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Cities, Walkability and Health. A multi-disciplinary walking experience at EPH22 in Berlin

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Abstract: Several studies in Public Health focused on determining the influences of the built environment on the population's physical health status. To collect perception of the

environment and the ability to promote Physical Activity, a walking experience was developed during the EPH23 Conference in Berlin. A survey had been used, according to an evaluation method (Design&Health Lab. DABC-POLIMI) based on the comparison and critical selection of qualitative urban indicators. The Micro dimension (analyzing Usefulness, Safeness, Comfort, and Aesthetics criteria) investigates the city at the street scale level; features like green/blue/grey infrastructures; intermodal public transport system; vehicular traffic reduction; cycling, and pedestrian routes availability; and accessibility of public spaces, were observed and commented by the Attendees. The survey was conducted via Google form platform and consists of two sections, one with questions for statistical purposes such as gender, age, and expertise, while the second presents questions related to the four Micro dimension criteria. The survey was applied to four areas in the city of Berlin: Pariser Platz, Unter den Linden, Gendarmenmarkt, and Bebel Platz, and was completed by 29 participants. Predominantly Public Health experts (70 percent), aged 46-65 (50 percent), participated in the survey. The results showed the strengths and weaknesses of various urban areas, highlighting possible scenarios for improvement. Limitations of the experience were the number of respondents and the analysis of some parts of the city center. Implementation for the future can be to include a higher number of city users' as well as performing the same tool in different cities to test the effectiveness. The pre-Conference overall purpose was to foster the dialogue between designers and Public Health experts, to establish a multidisciplinary approach for understanding together how to create a living environment more linked to a healthy lifestyle.