Case studies

What is the particle dynamics in classrooms?

Indoor vs. outdoor exposure

Exposure at schools: emission vs. ventilation

- Measurements of PM $_{10}$, Number concentrations, CO₂
- Naturally-ventilated classrooms (pre-retrofit)

<u>Diffusion Charger Charger</u>

DustTrak photometer

Diffusion Charger Particle Counter

DustTrak photometer 8534: PM $_{10}$

Non-dispersive infrared analyzer: $CO₂$, T & RH

Stabile, L., Buonanno, G., Frattolillo, A., Dell'Isola, M., 2019. The effect of the ventilation retrofit in a school on CO 2, airborne particles, and energy consumptions. Building and Environment, 156, 1-11, DOI: 10.1016/j.buildenv.2019.04.001

<u>Indoor vs. outdoor exposure</u>

Exposure in schools: emission vs. ventilation

• Measurements of PM_{10} , Number concentrations, CD_2

Hours

• Naturally-ventilated classrooms (post-retrofit)

Air Gurrents

Manual airing reduces CO_2 (and indoor-generated gaseous pollutants) but increases submicrometric particles (effect on PM_{10} negligible)

<u>Indoor vs. outdoor exposure</u>

Exposure in schools: emission vs. ventilation

- Measurements of PM_{10} , Number concentrations, CD_2
- Mechanical ventilated classrooms (post-retrofit) MV flow rate

<u>Indoor vs. outdoor exposure</u>

Morawska, L., Afshari, A., Bae, G. N., Buonanno, G., Chao, C., Hänninen, O., Hofmann, W., Isaxon, C., Jayaratne, R., Salthammer, T., Waring, M., Wierzbicka, A., 2013, Indoor Aerosols: From Personal Exposure to Risk Assessment, Indoor Air, 23 (6), 462–487

Manual airing to reduce airborne transmission?

Methodology: scenarios

Stabile, L., Pacitto, A., Mikszewski, A., Morawska, L., Buonanno, G., 2021. Ventilation procedures to minimize the airborne transmission of viruses in classrooms. Building and Environment, 202, 108042, DOI: 10.1016/j.buildenv.2021.108042

Morawska et al., Making indoor air quality standards in public buildings the reality: moving forward. *Science*, in press

- 1. We considered a classroom, assuming that susceptible individuals remained in the microenvironment for the same amount of time (1 hour) as the infected individual (SARS-CoV-2 Delta variant).
- 2. The scenario consisted of a 150 m^3 classroom (total area of 50 m^2 , populated with 25 students + 1 teacher with 2 m^2 /student) in which a seated infected student emitted infectious particles through 80% oral respiration and 20% phonation, while the exposed susceptible students were seated (not wearing personal protective equipment).
- 3. No exceptional events such as coughing or sneezing were considered in the evaluation of the infectious particle emission rate of the infected person.
- 4. In addition, ventilation of 14 L s^{-1} person⁻¹ (corresponding to approximately 9 ACH) was assumed.
- 5. Once all boundary conditions were defined for a prospective assessment of the long-range airborne transmission, we used the AIRC tool to estimate the individual probability of infection and to verify whether the event reproduction number (Re) was maintained below 1.
- 6. The infection risk was 2.9%, confirming that with a gathering of 25 students, the condition Re<1 was met (Re continued to stay below 1 until the maximum speaking value of 40%).
- 7. A CO₂ value in the steady-state condition lower than 800 ppm was obtained, with a background $CO₂$ of 450 ppm.
- 8. Consequently, a $CO₂$ threshold value for this scenario could be 800 ppm (350 ppm as an increase over the outdoor value).

Morawska et al., Making indoor air quality standards in public buildings the reality: moving forward. *Science*, in press

<u>Results: procedures</u>

Mechanical ventilation?

The government of the central Italy's Marche region on March 2021 launched a 9 M€ call to fund the installation of MVSs in classrooms to prevent the airborne transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and limit the adoption of distance learning solutions.

There were a total of 10 441 classrooms with an average occupancy of 20 students per classroom. 10 125 classrooms relied on natural ventilation (i.e. ventilation due to the leakages of the building and to the manual opening of the windows) while 316 were equipped with MVSs.

