A New Definition of a Smart and Healthy City Through a Literature Review on Accessible Urban Green Space

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Abstract. Urban green spaces (UGS) are part of green infrastructure, public open spaces, and city amenities that may promote health for all urban residents, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO). Therefore, creating urban green areas that are accessible, inclusive, and fairly distributed across the city is vital to designing and building smarter and healthier urban environments. Numerous scientific studies have reinforced the growing awareness of their benefits to residents and their well-being in recent decades. Research has defined green spaces (from urban forests to inner-city green spaces) and highlighted social aspects, including environmental justice and accessibility, by analysing different methodologies and techniques. However, cutting-edge framework for the accessibility and inclusivity of the urban green spaces has not been developed. This work contributes to ongoing research and critically reviewing the literature to solve this gap. Specifically, this research examines the potential of urban green spaces and their accessibility, proposing operative process that establish a scientific definition and facilitate critical reflection on the planned and design solutions needed to transform and enhance urban landscapes in smarter, healthier and more inclusive cities.

Keywords: Accessibility · Inclusivity · Literature Review · Smart and Healthy City · Urban green space (UGS)

1 Introduction

The World Health Organisation defines the *Urban Green Space* (UGS) as «all urban land covered by vegetation of any kind. This covers vegetation on private and public grounds, irrespective of size and function, and can also include small water bodies such as ponds, lakes or streams», and, in addition, it is «a component of green infrastructure, an important part of public open spaces and common services provided by a city and can serve as a health-promoting setting for all members of the urban community» ([1], p. 2). Indeed, its many benefits in the urban environments and its beneficial impacts on behalf of citizens and their well-being have been object in several research, conducted over the last three decades, as analysed and reported by Farkas et al. [2].

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The aforementioned study indicates that several studies have concentrated on defining and analysing green spaces, ranging from urban forests to inner-city green areas, using different methodologies and techniques. Other studies highlight the benefits, positive impacts, and challenges regarding the urban setting, such as health conditions, and the psycho-sociological well-being of the urban resident. Others indicate that the removal of existing urban green spaces, as negative effects, caused by the over-urbanisation, as well as consequent problems such as the inequalities, limited access to public amenities, environmental aspects which destabilise cities' liveability.

Consequently, these studies post the belief that urban green spaces should be equitably distributed, accessible, and inclusive for all residents, and that urban planning should prioritise this goal.

The Covid-19 pandemic has emphasised the importance of creating quality and easily accessible urban green spaces, as evidenced by the many street experiments conducted in many worldwide cities during this period. This reflects a response to the need of change the public spaces, rethinking the urban green spaces as sensitive places for physical and mental recreation [3, 4].

Thus, an increasing number of cities are implementing measures to enhance the quantity, quality, and accessibility of green areas. However, these considerations automatically lead to the following unresolved issues: (1) How can an accessible urban green space be defined? Which parameters and characteristics come into play, such as, in the urban scale, their diffusion and distribution within the cities; in the architectural scale, instead, compliance with the requirements of Universal Design principles; or even, from the environmental justice and the social equity point of view, what aspects need to be analysed? (2) What are the most successful methodologies and technologies used in the investigation and evaluation of urban green spaces? (3) What is the perception of green public areas among residents and general users? Can their involvement in the planning and administration procedures of these places improve the quality and efficacy of the project? (4) With which aspects and elements of our daily lifestyle the urban green spaces are closely connected? How can they contribute to a different perception of the city? Can the presence of accessible urban green spaces in vulnerable contexts, such as historic cities or degraded surroundings, facilitate their transformation into smarter, healthier, and more inclusive landscapes?

Starting from these questions, this paper aims to provide an advanced framework for the accessibility and inclusiveness of urban green spaces via a systematic and critical literature assessment, beginning with these concerns. Specifically, the study investigates the potential of urban green spaces, their accessibility, focusing to establish an operative framework that defines scientific parameters and offers critical insights into planned and design solutions for evaluating the urban environments in smarter, healthier and inclusive cities.

