamless access from start to finish. This means addressing every part of the journey: from the information available to planning the trip, the accessibility of infrastructure, the connection to vehicles, and the final destination. Far too often, there are breaks in the transport chain that leave people stranded. It's essential to remember that different people face different challenges, and that includes those whose needs might not be immediately visible. One in six people worldwide has some form of disability, and we must design truly inclusive systems, whether it's for someone using a wheelchair, navigating with cognitive impairments, or simply struggling with poorly marked steps. An equitable transport system leaves no one behind.

If I was in power of our transport systems, the first thing I would do is...

... create a system that actively listens to its users. Incorporating user feedback into the design process is critical. People's real-life experiences and needs must be considered

to ensure that infrastructure serves everyone, especially the most vulnerable. Additionally, we need to integrate the entire transport network, eliminating barriers such as switching tickets or changing vehicles unnecessarily. This can only be achieved if we involve diverse voices, including those from non-technical fields, ensuring that human-centered design is at the core of the process.

How does the current situation for persons with disabilities in your city influence your work?

It directly influences my work, reminding me that there's always more to be done. While there has been progress, there are still many daily challenges people with disabilities face. I work with the belief that we can always improve something more and that inclusivity should be a top priority in every decision. It's not just about meeting regulations but ensuring that the real-world experiences of those with disabilities drive the creation of truly accessible and barrier-free transport systems. These challenges push me every day to advocate for lasting change.



### What's the main challenge that you face in your daily work?

The main challenge I face in my daily work is reconciling the many perspectives that come with working in urban planning. It's an interdisciplinary field where each stakeholder has different goals—architects, engineers, city planners, and community representatives all bring their own unique outlooks. Inclusion of people of different ages and abilities is often one of the least prioritized aspects, and pushing for it requires not just technical knowledge but an ongoing effort to shift mindsets. Inclusion isn't simply about meeting regulations—it's about considering the needs of people from all walks of life, especially the most vulnerable. My challenge is raising awareness about the significance of inclusive design, making it a central priority in the planning process. This requires constant dialogue and collaboration with various experts to ensure that transport systems are accessible for everyone, regardless of their mobility, age, or socioeconomic status. While it may be difficult, it's incredibly rewarding to see how small changes can lead to a more inclusive environment, and this keeps me motivated every day.

### Why is it important to listen to young people?

It is incredibly important, especially when it comes to shaping the future of transport and urban development. Young people have a fresh perspective on the world and they can identify problems and propose solutions that others may not even consider. Their passion and creativity often bring bold ideas that challenge the status quo and push us to think outside of the box. But beyond their innovative ideas, young people also represent the future users and technicians of transport systems. They will experience the long-term effects of the decisions made today. If we fail to listen to them, we risk missing out on insights that could better serve everyone in society.

### What would you tell other young people working in the transport field?

I would say: always keep the user at the center of your work. It's easy to get caught up in technicalities and design features, but ultimately, it's the people who use the transport system who matter most. The comfort, safety, and accessibility of the user should be the driving force behind every decision you make. When you design with the end user in mind, you create systems that truly serve everyone. Don't be afraid to take the time to consider all needs, even if it means challenging the

#### Principle #2 Inclusivity in Transport

The principle underscores that inclusive transport isn't just a luxury, but a fundamental right. By designing systems that are accessible and welcoming, we ensure that everyone can participate in daily life without facing unnecessary barriers. In my work, this means prioritizing the needs of vulnerable groups, such as those with disabilities, older adults, and children. It also requires continuous efforts to remove systemic obstacles that can prevent people from accessing transport services. Ensuring accessibility in public transport networks helps build more equitable, cohesive cities where everyone can move freely, access opportunities, and lead fulfilling lives.

My work aligns with the  
Hamburg Charter Principles!





typical processes or taking longer to get things right. Quality is more important than speed. Young people have the power to influence how transport systems evolve, and their commitment to inclusivity can shape the future for generations to come. So, approach every challenge with empathy, creativity, and a deep understanding of the diverse people who will benefit from your work.

