Acknowledgment and Reflection on TRB 2025 Attendance

I am deeply grateful to the Israel Smart Transportation Research Center (ISTRC) for their support of my research on pedestrian stress. Their funding enabled me to attend the prestigious 104th Annual Transportation Research Board (TRB) Meeting in Washington, DC, USA, from January 5 to 9, 2025.

This year's TRB experience was particularly meaningful to me. Following the presentation of my poster on *Pedestrian Stress in Human-driven and Fully Automated Vehicle Transport Systems* at TRB 2023, an event I was unable to attend due to COVID restrictions, this conference was an invaluable opportunity to make up for that absence and fully engage with the transportation research community.

TRB, a division of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, serves as a cornerstone of transportation innovation and research. The TRB Annual Meeting is a global platform for knowledge exchange, hosting thousands of attendees and offering sessions that span cutting-edge research, policy discussions, and practical applications.

A highlight of my TRB experience was presenting my research on *Pedestrian Stress as a Key Metric for Urban Design, Transport Planning, and Policy* during the Pedestrian Committee Meeting (ACH10). This setting provided a unique opportunity to share my findings with an expert audience, receive constructive feedback, and engage in in-depth discussions. The committee's focus on pedestrian safety, accessibility, and mobility aligns closely with my research, making this an ideal venue to explore how pedestrian considerations can be integrated into broader transportation strategies. The insights I gained have deepened my understanding of the importance and growing interest in the emotional dimensions of pedestrian stress, as well as their implications for urban mobility and design.

In addition to presenting my research, I volunteered and was honored to contribute to the *Empathy at the Intersection* exhibit. This interactive initiative underscored the importance of public education and empathy in transportation. By encouraging reflection and offering attendees a fresh perspective, the

exhibit created a meaningful connection between human experiences and innovative mobility solutions. Engaging with international participants who left reflections and ideas was both inspiring and rewarding.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to my supervisor, Prof. Yoram Shiftan, from the Civil and Environmental Engineering Faculty at the Technion, Israel Institute of Technology. His unwavering support, guidance, and mentorship have been invaluable throughout my research journey, enabling me to reach this important milestone.

Reflecting on this experience, I would like to offer a few recommendations for future attendees:

1. **Prepare Strategically**: With numerous parallel sessions, workshops, and poster presentations, planning is essential. Get familiar with the online program and conference planner in advance. Prioritize sessions aligned with your interests and prepare a clear agenda to maximize the experience.
2. **Embrace Networking Opportunities**: Social events, informal gatherings, and networking sessions are invaluable for building professional relationships and exploring collaborative projects.
3. **Engage with Authors and Colleagues**: Meeting paper authors in person brings research to life. Conversations with peers, especially those from various Zoom meetings and the EIT Urban Mobility Doctoral Training Network (DTN), were particularly enlightening.
4. **Check the Weather Forecast**. During TRB 2025, a significant snowstorm swept through Washington, DC, creating widespread mobility challenges across the city. The storm served as a real-world reminder of the critical need for robust urban mobility systems capable of functioning under extreme conditions, an issue at the heart of many conversations during the event.

I am available for any questions and happy to provide additional insights as needed. Please don't hesitate to reach out!

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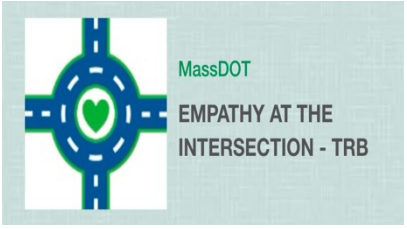


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