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### **Walkability as a Vector for Inclusion, Sustainability, and Governance The Case of Bejaia's City Center in Algeria**

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#### **Abstract:**

Walkability, fundamental to the urban space experience, lies at the heart of contemporary urbanization challenges, especially in developing cities. While walking serves as a crucial form of mobility, social integration, and beneficial physical activity, it is often sidelined in favor of individual transport modes. These, albeit convenient, lead to multiple issues: congestion, excessive energy and space consumption, air pollution, noise, accident risks, and the exacerbation of social disparities. This research aims to explore how a more thoughtful urbanization approach can rehabilitate walking as a preferred mode of transportation, enhancing both urban life quality and environmental sustainability. The city of Bejaia in Algeria, known for its dense and active hyper-center, provides a relevant case study for addressing walkability issues. This research seeks to deepen our understanding of urban walkability, focusing on various aspects: the significance of walking as a sustainable mode of transport, the built environment's influence on walking facilitation, and the review of previous studies and methodologies used to assess walkability in urban contexts worldwide. By examining these factors within Bejaia's specific context, our study aims to uncover relevant insights for enhancing pedestrian mobility and, by extension, urban life quality. To examine walkability in Bejaia's hyper-center, our study employs a diverse methodological approach, outlined within a robust theoretical framework. This approach includes repeated direct observations at different times and locations, cartographic and statistical analysis, and semistructured interviews with key urban stakeholders. The innovative use of space syntax, developed by UCL, allowed us to examine street connectivity. Moreover, engaging with the local community through surveys and commented walks emphasizes the participatory dimension of our research. The walkability audit, based on an indicator rating system, identifies discrepancies between existing infrastructure, lived experiences, and pedestrian expectations. The study's findings lead to strategic recommendations aimed at significantly improving Bejaia's walkability, thereby encouraging pedestrian mobility in its hyper-center.

**Keywords:** Walkability, Walking, Perception, Pedestrian mobility, Bejaia

## Author's Biographical Note:

**Yacine MANSOURI** is an architect, urban planner, and PhD candidate in the Art of Building and Urbanism at the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Liège (Belgium). He is a member of the Research Unit in Architecture ([URA](#)) at the University of Liège. His research primarily focuses on the question of walking in cities as an active mode of transportation and as a research method in urbanism and landscape studies. He is also interested in the study of urban landscape perception and urban sustainability in a broader sense. He has participated in several international seminars in various countries, including Belgium, France, Greece, Qatar, Algeria, Morocco, Portugal, and Russia.

Yacine is also a member of [ANWAC](#) (The Africa Network for Walking and Cycling), which is part of the international walking organization [Walk21](#).

