

S.U.S.T.A.I.N.

Specific User Sustainability Through Accurate Index Number



University of Turin, Italy

UniToGO - Green Office - Mobility Working Group (Andrea Scagni, Micol Maggiolini)

With the support of Turin Metropolitan City Council and Piedmont Regional Administration

AIMS

Implementing an objective, data based system of disincentives to car use for university commuters based on a **sustainability index** taking into account all relevant information available (mainly the origin destination matrix and the travel options available) and easily obtainable on a large scale with low resource distributed computing

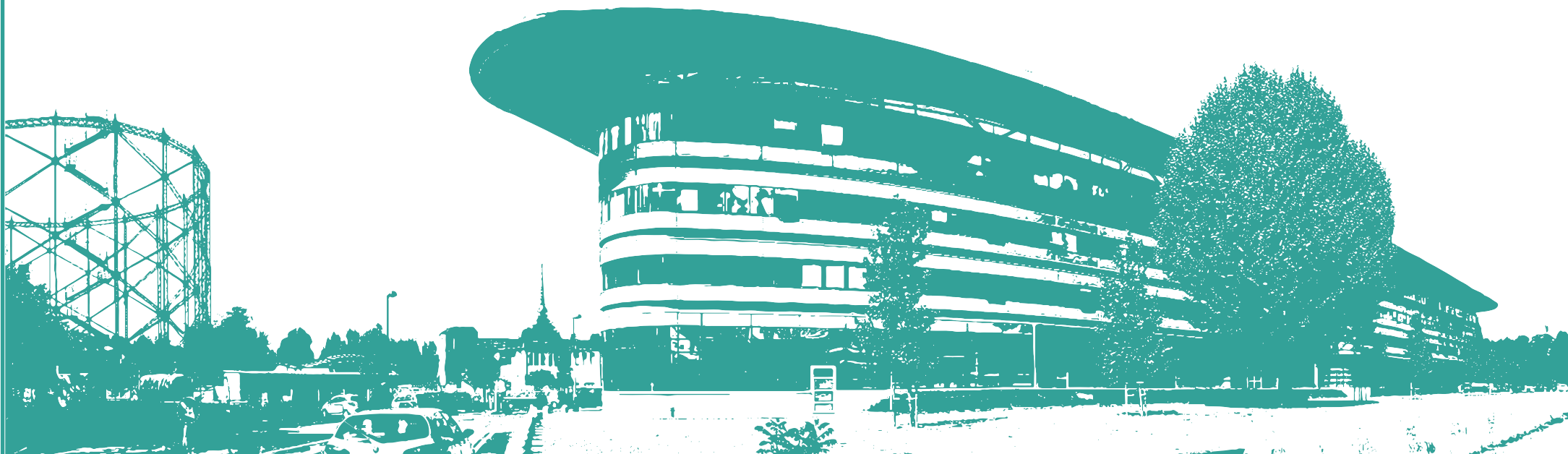
WHO WE ARE

University of Turin is very large scale Athenaeum, with a community of almost 80.000 students, faculty and staff, widely scattered in more than 100 locations around the city centre and the metropolitan area. The impact of its daily activities on the city life and environment is therefore massive.

In this context its **Green Office (UniToGO)** plays a central role in increasing the environmental sustainability of its community. UniToGO includes a working group on mobility issues that aims at building cultural, normative and structural conditions that can motivate the members of the UniTo community to change their mobility choices towards sustainability (active mobility + public transport + sharing). Among its tasks, helping to manage the access to existing parking lots located in university buildings on matters than involve sustainability, granting it to the members of the community who actually most need it, while discouraging car use (and parking) when other options are reasonably available to the individual.

BACKGROUND

In 2012 the new **Campus "Luigi Einaudi"** (CLE) was opened, aggregating many teaching, research and administrative activities and involving several thousands people. Due to existing laws, the Campus was equipped with a large car parking area (about 500 places) to avoid huge impact of its users on the neighbourhood environment. While remaining largely unoccupied for years (also due to a monthly fee of 10€ low but not free), the parking became a **valuable and sought after commodity** in 2017 when public parking areas around the Campus were turned into toll parking spaces at market prices, approximately 6-7 times higher than the internal parking fees.



