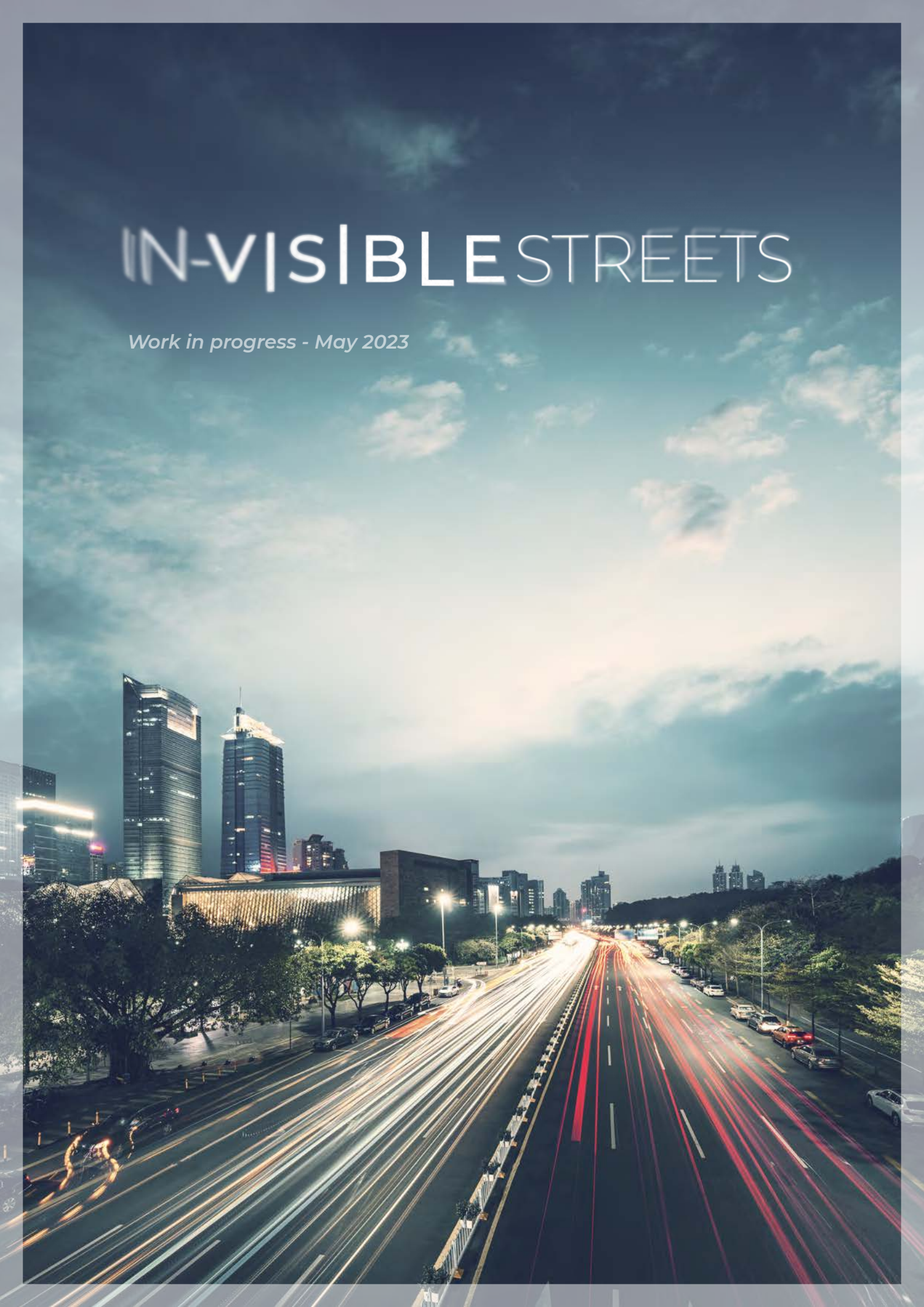


IN-VISIBLE STREETS

Work in progress - May 2023



THE PROJECT

IN-VISIBLE STREETS” is a road safety multimedia project that comprises two large supplementary items:
a *DOCUMENTARY FILM* and an information *AUDIOVISUAL ARCHIVE and DATABASE*.

