

Dear reader,

When people move to a new city or neighbourhood, this is an ideal time to reconsider old travel habits and try out more sustainable modes. If these are immigrants with a different cultural background, they often have different needs for information and education than newcomers from the same or neighbouring countries. And for quite a few of them, having access to sustainable alternatives to the car is an essential condition for their inclusion in society. In this e-update we will present several projects and studies that have looked into the mobility management options for such new residents, both native and non-native.

One underlying reason for the general current political turmoil in Europe certainly is the immigration theme. We know this is sensible, even in the choice of wording and pictures. In this context, our aim is to contribute just a little bit to improve the immigrant situation. And it is good to see that the UK is still a member of EPOMM.

The term 'mobility' can have a double meaning. Often mobility is used to designate the frequency or willingness to choose a new place of residence, and 'social mobility' refers to a change in social status. In this e-update we will use the word mobility in a strictly transport-related sense.

A small window of opportunity for a large number of people



Together with changing job, moving home is the top reason for changing transport habits ([USEmobility project](#)). A lot of our transport behaviour is habitual. These habits are performed automatically and are cued by our context. Obviously, when that context changes, the automatic behavioural responses are temporarily weakened. This window of opportunity is however quite short, and closes within three months after moving house. But it affects a large number of people – on average, people move about every 10 years (numbers from [France](#), [Germany](#) and the [Netherlands](#)), so within 10 years, you can (at least statistically) reach the whole population.

Studies show, how this window of opportunity can be used to manage mobility.

- Researchers from [Bath University](#) found that people who recently moved house were more likely to be affected by an awareness raising intervention on sustainable (transport) behaviours. An interesting detail is that cyclists seem to form much [stronger commuting habits](#) than car drivers do.
- A [similar study](#) found that university employees who were environmentally concerned and had recently moved, used the car less frequently for commuting to work than their environmentally concerned colleagues who had not recently moved. It seems that a change of context can re-activate important values that guide our behaviour.
- A [study in Aachen, Germany](#) (link in German, with abstract in English) showed that public transport (PT) marketing for new citizens generates a significant modal shift to PT.

The information and awareness raising approach has been tried out in several cities participating in the [SEGMENT project](#), such as [Munich, Germany](#), [Utrecht, The Netherlands](#), and [Almada, Portugal](#). In Almada, the information kit for new residents that was developed in SEGMENT has served as the basis for a new [personalised travel information campaign](#) to increase public transport use in certain neighbourhoods.

House hunting

Prevention is better than cure. People should be encouraged to make a sustainable location choice, taking into account mobility.

Often people decide to live outside of the city to have less noise and pollution, lower housing costs, a garden, more space for children and nature nearby. The mobility



Click for website (in German)

consequences of their new location include a longer daily commute and a high dependency on the car, as distances are greater and public transport service is limited. This results in increased time and effort expended on taxiing children or for pursuing social, leisure and cultural activities. Rent and house costs are very visible, but mobility costs and time are often underestimated, and the housing market does not inform customers about it. The public transport authority of Munich, Germany, developed the [calculation tool WoMo](#) to estimate travel times and expenses for individual mobility when choosing a new residence.

In order to make the hidden costs of living in remoter areas more visible, the Minister for Environment in Flanders, Belgium, recently proposed to give all houses an M-score, reflecting how close the property is to basic services and how well it is connected to the public transport and road network. Currently, Flemish properties already need an energy performance certificate before entering the housing market. However, the idea of the M-score met with a storm of protest, calling it 'patronising' and 'bureaucratic'.

A [study in Aachen, Germany](#) (link in German, with abstract in English), shows that people would welcome some insight into the connectedness of properties: the majority of new citizens would be interested to have a very simple tool to include PT into the process of looking to a new flat in a foreign town.

There is no such thing as 'the' newcomer



By [DraconianRain](#), CC BY 2.0

The socio-economic background of newcomers obviously has an impact on their mobility behaviour. For instance, low and medium income groups will walk and cycle more when the density of the neighbourhood is higher, whereas high income groups will rather be convinced to travel actively by the attractiveness of a neighbourhood ([phys.org](#)).