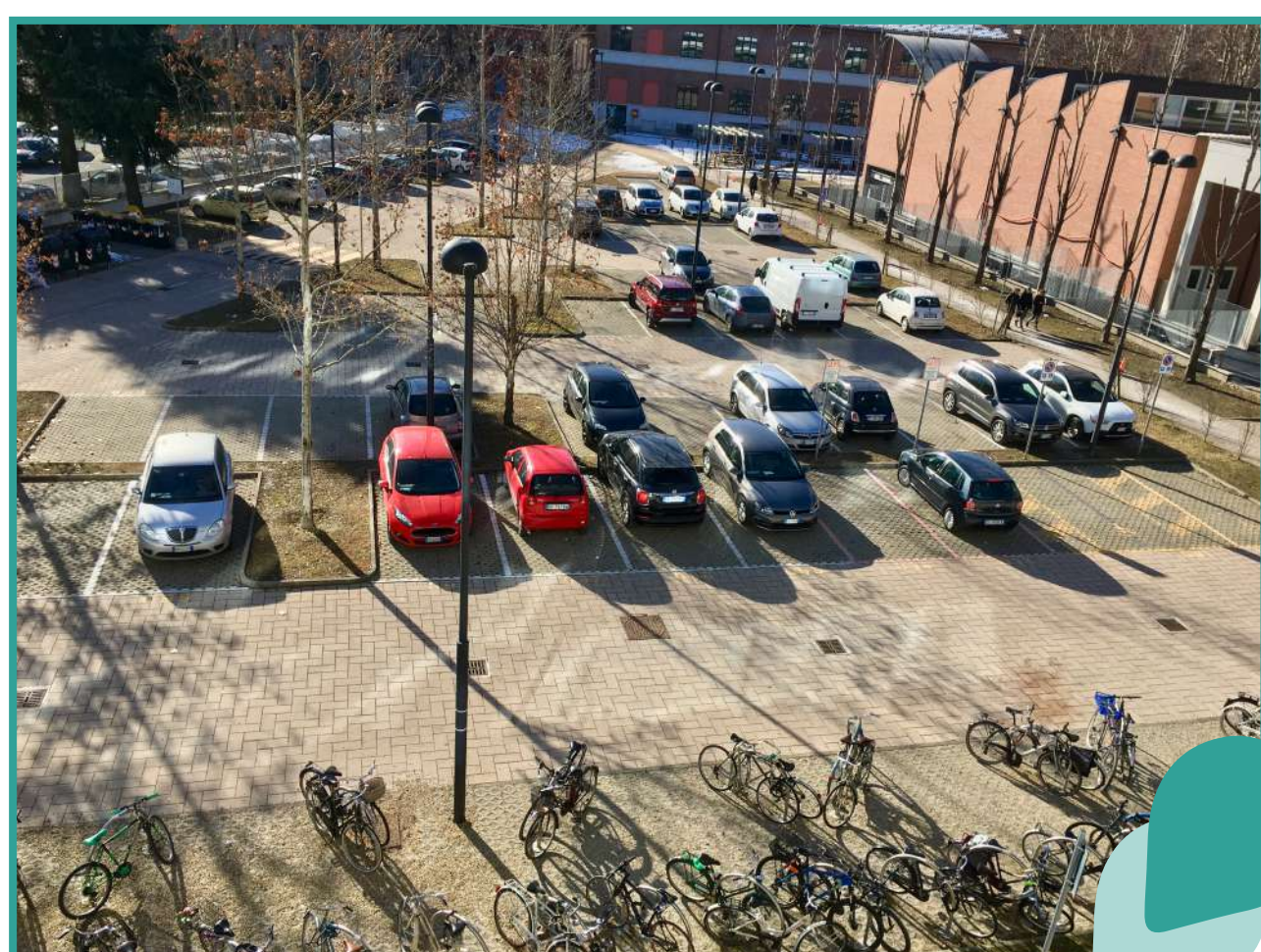
IN BRIEF WE WANT TO

- Allow access to car parking to those **who most need** it, disincentive others
- Obtain information seamlessly and transparently from **web platform**
- Establish, test and deploy criteria **easily extensible** to other contexts

