

Dear reader

Most employees travel to work and back home every working day. Large companies receive hundreds of incoming travellers within the timeframe of a couple of hours. Obviously, the commute represents a huge part of daily traffic. A part which is highly repetitive and predictable, and therefore has a high potential for behaviour change. Companies also have direct communication lines to all of their employees. For all of these reasons, it is crucial for cities and municipalities to turn their local businesses into allies in their sustainable mobility strategies. Since our last e-update on [workplace mobility plans](#), many new initiatives have been undertaken and new results have been published. Time for an (e-)update!

This topic is also covered in [various ways](#) by the upcoming [ECOMM](#). The [call for presentations](#) just opened.

Company travel plans



Source: www.eltis.org

The central instrument to coordinate sustainable mobility actions in an enterprise is a company travel plan (often also called mobility plan). It is often coordinated by a corporate mobility manager and sometimes complemented by personalised travel plans for individual employees (see our [previous e-update](#)). A good set of [guidelines](#) for company travel planning was produced by the European COMMERCE project.

Too often, companies try to implement an isolated measure, e.g. carpooling, only to conclude that it does not work. Only a good mix of different push and pull measures – ‘carrots’ and ‘sticks’ – will have a significant impact on mobility behaviour.

Carrots...



Photo courtesy of [Mobiel 21](#)

Financial incentives probably are the most ‘tasty’ carrots. A very strong incentive is the **tax-free home-to-work cycling mileage allowance**, as it exists for instance in Belgium, the Netherlands and the UK. Last year, the French government conducted a [pilot project](#) to experiment with the introduction of such an allowance. [Preliminary results](#) show that a €0.25/km reward increases the modal share of cycling by 50%. On 1 July of this year, the government implemented a legal obligation for companies to reimburse (part of) the costs of the bike commute, but they still have to fix the tax-deductible amount, which will probably be only between €0.12 and €0.15/km (Source: [Le Figaro](#) – in French).

The Austrian company [Omicron](#) (video in German, with English subtitles) has introduced a system of **Ecomiles**. Participating employees receive points for their sustainable commuting trips and for not using a parking space. They can exchange these points for vouchers for sport- or health-related purchases.



Photo courtesy of the [MOBI project](#)

In the Netherlands several projects have offered a **financial reward** up to €100 per month for people who avoid driving their car during peak hours, often in the context of major road works. And it worked: the project [Spitsvrij](#) (link in Dutch) for instance got some 3,000 cars out of the peak per working day. After the reward ended, the participants continued to avoid the peak for almost half of the trips. The project team estimates having saved societal costs of about 5.4 million euros in the first 1.5 year of implementation.

Another project called [Winnen van de file](#) (“Beat the traffic jam” – link in Dutch) tried the same approach without a financial incentive. They built in **gamification** elements and rewarded their participants with points, rankings and prize draws. There were extra bonus points to be earned in an online game called [Filevegen](#) (“Swiping Traffic”). The same gamification approach is being developed in the [MOBI project](#). Their game, called “From 5 to 4” gives companies their own gaming platform where colleagues can form teams and earn points by replacing the car by a sustainable mode for at least 1 day a week. A cute mascot called MOBI gives practical tips and motivational hints. Employers can use the website’s analytics page to gain insight into their employees’ travel behaviour.

Apart from encouraging a shift to more sustainable modes, companies can also reduce the number of necessary trips through **telework and teleconferences** (see our [e-update on the New way of working](#)) or avoid peak-hour trips via more **flexible working hours**. For instance, the [Travel Smart Pilot Programme](#) (2012-2014) in Singapore managed to eliminate or shift 12% of peak-hour traffic by introducing telework and flexible hours, trial tickets and rewards for pre-peak PT use, and events such as early-morning yoga and fitness classes in the city.