This paper analyses around 125 works in English, categorised as articles, book chapters, and conference papers, as recorded in the Scopus Database, to address the aforementioned research issues. To accomplish this objective, the structure of the paper is delineated as follows: following this *Introduction* (Sect. 1), the *methodology* to process the data is delineated (Sect. 2), subsequently providing an in-depth analysis of *the state of art on accessible urban green spaces* (Sect. 3). Sect. 4, titled "*Conclusion*" discusses

the outcomes derived from the literature review, highlights the principal findings of the study, and outlines the research plan.

2 Methodology

This study proposes an analysis of the current literature on accessible urban green spaces, aiming to provide an original framework via a systematic and evaluative literature review that addresses the aforementioned challenges. Figure 1 shows the five stages (1. problem formulation, 2. data collection, 3. data evaluation, 4. analysis and interpretation, and 5. public presentation) into which the literature review is organised in line with the main approaches and methodologies ([5], pp. 4–11).

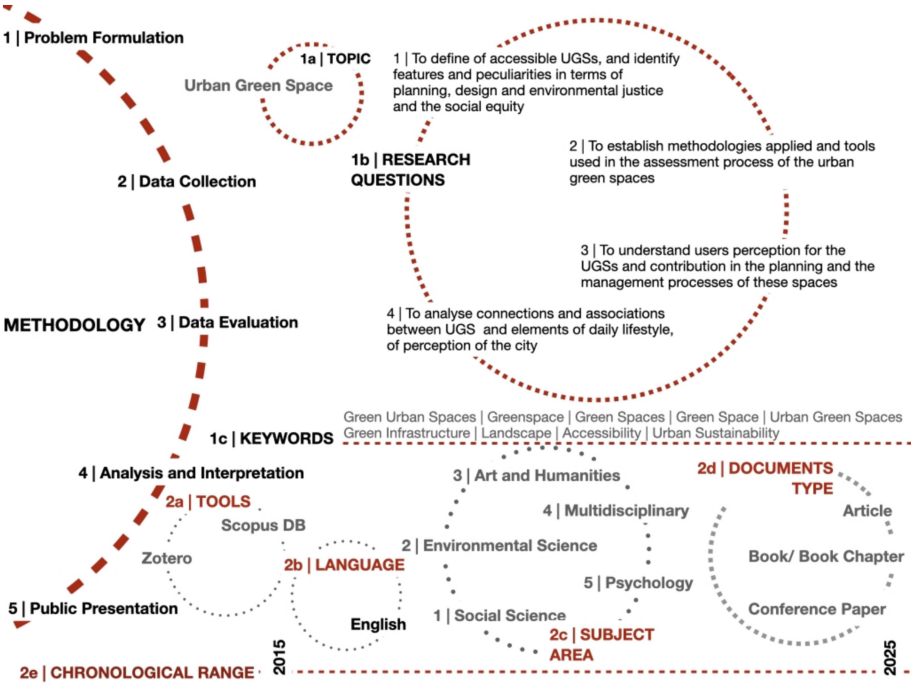

Fig. 1. Methodology's Scheme (MSP).

The first phase, *Problem formulation*, is to define and articulate the research questions that will move the literature review, followed by establishing the criteria for inclusion and exclusion. The primary goals of the literature review are varied. Firstly, the literature review seeks to clarify the definition of accessible urban green spaces by examining their key characteristics and distinct features, particularly in relation to urban planning, landscape design, and broader issues of environmental justice and social equity. Secondly, the review aims to explore the methodologies and analytical tools employed in evaluating urban green spaces. Thirdly, the review considers the role of user perception,

investigating how individuals and communities experience green urban environments. Finally, the review investigates the interrelations between urban green spaces and various dimensions of everyday urban life. This includes their influence on public health and safety, their contribution to the perceived quality of the urban environment, and their role within sensitive or complex settings such as historic city centers or socially and environmentally degraded areas. Through this multifaceted analysis, the literature review seeks to shed light on the significance of green infrastructure in shaping resilient, equitable, and liveable urban landscapes.