The maximum (nominal) air flow rates of the MVSs installed in the different classrooms ranged between 100 to 1000 m³ h⁻¹ (with 25th, 50th, and 75th percentiles equal to 360 m³ h⁻¹, 600 m³ h⁻¹, and 800 m³ h⁻¹, respectively) resulting in a ventilation rate per person between 1.4 and 14 L s⁻¹ student⁻¹.

In order to stratify the analysis, we have also introduced two sub-cohorts: i) the sub-cohort 1 represents the classrooms with MVSs characterized by a ventilation rate per person between 1.4 and 10 L s⁻¹ student⁻¹ that meets the standard requirements of indoor air quality, ii) the sub-cohort 2 includes classrooms with a ventilation rate per person >10 L s⁻¹ student⁻¹ and up to 14 L s⁻¹ student⁻¹ and it could represent a health-based ventilation to protect from airborne transmission.

Buonanno et al., Increasing ventilation reduces the SARS-CoV-2 airborne transmission in schools: a retrospective cohort study in Italy's Marche region, The Lancet – Infectious diseases, submitted

Buonanno G, Ricolfi L, Morawska L and Stabile L (2022) Increasing ventilation reduces SARS-CoV-2 airborne transmission in schools: A retrospective cohort study in Italy's Marche region. *Front. Public Health* 10:1087087. doi: 10.3389/fpubh.2022.1087087

- The agreement between the results obtained from the retrospective cohort study and values calculated through the predictive represents a validation of the approach through a retrospective cohort study.
- Such validations confirm the possibility of extending the use of the approach, once the scenario has been defined, to any indoor environment of interest in addition to school classrooms and providing predictive estimates of the effectiveness of the ventilation for different exposure scenarios and variants of concern.
- The study represents a Halley's comet because we have had simultaneous (i) waves of infections (Delta and Omicron); (ii) different levels of ventilation in school classrooms; and (iii) monitoring of infections.

Buonanno G, Ricolfi L, Morawska L and Stabile L (2022) Increasing ventilation reduces SARS-CoV-2 airborne transmission in schools: A retrospective cohort study in Italy's Marche region. *Front. Public Health* 10:1087087. doi: 10.3389/fpubh.2022.1087087

Personal ventilation?

A solution for the short and long range

Unprotected from short range airborne transmPssierted from short range airborne transm

Personal air cleaner (patent n. 102022000010346)

Reducing the short range risk

Cortellessa G., Canale C., Stabile L., Grossi G., Buonanno G., Arpino F., 2023. Effectiveness of a portable personal air cleaner in reducing the airborne transmission of respiratory pathogens. Buildings and Environment, under review

Case study 3: meeting room/university classroom

Figure 15 - Top view of the spatial distribution of IRPs in the lecture room with and without personal air cleaner.

Meeting room/university classroom

Prototype 2.0

The prototype 2.0 is more compact, with dimensions of 10 x 10 x 20 cm.

The thickness of the air jet openings has been reduced to 2 mm, allowing an expected air jet velocity at the openings of 5-6 m/s.

Iso-surface at 0.3 m/s

Z

5-hole pressure probe measurements (ProCap Streamwise)

Experimental-numerical comparison (x-normal surface)

CFD

5-hole pressure probe

We can assess short and long range airborne transmission of respiratory pathogens

We can manage short and long range infectious risk through engineering controls as ventilation and air distribution

Car cabin

Airborne transmission in transport microenvironment: high occupancy and the possible inadequate ventilation.

Can we adopt simplified models to assess the infectious risk?

Research Paper

ASSESSMENT of SARS-COV-2 airborne infection transmission risk in public buses

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ABSTRACT

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Keywords: SARS-CoV-2 Airborne transmission $_{\rm R115}$ Transport microenvironment Maximum occupancy Air exchange rate

Public transport environments are thought to play a key role in the spread of SARS-CoV-2 worldwide. Indeed, high crowding indexes (i.e. high numbers of people relative to the vehicle size), inadequate clean air supply, and frequent extended exposure durations make transport environments potential hotspots for transmission of respiratory infections. During the COVID-19 pandemic, generic mitigation measures (e.g. physical distancing) have been applied without also considering the airborne transmission route. This is due to the lack of quantified data about airborne contagion risk in transport environments.