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... and sticks

Next to incentives for using sustainable modes, it is wise to introduce disincentives for solo car use. In August 2011 the Norwegian Public Roads Administration (NPRA) introduced a daily parking fee of €3 for employees. In spring 2012 the share of car drivers had dropped from 35 % to 27 % and public transport use had increased from 39 % to 44 %. However, there was a slight increase of parking in other areas without a fee from 2 % to 6 % ([TØI rapport 1225/2012](#) - in Norwegian). Fee revenues have partly been used for free monthly public transport passes, which have been given to employees as prizes in a monthly lottery. Over time, the attitude among employees towards the parking fee improved.

Reductions in parking capacity are also strong disincentives. Often, a move to a new location is the perfect occasion to reduce parking and hence car use. Some examples:

- [GDF Suez](#) in Brussels: when GDF Suez moved several teams from 16 different locations to a central building, they introduced the 'Let's Choose' programme. By introducing a [mobility budget](#) (in this case called a 'cafeteria plan') for employees who voluntarily gave up their parking spot, they realised a 64% decrease in car use.
- the [Chalmers University campus site](#) in Gothenburg, Sweden: developers planned an increase from 4,000 to 8,000 employees and the municipality forbade them to increase the number of car parking spots.
- [Zurich Insurance](#), Switzerland: they built the new SkyKey building with 75% fewer parking spaces than former sites, which resulted in a 76% drop in car use. In the SkyKey concept, mobility is seamlessly integrated with energy efficiency and health as the three cornerstones of a sustainable office building.

Why do companies care about travel planning?

A very strong motivator is when companies are experiencing parking pressure or other mobility problems. Other reasons are cost reductions or having more healthy employees and less absenteeism.

However, a project in Utrecht, The Netherlands, found that most companies joined because of sustainability considerations (Source: [Jos Hollestelle, & Morgen](#)). Many companies care about having an improved, green corporate image and showing that they are not only causing traffic problems, but that they are also part of the solution. [Corporate Social Responsibility](#) has become an essential part of corporate management strategies.

This trend has led to a proliferation of 'green' labels, certifications and standards (see for instance the [Ecolabel Index](#) directory). The Moma.BIZ project (2010-2012) followed this trend by creating a [mobility label](#) to assess the performance of business zones or individual companies when it comes to employee travel options. The assessment is based on a checklist that the businesses fill in online.



Picture courtesy of the [MoMa.BIZ project](#)

Motivating companies through regulation



Source: [www.eltis.org](#)

The strongest motivation for companies to engage in mobility management is of course a legal obligation to make company travel plans. In the [Brussels Capital Region](#) in Belgium, every company with more than 100 employees has to make a mobility plan every 3 years with a diagnosis, action plan, monitoring and evaluation. For the diagnosis, they made a [website](#) (in Dutch and French) where employers can easily create an online travel behaviour survey and generate a report that compares the company's results with those of other businesses (the city of Helsinki did something similar with their [Commuting Calculator](#)). For the action plan, there are several mandatory actions: appointing a contact person, communicating about the travel plan, organising annual awareness raising events, providing up to date information, providing a multi-modal accessibility plan, encouraging the use of PT, installing a sheltered and secured bicycle shed, considering the eco-score when purchasing or leasing vehicles and having a specific action plan for peak moments of air pollution.

In Italy, companies and institutions of over 300 employees have been obliged to appoint a mobility manager and develop a travel plan since 1998. In 2000 the function of area mobility manager was created to support company mobility managers. ([EPOMM mobility management monitor for Italy, 2011](#))



Photo courtesy of [Mobiel 21](#)

Most cities have minimum requirements for building car parking spaces in new office buildings. They should however also introduce a maximum allowance and allow developers to stay under this maximum via a parking pay-off or a provision of mobility management alternatives. Recent examples include the contested [COBRACE code](#) in Brussels and the increased bike parking standards in [London](#). For more information on parking and new developments, see our e-updates on [land use planning](#) and [parking management](#).

Taxes



Source: www.eltis.org

If the national framework allows it, cities and municipalities can grant a discount on local taxes to companies who make a travel plan, or they can levy taxes on parking spaces made available to employees. Experiences such as the [parking levy in Nottingham UK](#) show that the potential impacts on the surrounding neighbourhoods have to be taken into account when introducing such a tax.