SUSTAINABILITY AND INDIVIDUAL

Aiming to establish innovative and rational criteria to promote sustainable mobility through the whole university, the UniToGO Mobility Working Group decided it was due time to move beyond generic, broad appeals in the vein of "please care for the environment", "please use your car less"

that just invoked individual goodwill. It was necessary to acknowledge that different people may have **differing constraints and needs in terms of mobility**, involving heterogeneous levels of actually achievable sustainability. The best global results would most likely come through databased combination of choices and opportunities, optimizing the overall sustainability levels while allowing for special needs and more difficult situations to maintain less environmentally friendly journey modes.



AN IMPARTIAL INDEX TO SELECT AMONG CAR

The new databased approach was applied to select the applications submitted to obtain a parking permit at the new Campus. Along with features related to family management (number and age of children, not self-sufficient elderly parents or relatives) and to eco friendly cars, the intervention aimed at defining a **journey sustainability index** that could, for any couple of origin destination locations within the Piedmont region, summarize the **comparative advantage/disadvantage** of the standard door to door car journey versus the best multimodal solution involving active mobility plus public transport (including sharing). Such index was to be automatically computed, based on the already existing geographical routing engines that the Piedmont Region maintained and updated regularly and used to power the web platforms that allowed individual citizens to enquiry about available public transport solutions to any destination (www.muoversinpiemonte.it and related sites).

The concept was therefore to allocate the parking permits to individuals whose home to university journey by car is much faster and easier than the best sustainable option, either uni or multimodal. On the contrary, the parking permit would be denied to individuals that had the chance to commute by active mobility + public transport just as fast - or even faster - than with a car drive. Notice that this does not imply that the latter could not travel towards the campus by car, it would only impose the disincentive involved in paying the higher parking fees of the neighbouring public areas. In the meantime, bicycle parking spaces of the Campus were reorganised, with a strong increase in the number of places available to students (the largest part of the community) and the creation of a secure bicycle area where theft risk were minimized through a card only access system (free of charge).