To achieve these objectives, the literature review first delineates the appropriate topics to refine the study scope, followed by the selection of keywords to further simplify the search results. The first category comprises green urban places; the second includes greenspaces, green spaces, green space, urban green space, green infrastructure, urban green spaces, landscape, accessibility, urban sustainability.

The second phase, *Data collection*, begin with the choice of Scopus as a search database among the many currently available [6]. The searches used for the investigation of pertinent literature on accessible urban green spaces within the Scopus Database are: Green [and] urban [and] spaces.

A significant quantity of results, around 1200, has been gathered in the first search. Consequently, filters have been included to refine the search. The study period spans from 2015 to the first quarter of 2025. The year 2015 was selected as the starting year of the study due to the observation that prior to this date, contributions about the accessibility and the inclusivity of urban green spaces are rather sporadic and not continuous. The topic areas considered include Social Science, Environmental Science, Arts and Humanities, Multidisciplinary Studies, and Psychology. The recommended document types are Article, Book Chapter, Book, and Conference Paper, all in English and from open sources. To further narrow the scope of study topics, the chosen keywords have been examined in the title, abstract, and among the authors' keywords. The final selection comprises around 120 submissions. The diverse and extensive data on various contributions was compiled in an Excel spreadsheet. Furthermore, all contributions were documented in a separate Zotero library [7].

The following part of the study was *Data evaluation*, which was conducted by reviewing the abstracts to assess the utility of the identified sources. Upon identifying a significant publication, the cited sources were scrutinised to include further references into the bibliography. Subsequently, the examination of sources is undertaken to identify those most relevant for inclusion. Finally, the analysis and interpretation of the data were undertaken using a thematic method. Recognising patterns in literature, including repeating themes, persistent arguments, and research deficiencies, has shown to be particularly significant.

3 State of Art on Accessible Urban Green Spaces

3.1 Quantitative Synthesis

This proposed research analyses the existing literature on accessible urban green spaces with the aim of creating a distinctive scheme. A systematic evaluation of the literature from the Scopus Database has identified approximately 125 contributions, in English,

categorised as Articles, Book Chapters, Books, Conference Papers, and Reviews. The chronological period from 2015 to the first trimester of 2024 has been examined.

Figure 2a illustrates a notable temporal growth in publications concerning these topics, rising from 1% between 2015 to 26% in 2022, with a high of 32% predicted in 2024. The literature review has been based to identify and define previously the research questions. This phase, characterised by a thematic approach, allowed to identify recurring themes, ongoing debates, and research gaps. The contributions reveal four overarching themes, which are further elaborated upon and summarised here: 1. Spatial Equity, Environmental Justice and Social Equity; 2. Analysis and assessment process; 3. Urban Green Spaces planning and management; 4. Connections, associations and relationships.