It is also a tribute to the millions of people and their families, who have been tragically involved in road incidents.

The FILM starts challenging the terrible and unacceptable statistics of road incidents, which include deaths and serious injuries, and wondering how this other “pandemic” could be resolved, as every year, more than 1.3 million people are killed, and between 20 to 50 million more people suffer non-fatal injuries around the world.

And the answer is always the same: “It’s a multi-cause problem”.

Not pleased with this answer, the narrator dives into the multiple causes, and ventures into the search of experiences, examples and standpoints in different cities around the world, to try to achieve a comprehensive idea of how to overcome this scourge.

Then, this way is how the first-person documentary begins, which is divided into various topic sequences:

- *Infrastructure*
- *Control and enforcement*
- *Traffic Safety Policies*
- *Marketing of speed and status*
- *The Human Factor*
- *Testimonies from victims and their families*

Each sequence is addressed with examples, retold by interviews with experts, real people testimonies in the street, footage, videos recorded at the place being analysed, and life stories from victims and their families.

On the other hand, the ARCHIVE is a supplementing resource that enables anybody to go deeper into all the different aspects that make up this problem, including its technical details, and will be available on a free website for consultation, particularly for experts and decision-makers.

THE TOPIC

There is consensus that road incidents are multi-causal, just like the possible ways to address a film on this topic.

Following the protagonist's life experience, "IN-VISIBLE STREETS" limits the object of study mainly to traffic in urban environments.

Does slowing down really impact on the number of victims?

What do road users and citizens, in general, think regarding this matter? Do they look out for, or are they aware of, the speed they drive at?

What features do cities and societies with the lowest incident rates have?

Worldwide traffic incident figures are alarming and unacceptable:

- Every year, over 1.3 million people die in road incidents, leaving families shattered; and between 20 and 50 million people are injured, left with a high percentage of disability.
- Traffic-related traumas are the main cause of death among children and young people between 5 and 29 years of age. Almost half of the related deaths affect vulnerable public road users, that is, pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.
- Although medium and low-income countries drive approximately 60% of the vehicles in the world, they represent 93% of crash-related deaths.
- Injuries caused by traffic bring about considerable economic losses for people, their families and countries as a whole. Such losses are the result of treatment costs and productivity loss of the people who die or are incapacitated due to injuries and of the work or study time their families must invest to look after the victims. This creates problems in their lives, public health and the labour market that is not prepared to absorb such problems.
- General road crashes represent 3% of a country's GDP. And it is a subject matter almost nobody talks about.

All these figures and data are simply unacceptable, considering that a large number of these deaths and injuries could be prevented just by taking more effective evidence-based measures, taking into account the good practices, success cases and accepting cultural patterns to broaden our views on this issue.

This is the spark triggering “IN-VISIBLE STREETS”: a holistic view on a multicausal issue. But...

Can we export models from high-income countries to other countries with different economic situations?

Does traffic reorganisation mean the same in Latin America and Europe?

How can universal measures be applied to heterogeneous social and cultural realities?

Is it a matter of a lack of competent staff, fear of taking “unpopular” measures, or a lack of updated knowledge?

Why are regulations respected in other countries, and how long did it take them to implement an efficient control system? How much does control and enforcement impact all this?

THE ARCHIVE

The documentary is a kick-off for a bigger project: the creation of a website that shall work as a resource pool where to go in-depth into each of the topics and examples the documentary unfolds.

“The film” aims at setting the topic and raising awareness in the general public, while, on the other hand, there is “The Archive”: a platform that goes deep into the subject matter, that aims at providing tools for decision-makers of road-related matters.

Statistics, uncut interviews with protagonists, additional images, alternative shots, experiences, links to relevant role models and supplements of all types that will serve as a public and free-of-charge archive containing ideas and success cases that other cities (or municipalities), technicians, politicians or companies may benefit from to improve road users coexistence and reduce road incidents.

THE DOCUMENTARY

“In the collective imagination, is it believed that the lack of road safety is a latent risk of death? Do we perceive it as a pandemic that absolutely nobody is excluded from? Is it understood as an issue affecting health?”