On the national level a very important barrier to commuter behaviour change is the under-taxation of company cars, which is very common in Europe (see this [European Commission study from 2010](#) or this [OECD report from 2014](#)). Company car users systematically drive more kilometres than other employees and are less inclined to change modes.

Special offers

In [Stuttgart](#), Germany, many companies set the first steps to company travel planning via the 'Job ticket', an annual season ticket for employees. When an employer contributes at least €10 to the 'Job ticket', it becomes 10% cheaper than a normal annual season ticket. Without the contribution, the Job ticket is only 5% cheaper.

Campaigns and awareness raising



Photo courtesy of the [Bike2Work project](#)

Of course, the annual European Car-free Day during the [European Mobility Week](#) is a great opportunity for cities to raise awareness among their companies and commuters. But many cities, regions or countries have also developed campaigns of their own. See for instance:

- The [Pro Motion to Work!](#) project in Turku, Finland, for increasing physical activity levels
- The joint cycling campaign of [Lund and Malmö](#) in Sweden together with their surrounding municipalities
- The Bike to Work campaign [in Denmark](#)
- The annual [Cycle to Work Day](#) in the UK
- Many of such campaigns can be found on the [bike2work website](#), made by the bike2work project, an EU-project aiming to promote bike2work programmes and have programmes learn from each other



Photo courtesy of the Brussels Capital Region

The proof of the pudding is in the eating. Especially for cycling test drives are very convincing (see the [GoPedelec Manual](#) p.50). That is why some municipalities have bought a test fleet to lend out to companies. Some examples:

- the [Testkaravaan](#) (link in Dutch) in the Belgian province of West-Flanders, which comprised bicycles, electric bikes, cargo bikes, folding bikes, bike trailers, trial tickets for bus and train, bike sharing tickets and carpool promotion.
- the [Bike Project](#) (link in French and Dutch) in the Brussels Capital Region, which offers expert advice to companies that want to promote cycling towards their employees. Participating companies receive a fleet of test bikes for two or three weeks, a training on how to ride in the city, personalised itineraries and awareness raising workshops.
- the [Test an e-bike](#) project in Denmark.

Read these [9 tips for running 'Try-a-bike' events](#) to get you started.

Organise and support

Cities can also support companies to make their mobility greener by:

- Promoting and facilitating the [sharing of parking space](#);
- Promoting and facilitating bike courier services and goods consolidation hubs for more efficient deliveries (e.g. [Bentobox](#) in Berlin)



Photo: Ralph Hollenstein - Pedal Piraten e.U. ©

- Organising networks of neighbouring businesses on the topic of mobility or more general, e.g. [R10 in Rotterdam](#) (link in Dutch), or “[Wirtschaft MOBIL](#)” (link in German) in Vorarlberg, Austria.
- Organising knowledge exchange and trainings. E.g. the Brussels Capital Region holds an annual Mobility Salon where companies can exchange experiences, discover best practices from other companies and learn about the offer of mobility services in the region. They also organise a 6-day “Mobility Manager” training. In Flanders, Belgium, a [network of corporate mobility managers](#) (link in Dutch) meets every half year and exchanges knowledge in a LinkedIn group.

National programmes for Company Mobility Management



Optimising Use in the Netherlands



Smart Work in Finland

A national programme creates continuity and more systematic efforts. Again some examples:

- In Belgium, companies with more than 100 employees have a legal obligation to fill in the three-yearly ‘[Federal Diagnostic of the Commute](#)’ survey (link in Dutch and French). This gives the government a great insight in the statistics of the commute, but also in the effectiveness of mobility management measures (see this [ECOMM 2013 presentation by Sarah Martens](#)).
- The regional government of Flanders has a [commuting fund](#) (link in Dutch) that subsidises companies for the realisation of sustainable mobility measures. The provinces each have a mobility centre that conducts a free ‘mobility scan’ for companies who engage themselves to implement at least one of the proposed measures.
- In the [Frankfurt/Rhine-Main Metropolitan Region](#), Germany, there is a programme that gives support to company staff in analysing their specific mobility needs and helps to define suitable measures. It results in a certificate from the local chamber of commerce.
- For the past seven years, the Dutch government has been playing with the idea to introduce a point system in order to force companies with more than 50 employees to take mobility management measures. However, this decision has been postponed many times, as voluntary efforts of companies keep increasing anyway, among others through the “[Optimising use](#)” programme.
- In the framework of Optimising Use, The Dutch government offered support to small and medium-sized enterprises (25 to 250 employees) through a system of Mobility Vouchers: a subsidy of €1,500 to get help to make a scan of opportunities for MM and a second subsidy of €4,500 to get support for developing and implementing the most promising measures. ([Evaluation report](#) – in Dutch)
- The [klimaaktiv mobil](#) programme in Austria has supported 4,200 businesses to implement eco-friendly mobility projects. Businesses that reduce CO2 emissions through their projects are awarded the title of ‘klimaaktiv mobil project partner’ by the minister for environment. See also [mobilitaetsmanagement.at](#) (link in German).
- In Finland a new website, [www.fiksustitoin.fi](#) (link in Finnish), raises awareness on company mobility management and helps companies take the first steps. It is a joint initiative of actors in the fields of health, safety, environment and transport, so all of these viewpoints are included in the materials on the website.
- [Smarter Travel Workplaces](#) is a public awareness programme in Ireland working with large employers to implement voluntary workplace travel plans.

Conclusion



Photo courtesy of [Mobiel 21](#)

Of course, good cycling infrastructure and public transport provisions are necessary conditions for company travel plans to be effective. But there are many other things that public authorities can do to encourage and support companies in their quest for more sustainable mobility. Simply promoting the company travel planning approach requires no investment costs or complex technology and can have a significant impact on travel behaviour.

Useful resources

- previous [EPOMM e-updates](#)
- CIVITAS Training on Company Mobility Management, 9 Oct 2015, [Training Resource Pack](#)
- [Eltis case studies](#)
- Transport for London: [Business Travel Guides](#)
- [Making travel plans work. Lessons from UK case studies.](#)

- National Transport Authority Ireland: [Workplace Travel Plans. A Guide for Implementers](#)
- MoMa.biz: [Boxed Solutions Guide](#) for business and industrial zones.
- Travel Plan Plus: [Local Travel Plan Networks: a practical guide to implementation](#).
- [Evidence](#) database on site-based travel plans (registration required).
- "Tax treatment of employer commuting support: an international review"
- For Active and Premium members of Allinx: webinar recordings
 - [Mobility Management for Employers](#) by Jesper Johansson (Tyréns AB)
 - [How to form successful alliances with companies](#) by Jos Hollestelle (&Morgen)
- Best practices:
 - Winners of the [PEWTA awards 2008-2010](#)
 - YouTube channel of the [Alpstar project](#) (videos in German with English subtitles)
- Transport research centre: [Effective transport policies for corporate mobility management](#) (2010)
- The [TDM Handbook](#) by the Victoria Transport Policy Institute in Canada
- [Toolbox for mobility management measures in companies](#) (2000)
- Cerema book on telework: [Management de la mobilité et travail à distance](#)

Upcoming events

- **INTERMODES study visit to Porto**
10-11 December 2015 – Porto, Portugal
<http://www.intermodes.com/en/European-Club-of-intermodal-regions-and-cities>
- **STARS, MOBI and PTP-Cycle Final Conference**
18 February 2016 – Brussels, Belgium
www.eltis.org
- **3rd EU Conference on SUMP**
12-13 April 2016 – Bremen, Germany
www.epomm.eu/endurance
- **20th European Conference on Mobility Management**
1-3 June – Athens, Greece
ecomm2016.com
[call for presentations](#)