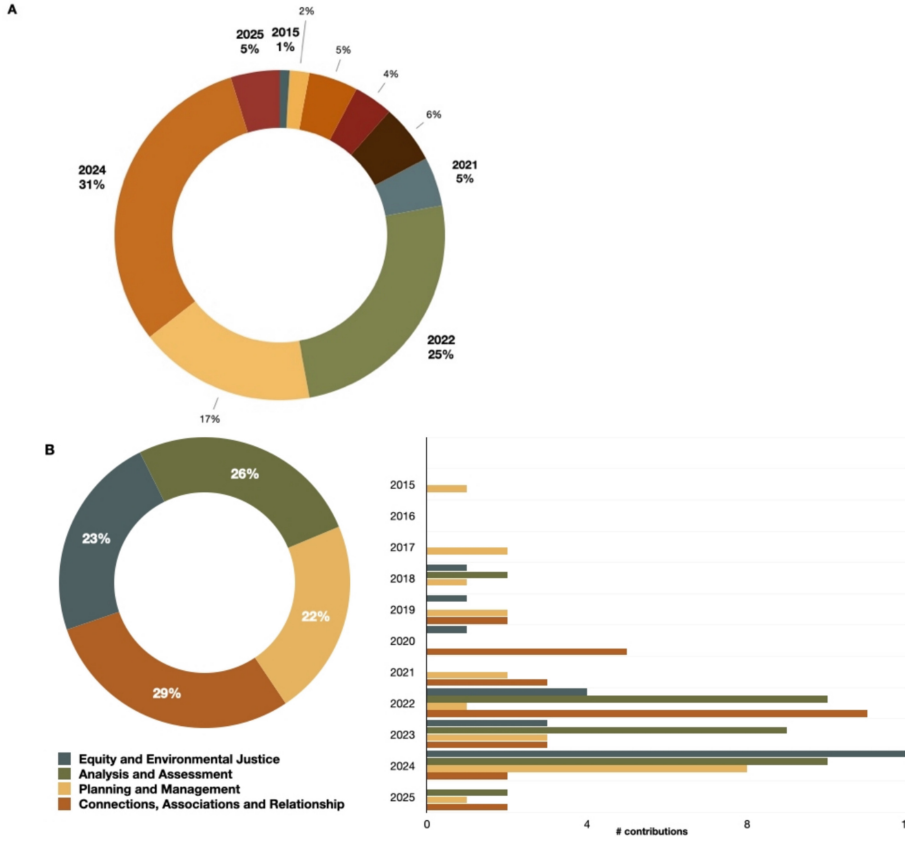

Fig. 2. Graph representations of the study findings. Distribution of the relevant literature selection from: A. Chronological Distribution; B. Topic - Chronological distribution (MSP).

Moreover, as shown in Fig. 2b, among the four topics, following the research issues, exposed above, the contributions are balanced on the different themes. From a chronological point of view, only the thematic in reference to *Planning and management* has

a more homogeneous distribution in the decade under consideration. While, for other issue, there has been for all a consistent a significant increase in 2022.

It is interesting to observe that in 2022 the major contributions are divided into *Analysis and assessment* and *Connections, associations and relationship* themes. It should be noted that many of the contributions to this last thematic deal with the topic of Pandemic Covid19 and health.

In 2024, however, most of the contributions, besides addressing the theme of *Analysis and assessment*, are directed towards *Equity and Environmental* justice issues.

The geographical contexts under examination are distinct. Europe and Asia are the principal regions of study, with further examination of other locations including Canada, the United States of America, Latin America, and Australia.

3.2 Towards a Thematic Framework

3.2.1 Spatial Equity, Environmental Justice and Social Equity

The accessibility concept has evolved throughout the years. Initially described by Hansen [8] in 1959 as the potential of opportunities, accessibility was subsequently characterised by Alam et at (2010) as "the convenience of accessing spatially distributed opportunities with a choice of travel. Paez *et al.* (2012) defined the accessibility as the potential for reaching spatially distributed opportunities such as employment and recreation" ([9], p. 2).

Urban green spaces represent opportunities for the sustainable development of local communities, and for their well-being. How can be an accessible urban green space be defined? The literature research indicates that the term accessibility of UGSs is associated with concepts of equality and environmental justice. The accessibility of urban green spaces is closely linked to the varying scales of intervention. The research conducted by Xu S. et al., focussing on the Weidu District of Xuchang City, Henan Province, China. The disparities in accessibility have been studied and evaluated across three scales: subdistrict, community, and residential quarter.

The results indicate that the accessibility of park green space at the subdistrict level differs from that at the community and residential quarter levels regarding geographical distribution features and quantitative relationships. Consequently, their research is crucial for achieving dependable results for subsequent urban green space planning [10].

The dual meaning of *equity*, *spatial equity* and *social equity*, has a key role in the definition of the accessible urban green, and both are fundamental in the urban green spaces planning [11].