These are questions over which the protagonist and director of “IN-VISIBLE STREETS” is losing sleep, and which turn into a beacon when it comes to addressing the documentary.

The INVISIBLE behind the VISIBLE

This concept is the soul and the guiding thread throughout the entire documentary.

The “VISIBLE” are all those interventions, rules and regulations that road users face every day in the cities where they move. What people see.

The “INVISIBLE” is all the science, development and research that lies behind, all the work carried out by road safety professionals and technicians, who decide on the measures, actions and interventions concerning infrastructure.

An “annoying and hindering measure” for some people is the solution needed to cross a street safely for others.

What for some drivers is something that “restricts their rights”, for a cyclist is the difference between riding safely or unsafely.

A 30 km/h speed limit on a street may seem “slow” but, can anyone see that slowing down saves lives?

Reflecting on these dilemmas, the film will explore, analyse and research six theme pillars that are a way of addressing the multiple causes of this issue:

Pillar 1. Infrastructure.

How the appropriate infrastructure, or the lack of it, affects road safety and coexistence? Is it just a matter of money? How is it possible that bad decisions are made thereupon? What role does the visible infrastructure vs. invisible improvement dichotomy play? How do different societies accept it?

Pillar 2. Control / Enforcement

Is strict control and enforcement the foundation for sound road coexistence? What role do awareness campaigns play? What can be done about “cheaters”? Is economic punishment or fines the best solution?

Pillar 3. Road Safety Policies

Measures to improve road coexistence are usually seen as “unfriendly” in political terms. But, are we sure about that? What do road users and citizens think about that? Are the most effective laws and decisions exportable to other cultures and/or societies? What do decision-makers need to undertake life-saving measures?

Pillar 4. Status and Speed Marketing

Advertising and marketing as a tool to increase road safety. How responsible are automobile companies in this scenario? All vehicles and motorcycles in the market exceed the maximum and appropriate speeds, so, why are they manufactured to run so fast? Do road users require that?

Pillar 5. Human Factor

If we acknowledge that as a consequence of a road incident, absolutely none of the people involved gain any benefit, why is it so difficult to accept our role as possible participants? In an era where many people with vast economic and cultural resources seek health care, good eating habits, body care, mental health, etc., is it possible for them not to consider road safety as one more item to take into account? How and how much does our mood impact the way we drive? Do we drive the same way we live? Why do we find it so hard to wear a seat belt or not to drink when driving? We double-park; and many times, we don't give way. Why do we behave like that? Are we bad citizens or bad human beings for doing that? Do we understand that if we hop on a motorcycle, we are more vulnerable than in a car? Why is it so hard to wear a helmet?

Pillar 6. Testimonies from Victims and their Family

Even though the documentary does not aim at being a collection of sad stories, the voice of the families and victims should be heard. We have a moral duty to let them take the floor. It is in their honour that this titanic fight takes place. These testimonies will weave the rest of the pillars.

Each topic will be narrated from different standpoints: specialists, victims, politicians, users, and statisticians. The topics will interweave with the documentary maker's reflections in a film that will seek to shed light into a subject matter that very few dare talk about: the reasons behind the millions of road-related deaths and incidents, most of which are preventable.

Expecting to make a research documentary told in the first person and transmitting the necessary sensitivity and beauty to challenge the audience, the narrator leaves his house and country of origin to live in a caravan, which he will use to travel throughout different cities, where he will search for examples, possible solutions, conflicts and life stories.

Travelling as a way of learning; and learning by living in traffic.

THE PROTAGONIST & HIS MOTIVATION

Matías Ghio is a frequent driver and a fan of road trips. He trains cycling and running along Buenos Aires streets, activities that led him to discover a hidden –but passionate– interest in road safety, and everything related to traffic. Moreover, he works on what he likes doing, as a director, audiovisual maker and multimedia designer.

Driven by this passion, some years ago, he started collaborating with an NGO that brings together families of road incident victims. At the same time, he works on road safety contributing to different national and international projects in audiovisual campaigns and communication.

But he has an even bigger dream that combines his two passions, filmmaking and road safety; and this dream is called: “IN-VISIBLE STREETS”.

