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Editorial

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While transport safety, or traffic safety, still is an important issue in connection with research in the transport and mobility area, mode choice, health, and economy aspects gain more and more importance, thus covering all three pillars of sustainability: social aspects, ecology, and economy. In this issue of TOTS four papers deal with safety issues. Two of them, by Tsopa et al. and by Ahmed et al., focus on the identification of hazard factors, in connection with truck driving on the one hand, and pedestrian safety on the other hand. In both studies the goal is to find indicators for imminent risk. If successful, the findings of such studies can help to eliminate risks before accidents happen. It is difficult, though, to show an accident-reducing or accident-preventing effect of the application of such indicators, or hazard factors in a cross-sectional setting. Only future and their application on a large scale will show if such risk-assessment methods are valid in the sense that they effectively reflect the probability of accidents to happen. Confronted with the same problem, Barman et al. discuss safe curb parking distance near schoolgates in order to ensure the pupils' safety. Whether their suggestions, plausible as they are, prevent accidents from happening or at least reduce accident numbers significantly will only show in the future. A new safety topic is connected to the increasing number of e-scooters in use. What researchers and e-scooter riders themselves consider as being risky is elaborated on with the help of various psychological methods by Drimlova et al.

All these papers deliver results that could be tremendously important. They all call for more longitudinal studies that would deal with the question of validity of their results, the dependent variable being real world accidents in the long run and on a larger scale.

Changing topic, transport mode choice is an increasingly important ecological issue. Could the introduction of autonomous vehicles into the traffic system influence mode choice, possibly in a wished-for direction? This is the question that Lee and Wang ask, with an unclear answer, though. However, their paper provides many arguments for an interesting discussion.

With Fattahi et al. we move away from safety and mobility and direct our focus on health (while, of course, traffic safety can be seen as belonging to the public-health sector). They dealt with urban transportation measures and vaccination impact on the number of COVID Infections, thus indicating a direct connection between the transport system and health.

The final move of this issue of TOTS is towards economy. Wondratschek analyses investment risk and economic benefit of a possible railway line in Cuba, the socalled Hershey Railway. The results of his study allow to not only expect economic benefits higher than the investment costs. Positive societal affects are plausibly predicted, as well.

Summarising the contents of this issue of TOTS one may say that sustainability issues constitute its kernel, reflecting societal (health, safety, transport options), ecological, and economical aspects. One important argument that becomes transparent in the majority of the papers is that evaluation studies are desperately needed; we read of a lot of arguably efficient methods to improve health and safety, and to modify mode choice. However, large scale implementation over longer time periods, connected to thorough evaluation with relevant criteria as dependent variables is necessary.