Colbert J. *et al* shown in their study conducted in the Auckland Region of New Zealand that inadequate spatial accessibility to urban green spaces adversely impacts disadvantaged groups, who are more susceptible to health inequalities associated with socioeconomic factors. The findings put in evidence that more deprived neighbourhoods were revealed to have lower accessibility to urban green spaces, highlighting the urgency to address the emerging divisions in accessibility and opportunities for these neighbourhoods [12].

Simultaneously, the problem raised by Lu Y. et al., pertains to two study gaps within the green justice field. The first pertains to the spatial equality levels of various forms of

urban green spaces, together with their distinctions and geographical distribution features. The second aspect pertains to the disparities in spatial equality levels of urban green spaces between cities at different socioeconomic stages. Their study, contextualised within China, examines three categories of urban green spaces: community green spaces, street greenery, and public parks, investigating the influence of socioeconomic factors on the spatial equity of these areas across various cities. The results indicate that the population growth rate enhances the spatial equity of community green areas and street greenery. Conversely, economic development and increased in-migration can worsen the equity level of public green space accessibility [13].

Several research reported a widespread attention to the social equity and environmental justice in the accessibility of urban green space. Strategies for the planning and design of accessible green space based on Environmental Justice should be include five essential points: 1. community-led, green space development and management; 2. fair and equitable distribution of green spaces; 3. improvement of accessibility; 4. connecting green spaces to benefits of health; 5. and mandatory linkage of built infrastructure with the provision of green spaces [14–18].

However, the literature review has shown that there is a lack of research focused on the accessibility of the urban green spaces in the architectural scale, and on the Universal Design principles.

3.2.2 Analysis and Assessment Process

The definition of accessibility, usually and with reference to green spaces, is quite extensive. This concerns both physical and dimensional aspects, and the environmental justice and social equity issues. Thus, the analysis and assessment processes on accessible urban green spaces are numerous and diversified depending on the aspect of accessibility that is to be investigated.

Specifically, Geographic information system (GIS) data-based approach is widely used [19–21], both as a unique method, and in combination with other methods of analysis such as spatial syntax [22–24], remote sensing, and statistical techniques [25]. Several research have been demonstrated that this kind of analysis is a valuable tool for planning and decision-making at both municipal and regional levels.

A significant example is represented by the Barcelona green axes initiative. This project sought to convert one-third of the streets inside its nineteenth-century expansion grid into green spaces, so enhancing safety and comfort for pedestrians, cyclists, and other social activities in healthier environments. The GIS-based analysis gives a comprehensive framework of the transformations, of the way to connected green infrastructure system, and significantly increase accessibility to green areas [26].

An important example of integrated methodology is the comprehensive analysis of the central urban area of Yuxi City, China, for the evaluation of the establishment of a new green space. This research demonstrates a high association between service level, kind of green space, service pressure, and demand for green space with geographical location, using open data sources such as POI, OSM, and ASTER GDEM, with GIS analysis and Global Mapper. This facilitates the assessment of future planning by integrating population density and land development intensity, thereby enabling the strategic arrangement

and planning of park green spaces through the reduction of low-demand areas, expansion of green spaces in high-demand areas, enhancement of public transportation, and improvement of accessibility [27].

Another integrated method used is represented by The Gaussian Two-Step Floating Catchment Area (G2SFCA) method, along with the Lorenz curve and Gini coefficient. Theses methodologies are employed, for example, to measure and evaluate the accessibility and equity, considering both average walking speed and variations in walking speed across different age groups [28, 29].

In addition, many study are based on the application of an improved two-step floating catchment area (2SFCA) method, for estimating the accessibility in the urban green spaces [30, 31].

Other analysis and evaluation methods mentioned by the research considered are such as space syntax approach [32], perception-based survey, aimed to improve access to nature in cities [33], the use of geolocated social media as a rapid indicator of park visitation and equitable park access [34], accessibility of urban green spaces evaluation based on urban morphology [35] or spatial heterogeneity analysis [36], questionnaire method using a social preference approach (SPA) [37], nationwide analysis based on remote sensing, open street map and census data [38].

