A FAMILY OF RECREATIONAL ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

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Abstract

The term 'accessibility' is used in a variety of different ways. This includes whether a) facilities or locations are accessibly for different social groups (typically in relation to physically disabled citizens), b) use of a resource is legally restricted or c) facilities are reachable due to their physical location and thereby distance or travel time from the users' origin. The present paper is focused on the latter issue - 'physical accessibility' – being a core indicator of the physical configuration of the space we live in and plan for. GIS-based measures are developed and discussed primarily in the context of indicators of recreational accessibility, even though measures of accessibility have been used for evaluating a range of other types of facilities, including housing, hospitals, retail business etc. A main distinction is made between user oriented measures and facility oriented indicators. User oriented indicators focus on quantification of available resources (e.g. supply of available green space) which is most frequently the point of view of the population' 'advocates' e.g. housing planners. This way accessibility is related to mobility – or what can be achieved by being mobile. On the other hand facility-oriented indicators, measured in terms of number of potential users, sees the world from the perspective of the site managers.

The article provides a structured framework of accessibility indicators which can be applied specifically in the context of recreational planning and to physical planning in general. Application of the framework is exemplified by situations at different planning scales. This includes benchmarking of EU countries in terms of the populations access to forest resources, a regional study of the visitor load on Danish forests and an assessment of the barrier effect of the infrastructure in a nature areas in suburban Copenhagen.

Analytical methodologies, data requirement and interpretation of results will be discussed.

Key Words

GIS, Accessibility, Recreation, Supply, Transport

Key References

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