In this study, we apply a novel combination of close proximity and room-scale risk assessment approaches for people sharing public transport environments to predict their contagion risk due to SARS-CoV-2 respiratory infection. In particular, the individual infection risk of susceptible subjects and the transmissibility of SARS-CoV-2 (expressed through the reproduction number) are evaluated for two types of buses, differing in terms of exposure time and crowding index: urban and long-distance buses. Infection risk and reproduction number are calculated for different scenarios as a function of the ventilation rates (both measured and estimated according to standards), crowding indexes, and travel

Introduction: transport microenvironments **Transport microenvironments**

- several outbreaks worldwide
- high crowding indexes
- inadequate clean (pathogen-free) air supply
- no existing ventilation standard (for buses)

Generic mitigation measures applied worldwide

- Not considering the airborne transmission (i.e. the most inportant)
- sanification,
- social distancing,
- reduced occupancy (50%, 75%, 80% …)
- masking,
- varying start and end times of schools and offices.

Quantify the risk of airborne transmission is essential…

Aims of the work

Aims of the work

- quantifying the risk of airborne transmission in buses
- identifying mitigation strategies to reduce the transmission potential of SARS-CoV-2 infection for safe transportation of passengers and to control the spread of the pandemic.

How…

- applying a combination of **close proximity** and **room-scale** risk assessment approaches for people sharing public transport environments
- evaluating the **individual infection risk** of susceptible subjects and the transmissibility of SARS-CoV-2 (expressed through the **reproductive number**)
- two types of buses, differing in terms of exposure time and crowding index, **urban** and **long-distance** buses
- different scenarios as a function of the **ventilation rates** (both measured and estimated according to standards), crowding indexes, and travel times

Methodology: quantifying the viral emission

Viral emission approach (Buonanno, Morawsk sARS-Cov-1

- Droplet volume emission (expiratory activity)
- Expiration flow rate (metabolic activity)
- Viral load & Minimum infectious dose

MERS

TB (On Treatment)

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risk in transport microenvironments and the set of the 41

Methodology: emission-to-risk approach

CFD approach: close-proximity risk (Cortellessa et al., 2021)

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Methodology: emission-to-risk approach **Box-model approach: room-scale risk** (Buonanno, Stabile, Morawska 2020)

Virus-laden droplet dynamics in indoor environments: an indoor air quality

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Methodology: scenarios & influence parameters

Urban and long-range buses

Characteristics of the buses

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Close Proximity
Individual Risk (IR

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Influence parameters

- **urban bus** (average Italian trip: 24-min);
- **long-distance bus** (different travel times)
- different expiratory activities (breathing,
- mitigation strategies (masks, vaccination)
- no filtration of the recirculated air for u!
- no filtration, G3 filters and M6 filters for long-distace buses (efficiency 0%, 4%, 40%)
- **close proximity risk only for urban buses** (only 1 susceptible person)
- actual (measured) **AERs for urban buses** (CO₂ decay rate approach)

Results: urban buses

Base scenarios: speaking vs. breathing

• contribution of **close proximity** to the individual risk extremely high when the infected subject **speaks** for the entire travel time (up to 75% for full occupancy, i.e. 93 persons, average separation distance 0.32 m);

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risk in transport microenvironments

Results: urban buses

Effect of the ventilation

- R_{event} considering both close proximity $(R_{\text{c},p})$ and room-scale (R_{rs}) contributions
- Equivalent maximum room occupancies (MROs) equal to 23 passengers and 40 passengers for windows closed and opened respectively;

 R_{event} < 1 when FFP2 masks are worn

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Results: long-distance buses

Travel duration effect, masking effect

• An illustrative example…

(infected commuter speaking for the first minutes (e.g. 60 min) and oral breathing for

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Results: long-distance buses

Summary of the results

• **required MRO to maintain Revent<1** for all the investigated scenarios for longdistance buses

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Results: long-distance buses

Immunization effect

- The presence of the immunes can reduce virus transmission;
- only a percentage of immunes higher than 90% would allow a Revent<1 in the case of 480-min trips **with no masks**;
- even if **surgical masks** were worn, a high percentage of immunes would still be required, i.e. at least 80% and 85% for oral breathing and speaking activities, respectively.