Finally, it is interesting to mention the research conducted by Mitropoulos L.et al., a district in central Athens, Greece. They deem the incorporation of accessibility in planning and the creation of tools essential for evaluating and measuring accessibility in green spaces. Consequently, their study aims to construct two accessibility indices: the infrastructure accessibility index and the opportunity accessibility index, which use an infrastructure-based approach and a distance-based approach, respectively. These accessibility indices are used for four categories of users and their requirements: pedestrians, People with Disabilities (PWD), cyclists and public transport users. The Infrastructure Accessibility Index (IAI) measures accessibility for sidewalks, crosswalks, bikeways and public transport stops. While the Opportunity Accessibility Index (OAI) quantifies the proportion of various user categories that get diversified opportunities during a certain timeframe. The permissible time restriction for user types is determined based on survey responses for seven distinct categories: green spaces, recreational spaces, education buildings, health buildings, public service building, commercial uses and public transport stops. The findings allow to provide recommendations to improve accessibility levels at local level [39].

3.2.3 Urban Green Spaces Planning and Management

Establishing accessible and inclusive urban green areas has emerged as a primary goal of urban development. In urban green space planning and design, many relevance features and aspect are considered, including the *green*, *connectivity*, *multi*-functionality and *accessibility*.

The complexity of these processes should lead to the definition of an independent operational approach, a sort of *Green Infrastructure* planning. Every local governance should have tools and methodology to implement appropriate UGS planning and operative measures able to design and networking of green spaces, and providing leisure

opportunities and other functions, as well as accessibility to all community. This essential aspect can be crucial in metropolitan areas, such as delineated by Papageorgiou M. et al., on Athens and Thessaloniki [40].

Availability, accessibility and quality are among the most important features in the development of UGSs. Some studies propose innovative methods and approaches for increasing data and information useful to support local UGS planning and management. The case discussed by Kajosaari A. et al., on Finland, is a relevant study based on uses data from a large-scale public participation GIS (PPGIS) survey, aimed to understand the mechanisms leading to UGS visitation and the health and well-being benefits gained from UGS use and exposure [41].

Another interesting example on innovative methodology, is the application of the ESTIMAP-recreation model to the city of Trento (Italy), discussed by Cortinovis C. et al. [42]. Their results allow to show significant differences in terms of priority of intervention across the city, with implications on planning decisions.

The accessibility of urban green spaces, as mentioned above, refers to both physical and social and cultural dimensions. Therefore, the common goal is to address urban planning practices and community preferences with an operational approach, based on the engagement methods that prioritizes inclusivity, equity, and community, towards a more cohesive and effective society.

Regard this aspect, there is a wide range of research that highlights the importance of this approach in the urban green space planning process. The engagement methods allow to understand the perceptions and attitudes of the communities towards UGS.

These are often investigated through a comprehensive questionnaire survey, focusing on several and diversified aspects and features, such as socio-demographic factors [43–48], social interaction and engagement phenomena [49]; as well as the level of satisfaction in terms of visual perception (based on landscape quality criteria) [50], location and extension [51], distance and time spent for and in green spaces [52].

While the case of the multicultural landscape of Aotearoa in New Zealand, reported by the authors Cui Y. et al., is significant example of inclusive participatory planning processes, utilising both on-site and online meetings. [53].

Participatory methods are crucial for both users and potential users, such as marginalized groups, in the planning and development of public urban green spaces, as well as their management. This is demonstrated in a research Sweden, where, as several contexts, lack resources and appropriate methods to manage these areas. A process model for user participation in the management of urban green spaces has been developed, with the engagement of not only users, but also marginalised groups and non-users. This process model has become an optimal solution and practically feasible within the daily activity of a municipal organisation. This tested process could serve as a model for local management of urban green spaces, using limited resources [54].

