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ISGlobal Publishes a Comic on the Quest for a New Urban Model in Barcelona

The graphic novel Redrawing Barcelona draws on scientific evidence to address issues such as air pollution, noise and sedentary lifestyles in the city

Barcelona, 2 June 2021. Barcelona's current search for a new urban model echoes a similar process that took place 160 years ago and led to the creation of Cerdà's Eixample. This is the main thesis of a new comic published by the Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal), a centre supported by the "la Caixa" Foundation, titled ***Redrawing Barcelona*** and subtitled ***From Cerdà to the Superblocks: The Quest for a New Urban Model***.

Redrawing Barcelona tells the story of Clàudia, a young woman with two small children, who learns about the **health effects of certain environmental exposures** and is ultimately inspired to become an activist for a new urban model.

"It is a **work of fiction** based on scientific evidence and current circumstances," explained Pau Rubio, Communications Coordinator at ISGlobal and author of the text. "That's why it includes appearances by real people, such as ISGlobal researchers Mark Nieuwenhuijsen, Maria Foraster and Jordi Sunyer, who bring rigour to the story. Apart from them, the story could be about any family involved in the various movements that are calling for a healthier and more sustainable urban model."

"This project grew out of the idea that **Barcelona is currently experiencing déjà vu**: it is hemmed in by physical barriers that prevent it from continuing to expand, and it is still governed by a model that is harmful to the health of its inhabitants, just as it was in the 19th century," added Rubio.

Redrawing Barcelona tackles issues such as the health-related consequences of **air pollution, noise and sedentary lifestyles**, as well as the repercussions of **urban and mobility planning**. Set against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown, the 64-page comic traces the **origins of the Cerdà Plan** and highlights the social movements calling for a **less car-centric city**.

Thanks to its digital format, the comic includes additional resources such as videos, interactive graphics and links to websites with further information.

"The main challenge of this project was striking a **balance between scientific rigour and an entertaining comic format**, with the aim of reaching as many people as possible," commented Andrea Lucio, the illustrator of the comic.

Free webcomic

Redrawing Barcelona is initially being published as a free webcomic in three languages: Spanish, Catalan and English. It will be available to read and download free of charge at redrawingbarcelona.isglobal.org from 2 June.

Later, the comic will also be available for download from the [EduCaixa](https://educaixa.org) educational portal.

About the authors

Andrea Lucio is a professional illustrator with a PhD in Fine Arts from the University of Barcelona. She is the author of the graphic novels *Iaioflautas*, *Un regalo para Kushbu*, *Homenaje a Cataluña* and *Arde Madrid*. As a freelancer, she has collaborated with publications such as *New Internationalist*, *The Hindu*, *Surreal Comics*, *Pikara Magazine*, *Dossier Crític* and *La Directa*.

Pau Rubio is a journalist. He has collaborated with media outlets such as *Información*, *Diario de Mallorca*, *El Mundo* and *Panenka*. He is the author of the books *Coses que feia el meu avi* and *La longitud del olvido*. He joined ISGlobal in 2011 and currently holds the position of Communications Coordinator.

About ISGlobal

The Barcelona Institute of Global Health (ISGlobal) is the result of an innovative alliance between the "la Caixa" Foundation and academic and government institutions. The Institute was set up to contribute to the work undertaken by the international community to address global health challenges. ISGlobal has consolidated a hub of excellence in research and medical care that has its roots in work first started in the world of health care by the Hospital Clínic and the Mar Health Park and in the academic sphere by the University of Barcelona and Pompeu Fabra University. The pivotal mechanism of its work model is the transfer of knowledge generated by scientific research to practice, a task undertaken by the Institute's Education, Policy and Global Development departments. ISGlobal is accredited as a Severo Ochoa Centre of Excellence and is a member of CERCA, the Catalan Government's network of research centres.

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