SARS-CoV-2 airborne infection transmission risk in transport microenvironments and the control of the 49

Discussions: can we trust the approach?

Experimental validation of the room-scale approach

- Experimental analysis in controlled conditions (hospitations) $\begin{array}{|c|c|c|}\n\hline\n\end{array}$
- Infected subject with a measured viral load (emission)
- Scenarios: speaking & breathing
- Viral load concentration in air: measured vs. predicted and
• Viral load concentration in air: measured vs. predicted and

In collaboration with:

Environmental Protection Agency of Piedmont (ARPA Piemonte) Azienda Ospedaliero-Universitaria San Luigi Gonzaga, University of Turin, Italy Amedeo di Savoia Hospital, University of Turin, Torino, Italy

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Conclusions

• **The risk of infection in transport microenvironments can be predicted!**

- For **urban buses**, the contribution of close proximity to the individual risk is extremely high when the infected subject **speaks** for the entire travel time, thus significantly contributing to the reproductive number and, consequently, to the maximum occupancy of the bus in view of controlling the transmissibility of the pandemic.
- The maximum occupancy to quarantee a $R_{\alpha\nu\rho\sigma\tau}$ (MRO) would be lower than the full occupancy of the bus both with the windows closed (MRO = 23 commuters) and with windows open (MRO = 40 commuters). To maintain a $R_{event} < 1$ for full occupancy of the bus, masks should be adopted.
- For a **breathing** infected subject, the close proximity risk is negligible, and the roomscale contribution is 0.48% , thus guaranteeing a $R_{event} < 1$ with full occupancy of the bus.
- For **long-distance buses** (where the close proximity contribution can be reasonably neglected due to the distances and orientation amongst the commuters; thus, the risk is only related to the room-scale contribution) the total exposure (travel) time and the adoption of mitigation solutions significantly affect the MRO.
- Reducing the speaking time and adopting frequent breaks during the trip represent very basic solutions that cannot always be applied. As an example, in the case of an infected person **speaking for 1 h**, only **high quality filtration of the recirculated air** and the simultaneous use of FFP2 masks would permit full occupancy of the bus up to almost 8 h; otherwise, an extremely high percentage of immunized persons (> 80%) would be required.

Experimental validation of the numerical model (scale 1:5)

Arpino, F., Cortellessa, G., Grossi, G., Nagano, H., 2021. A Eulerian-Lagrangian approach for the non-isothermal and transient CFD analysis of the aerosol airborne dispersion in a car cabin. Building and Environment 108648. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.buildenv.2021.108648

Experimental validation of the numerical model (scale 1:5)

Figure $6 - x$ -y velocity contours on the slice at $z = 0.3945$ m (measuring plane) with SST *k-ω* turbulence model.

Figure 7 – Experimental and numerical velocity profiles comparison within a selected x-y plane at z=0.3945 m obtained in four different sections: x=0.45 m, x=0.65 m, $x=0.85$ m and $x=1.05$ m.

Arpino, F., Grossi, G., Cortellessa, G., Mikszewski, A., Morawska, L., Buonanno, G., Stabile, L. Risk of SARS-CoV-2 in a car cabin assessed through 3D CFD simulations (2022) Indoor Air, 32 (3), art. no. e13012

Influence of the position of the infected subject

Streamlines of the airflows (coloured by velocity) exiting the mouth of the infected driver in case of mixed ventilation mode at 50%

Driver infected		Individual infection risk (%)		
Susceptible subject	Inhaled volume (mL)	CFD	Well-mixed	
Driver	emitter			
Passenger #1	1.89×10^{-9}	9.2%		
Passenger #2	8.68×10^{-9}	26%	42%	
Passenger #3	4.49×10^{-9}	18%		

Streamlines of the airflows (coloured by velocity) exiting the mouth of the infected passenger #3 in case of mixed ventilation mode at 50%

Influence of the HVAC system flow rate