The importance of citizen participation in the management of these spaces at the local level has been emerged in Greek context, such as that Thessaloniki where, through a questionnaire distributed online, it put in evidence as the citizens face the problems in using green space, and they consider the maintaining green spaces in cities is a critical intervention for improving living conditions [55].

And in reference to the Urban Green Space management, some studies have been addressed to establish and to develop evidence-based approach to effectively balance social, environmental, and economic objectives. These aim to support the city administrators, by providing them objective solutions for managing city-scale green spaces, each with its distinct characteristics. Berlin and Melbourne are exemplified by their cases [56].

3.2.4 Connections, Associations and Relationships

The research analysed and the results reported so far show that green urban spaces are closely connected to our lifestyle aspects, such as social interaction, health and safety, and to our perception of cities. And, in this perspective the accessibility of these spaces becomes essential.

Specifically, the urban green spaces are vital places for social interaction, social cohesion, public spirit cultivation, and community formation [57]. For this reason, many researchers argue that three are the significative characteristics of the UGSs: 1. accessibility of elements, 2. functional selectivity, and 3. structural connectivity and shareability. In this regard, it's very interesting the study on Changsha, carried out to Zhang C. et al., focused on the evaluation and the evolution of its urban green spaces publicness pattern in about a decade, in relationship with Changsha's urban development history, environmental, policy, economic, and social factors supported, led, promoted, and guided the formation and evolution of the urban green spaces publicness pattern. This has been provided ideas and methods for the UGS publicness evaluation on the urban scale and becoming a reference for the construction of liveable and sustainable cities [58].

Despite the many benefits of using green urban spaces, some research shows that in some contexts a part of the community, such as ethnic minority groups, as low-income, multi-ethnic populations [59–61], or more vulnerable groups, as older people [62, 63], can have difficulty in accessing these spaces. This is due to different reasons such as fear of crime; antisocial behaviour and accidents; difficulty in social interaction; problems related to unsuitable or unsafe playgrounds; no gardens or safe areas for children's play; poor accessibility; and lack of toilets; difficulties of transporting and caring for young children and poor weather.

There is a significative relationship between the accessibility of urban green spaces and health, and psychological and behavioural well-being benefits of the city dwellers, and many authors highlight the need for improving the existence of high-quality green spaces in urban areas [64–69]. Significant are the results of research in Japan which highlights the association between green space and suicide mortality. The findings, from spatial analyses of municipality-level panel data for the 1975–2014 period, suggest that accessible urban green space has a protective effect against self-harming behaviour [70].

In the last four years, moreover, many studies have been directed to understand the COVID-19 pandemic impact on our lifestyle habits and, therefore, in the way we interact with the urban landscape, particularly with the urban green spaces [71, 72].

These studies highlight the importance to continue to realise, maintain, and monitor UGSs, not only urban ecosystems and biodiversity, but also for the health of all urban residents [73].

The pandemic has significantly changed public priorities, improving the value of accessible, and safe of the urban green spaces, reconciling different aspects.

As the authors Wang et al. claim in their findings, the main objective is now to create multifunctional UGSs that satisfy to diversified interests, connecting heterogeneous features such as child-friendly and leisure facilities for families, and designing vibrant spaces for socialising, air-purifying plants, and scenic pathways, all sustained by enhanced safety and accessibility [74]. At the same time, as emerged from the research of Geneletti D. et al., applied to the city of Trento (Italy), another aim is to suggest standard measures, policy interventions and regulations that should be applied by urban planning to ensure that green space continues to benefit citizens also during emergency conditions [75].

Always in terms of emergency conditions, it is very interesting the study carried out by Cao Y. et al., on the refuge green spaces (RGS), a part of urban green space, located in China, used as refuge. These contribute significantly to the resilience of cities during the natural disasters. The research aim is to assess the equity of these places in relation to their planning layout, and to propose corresponding optimization measures in conjunction with future green space planning, analysing the evacuation capacity [76].