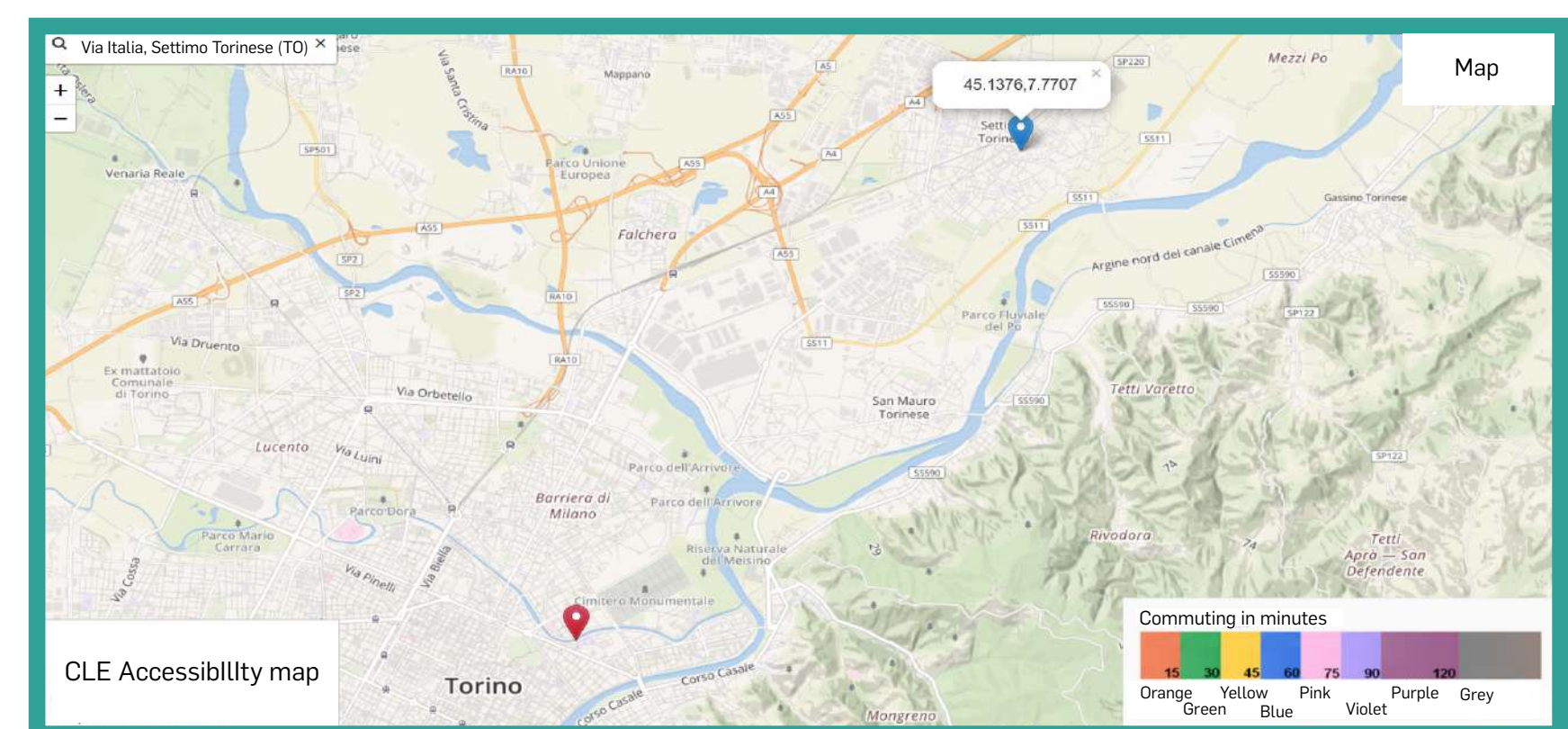
IMPLEMENTATION

FIRST STAGE (already in action)

The Campus was identified as the single arrival location. Working through **isochrone mapping**, the whole region was scanned and spatially classified in terms of home Campus travel time in two different journey modes: unimodal car only and multimodal combinations of any kind, but excluding own car. The two isochrone mappings drew areas from where the campus could be reached in the two modes with specific ranges of journey duration. The desired index was derived as a function of the difference of isochrones on the two mappings (car only and sustainable) for any home address of a community member submitting a permit request. The individual has to identify the colours of his home area in the two mappings on the web platform; this simple information is then processed thorough an ad hoc algorithm that translates this into a final number.

FINAL STAGE (2019/2020)