The picture gets even more complicated when we add the cultural background to the equation. The EU project [TOGETHER on the move](#) (2011-2014) found the travel behaviour of immigrants to be a neglected area of statistical information and research, even though they make up to 18 per cent of the population in the European countries studied, and even more in many cities. Most research on travel behaviour of immigrants comes from the USA, but similar trends were observed in Europe. Immigrant workers tend to make more use of sustainable alternatives to solo car use than native workers ([Sungyop Kim, USA](#)), a trend which cannot be explained solely by their lower incomes ([Ali Modarres, USA](#)) or by the fact that they are concentrated in metropolitan areas where public transport provision is high ([Tsang & Rohr, UK](#)). In the UK, non-UK-born migrants appear to travel less than the native population and mainly for work. Despite their greener travel pattern, the use of the transport network by migrants still imposes a cost on society, though lower than the one imposed by native travellers ([Tsang & Rohr, UK](#)). A [German study](#) found a large gender gap, with immigrant women taking fewer trips, travelling fewer kilometres and having less access to a car than men. The bike is often less popular among immigrants. According to a [study among immigrants in Amsterdam](#), one of the main reasons for young immigrants not to cycle is that they don't think it is fun.

At least some immigrant categories seem to prefer car travel to public transport more strongly than the domestically born, an indication that car ownership among these immigrants may increase rapidly as their incomes increase ([Eltis Mobility Update March 2013](#)). Indeed, in some societies the car still is an important status symbol, closely linked to a history of economic hardship ([Grozdanov & Ilieva](#)). In any case, the longer migrants stay in the country, the more their travel behaviour pattern will start to resemble that of the native population ([Imran, Yin and Pearce](#)).

Sustainable mobility training for immigrants



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Access to different transport modes is a precondition for finding work, feeling socially included and successfully integrating into a new society. The [European Modules on Migrant Integration](#) state that introductory courses to basic knowledge about everyday life, such as how to use public transport, should always be part of the integration process. A great set of training materials was developed by the [TOGETHER on the move](#) project and by the [city of Munich, Germany](#). Of course, one needs to consider that finding and paying for transportation to come to the course might already pose a barrier to some migrant households. Also, figuring out the transport system is [only one of the many hurdles](#) that newcomers have to take.

Many immigrants, especially women, have never learned to ride a bike. Cycling schools for adults, such as in [Belgium](#), [Sweden](#) and [Denmark](#), open up a whole new world of opportunities for these people. Read more about adult cycling training programmes in this [PRESTO fact sheet](#). In Belgium, the [Cycling Friends](#) project matches an immigrant woman who just learned to ride a bike to a native female and experienced bike rider so that they can meet for having bicycle trips together. The effect of such projects can be reinforced by lending out bikes and opening a bike repair shop. An example can be found in [Minneapolis, USA](#).

When immigrants do know how to ride a bike, they might not be familiar with the traffic rules and safety precautions of their new country. The [City of Lights Project](#) in Los Angeles, USA, works on this aspect of road safety awareness raising and it also tries to engage the immigrant cyclists in cycling advocacy and planning issues in their neighbourhoods. Mobility management programmes can also offer opportunities for immigrant people to volunteer, for instance as a supervisor in a [walking school bus](#). Volunteering makes an important [contribution to the social inclusion of immigrants](#). The transport sector also provides many job opportunities to immigrants ([The Immigrant Learning Center, USA](#)).

The Immigrant Council of Ireland provided [training to public transport companies](#) to embed equality and diversity within their workplace and to deal with anti-social behaviour on PT. Indeed, many instances of racist assaults occur on PT.

Refugees and sustainable mobility



Photo by [Daniel Maleck Lewy](#), 2005, CC BY-SA 3.0

The current influx of refugees is not the first in history and sadly, it will probably not be the last. Find an excellent visual overview of the [major refugee crises of the past century here](#). There is a heart-warming range of projects that help refugees use the available transport modes, such as cycling. Some examples:

- The [Austrian Youth Red Cross](#) ([link in German](#)) involves refugee children in the bicycle exam and has a booklet on cycling in Farsi and Arabic;
- In London, UK, [The Bike Project](#) gives old bikes to refugees, helps them to fix the bikes up, and teaches them to ride. Read more about it [here](#).
- The [Immigrant and Refugee Elders Transportation Project](#) in King County, USA, aims to increase the availability of culturally and ethnically appropriate transport information for newly arrived immigrant and refugee elders.
- More examples can be found in [Austria](#) (in German) and [Australia](#).

The bike is even playing an important role in the refugee crisis as a means for [lawful crossing of borders](#).

Building sustainable habits



In short, when people are taken out of their everyday context, they are particularly open to relevant information in order to form new habits. There is a brief moment of opportunity that has a far greater potential than organising mass campaigns to an audience that has already settled into their habits. For immigrants and refugees, existing information generally presents too many barriers and additional guidance is needed. The brief overview in this e-update shows that great work is being done already, but the topic is still underrepresented both in the research field and within (European) mobility projects.

Upcoming events

- **CIVITAS Forum Conference**
28-30 September 2016 – Gdynia, Poland
www.civitas.eu

For more events, please visit the [EPOMM calendar](#)