In addition, there is close link between accessible urban green space and crime mitigation: in fact, different study support that the creation of accessible urban green spaces represents a successful strategy towards achieving happier and sustainable cities [77].

However, how does an accessible urban green space affect the perception of the urban landscapes or another context?

Only a few studies have focused on these issues, but their analysis has provided very interesting information that highlights the importance of planning, designing and creating accessible and quality green spaces.

The presence of accessible urban green spaces can improve the perception of some context such as fragile settings [78], historic cities [79], or degraded environments [80], transforming and enhancing them in smarter, healthier and inclusive landscapes.

In these contexts, however, planning and designing accessible green spaces is often a challenge. An example is the one represented by the study of Gargiulo C. et al., applied to Pizzofalcone, a significant area of the city of Naples. This area, despite its centrality and its historical and architectural value, is not integrated with the rest of the historical city. So, the study is focused on identify and classify in a matrix active mobility measure, such as realisation of accessible green spaces, resulting from the study and comparison of the latest strategies and best practices, related to physical, economic, social and functional features of historic districts [81].

4 Conclusions

The Urban Green Space (UGS) is an essential part of the public open spaces. From more than three decades, several research that highlight its benefits, positive impacts, and challenges regarding the urban setting or on behalf of citizens such as health conditions, and the psycho-sociological well-being, are carried out.

So, planning, design and managing urban green spaces, equitably distributed across the city, accessible, and inclusive, has become a priority objective of urban planning.

But, as is well known, defining the accessibility of urban green space is not easy, due to the complexity of the aspects and elements involved such as physical and dimensional aspects, and the environmental justice, social and spatial equity issues.

This paper, part of an ongoing research, aims to examine the potential of urban green spaces, its accessibility with the aim to establish operative process able to define scientific definition and to propose a critical reflection about the planned and design solutions to transform and enhance the urban landscape in smarter, healthier and inclusive cities.

Thus, the first research step is focused on develop a cutting-edge framework for the accessibility and inclusivity of the urban green spaces through a systematic and critical literature review and try to define accessible urban green spaces.

Based on the findings of the analysed research, urban green spaces represent opportunities for the sustainable development of local communities, and for their well-being. Their accessibility is closely connected notions of equity (spatial and social) and environmental justice. In the evaluate process of the accessibility, it is essential considering the different scale of intervention, adequately assessing the elements and issues at each level. At the same time, the spatial equity is to be observed on different types of UGS, and their differences as well as spatial distribution characteristics and socioeconomic stages.

However, a significant feature, not extensively investigated, is the part of the accessibility of the urban green spaces in the architectural scale, and on the Universal Design principles.

These elements should be considered in the accessibility analysis and assessment processes, fundamental step to improve the quality and the accessibility of the UGSs, or to enhance the future operative proposal in the planning and management processes.

With reference to the urban green space planning process and management, it should be noted the importance, for every local governance, of appropriate methodology and tools to implement UGS planning and operative measures able to design and networking of green spaces, and providing leisure opportunities and other functions, as well as accessibility to all community. Participatory methods are crucial for both users and potential users, such as marginalized groups, in the planning and development of public urban green spaces, as well as their management.

In addition, green urban spaces are closely connected to our lifestyle aspects, such as social interaction, health and safety, and to our perception of cities. And, in this viewpoint the accessibility of these spaces becomes essential. So, the UGSs become multifunctional space that satisfy to diversified interests, connecting heterogeneous features such as child-friendly and leisure facilities for families, and designing vibrant spaces for socialising, air-purifying plants, and scenic pathways, all sustained by enhanced safety and accessibility, and ensure that green space continues to benefit citizens also during emergency conditions,

In conclusion, the research agenda aims propose a critical reflection about the planned and design solutions, to analyse the best practices and to suggest strategies able to transform and enhance the urban landscape in smarter, healthier and inclusive cities.

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