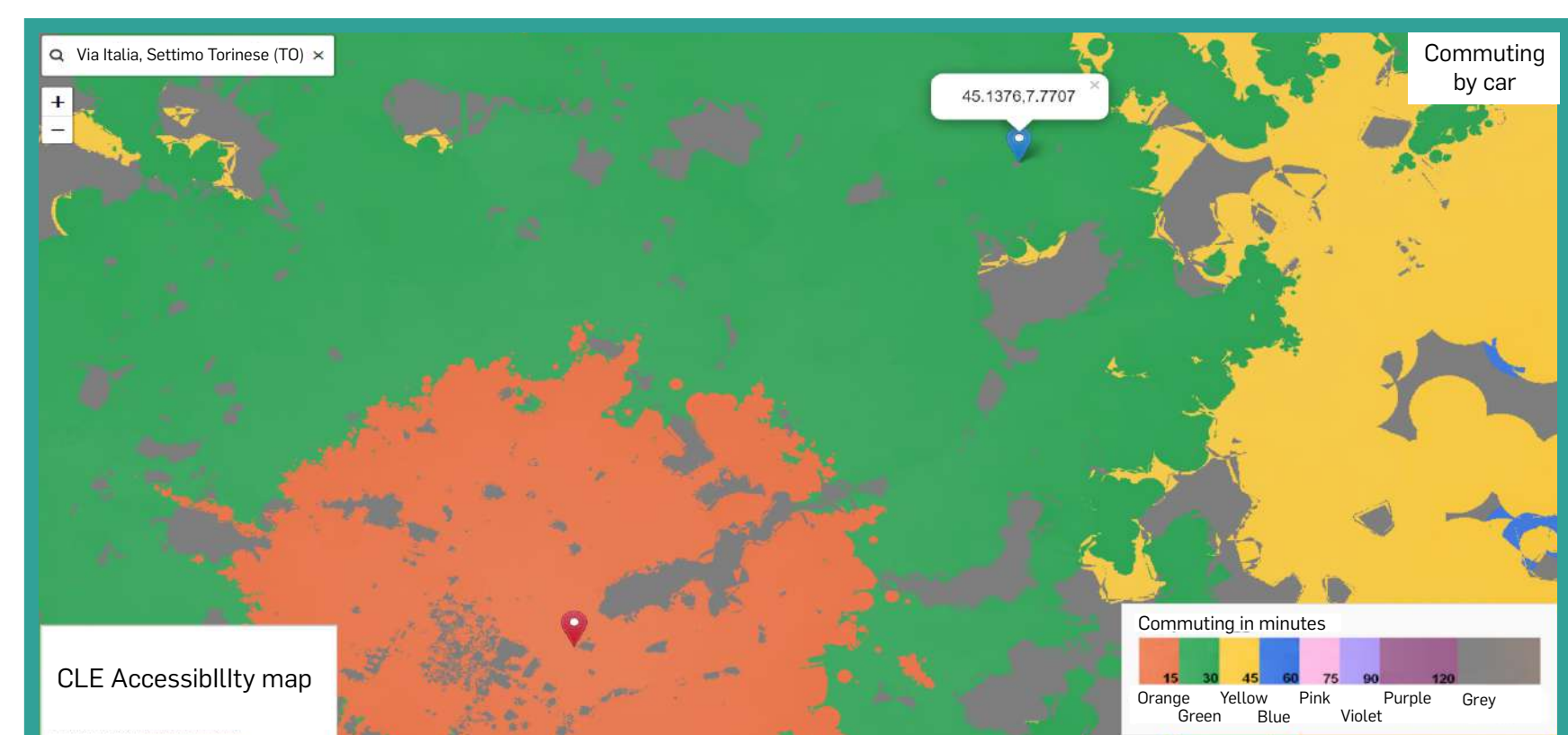
The web platform will compute in real time the specific journey time in the two modes (car only and sustainable) based on any source and destination points. The system will be configurable by setting **possible combinations of modes with mode specific constraints** (no more than XX km on foot, YY km by bike, or even by car in some cases a fully sustainable journey option may not exist, but allowing car use for the first short stretch could allow to connect to the public transport network and complete the longest section of the journey in sustainable ways), specific travelling hours during the day, possible constraints on number and timing of intermediate connections. Moreover, the algorithm will not be limited to travelling times comparison, but will further examine the features of the sustainable travel options from the point of view of **comfort and ease**: this could include the length and modality of the first stretch straight out of home, the length of the last stretch leading into the campus as well as the number and length of possible transfers for intermediate connections, and their timing compared to a reference "ideal" connection time (e.g. too risky if under 10 minutes, too long if above 15 minutes). Apart from the features of single specific travel solutions, the involved transportations services **running frequency during the whole day** or for particular time frames could also be taken into account. In the end, the index will therefore represent a measure of comparative overall quality of the home to university journey with the least possible car use, vs. one fully made with your own car.



The OpenStreetMap cartography with an example of a metropolitan area address



The specified address in the "blue" isochrone for sustainable journey



The specified address in the "green" isochrone for car only

CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNT

The new index will help to **sensibly and easily manage** a large numbers of applicants for parking permits giving priority to those who suffer actual difficulties with public transport, in terms of:

- scarcity of services
- too long first and last stretch to be covered on your own
- too many/too unreliable intermediate connections
- services with low commercial speed

Using this criteria will discourage specifically the drivers which most easily **could try alternative, more sustainable transport modes** and will not penalise those that would have to experience a long and uncomfortable commute if they gave up their own car use, or limited it to just a short first stretch of the full journey. After some testing, it could then became standard policy for the whole University.

POTENTIAL FURTHER APPLICATIONS

If acknowledged and shared by local administrations (as it is planned), the new index may in the near future inform **the allocation policies for parking on public soil** in the City of Turin and beyond. These policies will thus become a powerful and accurate tool to promote sustainable mobility.