For this, he bets it all, leaves life as he knows it, and engages in a cinematographic trip pursuing a film that will transform him and those who will watch it, while it serves as an experience for building a corpus of public and private policies, and makes this subject matter visible, which, oddly, little is talked about.

His deepest desire is to save lives. A very ambitious and hard-to-achieve desire. But one which is worth taking the risk for, and which turns not only into a concern but also a reason to live.

None of this would be possible without the collaboration of his two partners:

Paula Marchesini.

She is a civil engineer with national and international experience in road safety and safe infrastructure for mobility. Passionate about this topic, thirteen years ago, she returned to her home country, dreaming about helping to improve road safety. She has worked on research, teaching and consulting for the public and private sectors. She likes outdoor sports, travelling and riding her bike.

Myriam Serulnicoff.

A sociologist by profession, and curious by nature. She has been working on Road Safety, focusing on Safe and Sustainable Mobility since 2010, in Argentina. She has collaborated in several regional and international projects.

Throughout her professional career, she has had the opportunity to work with several interdisciplinary teams, in which she was able to combine her passion, her concerns, and was able to achieve many of her dreams, managing to add the audiovisual viewpoint into her jobs.

She is an amateur sportswoman in her free time, being the bicycle her ally wherever she is.



Matías Ghio



Paula Marchesini



Myriam Serulnicoff

THE AUDIENCE

There are many instances of documentaries that talk about the environment, climate change, vegan food, the importance of a healthy life, etc. And all that is exciting and very productive.

Notwithstanding, it is very hard to find a documentary addressing the scourge of road incidents from a human and everyday life standpoint. From a place where the general public may relate to it.

We want to focus the discussion on road risk perception as the core pillar of our physical as well as mental health care, but also on our role as social beings that coexist in scenarios that go beyond the doors of our private lives.

All of us are pedestrians, and eventually, some are cyclists, motorists or drivers of vehicles of different sizes.

It is an issue that, to a greater or lesser extent, affects every citizen.

The film is directed to the general public and pursues, based on experience cases and aesthetics, to challenge spectators, and to reflect on their practices both driving and as pedestrians, cyclists or public transport users. It will attempt to raise awareness of our behaviour on public roads and the risks to which we are exposed as potential victims or perpetrators if we don't comply with the basic road coexistence rules, and if we don't become aware of road risk perception.

This arises from a conviction: road safety, without citizens' commitment and engagement, is barely viable, and measures or interventions by themselves are not enough or effective.

Let's open our eyes and give the "IN-VISIBLE STREETS" visibility.

PROJECT PHASES AND NEEDS

A large-scale project like “IN-VISIBLE STREETS” needs to be created in several phases.

Phase 1 - Project initial development - Estimated time: 3/6 months

- A search for national and international support for the overall development of the project.
- A preliminary search for research and development funding specific to the documentary script.
- First approach with participants of the Archive and/or documentary. Putting together a list of people and professionals wishing to participate. First approaches.
- Documentary pre-production and specific budget.
- Technical and aesthetic development of the Archive website.

Phase 2 - Pre-production and filming - Estimated time: 6/12 months

- Development of a travel production and filming plan throughout the different cities.
- Specific filming of interviews with specialists, families and the general public in urban environments in cities to disclose.
- Transportation expenses.
- Editing full interviews to upload to the Archive on the web.
- Technical maintenance and update of the website with edited interviews.

Phase 3 - Documentary editing - Estimated time: 4/8 months

- Final editing of the documentary with all the material obtained, which, as a main call-to-action, could be consulted by those interested in the Archive.

Documentary References

By way of example, below there are some references that inspire us.
We believe that the documentary shall be a mix of all these references.

(Click over the title)

Where to Invade Next

What to see in this link:

- A theme search for specific solutions and answers.
- First-hand search for such answers.
- A host weaving together the full narrative.

COWSPIRACY

What to see in this link:

- A theme search for specific solutions and answers.
- First-hand search for such answers.
- A host weaving together the full narrative.

Expedition Happiness

What to see in this link:

- Road trip aesthetic reference.
- Landscape poetic shot reference.
- The trip as a life metaphor.

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