EPOMM
European Platform on Mobility Management

Overcoming barriers to Mobility Management

EPOMM - Managing mobility for a better future

e-update August 2016 | www.epomm.eu | Language: en | cz | de | fr

Dear reader,

Mobility management already has many success stories in Europe. But a systematic application of mobility management is still rare. That is the main reason why these successes so far have had a very limited impact on a European scale. In this e-update we will examine the main barriers that are holding back wide-scale implementation of mobility management or that counteract the impact of mobility management measures. We will also show some examples of ways to overcome barriers and some alternative, more beneficial policies.

Counterproductive legislation

The central objective of mobility management is most often to influence mobility behaviour and thus modal split. There are however several examples of counterproductive legislation and fiscal systems that favour a car-oriented lifestyle, such as commuter kilometre allowances for car trips only, or tax incentives for company cars as an employee benefit. Current legislation and policy-making procedures are also rather rigid and have a very difficult time dealing with new and fast-evolving start-ups such as Uber, who use the legal grey zone of the sharing economy to compete with the taxi industry.

Example of a solution: mobility budgets work (Belgium)

Several test projects have proven the success of the flexible mobility budget: It provides employees with a budget that they can spend on a mix of modes – and that significantly reduces the number of solo car kilometres they travel - see our 2012 e-update about the mobility budget. The Belgian fiscal system led to a very high number of lease cars, and a mobility budget would counteract that. Belgian companies are not in favour of a national obligation to implement the mobility budget, but they do call out for a simplification of the legal framework, as the administrative load for small and medium-sized companies is much too high. Perhaps the recent introduction of a new mobility card system will help companies overcome this barrier by providing a hassle-free system to implement the mobility budget.

Counterproductive land use strategies

Photo by epSos.de CC BY 2.0

Land use planning is another area that produces a lot of counterproductive legislation. Examples include minimum car parking requirements in building regulations, or excessive car oriented shopping centre development at the urban periphery, or zoning regulations dividing a city into separate residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial districts, which increases the distances between functions. Read more about it in our e-update on land-use planning.

Example of a solution: deregulation of parking (Miami, USA)

In 2010, the city of Miami allowed for exceptions on the minimum parking requirements for newly constructed buildings in downtown Miami. This has drastically reduced construction costs and boosted the creation of residential developments in public transport-oriented areas. Last year, some smaller developments outside of the downtown were also exempted from minimum parking requirements. This should lead to an increase of affordable housing in the vicinity of public transport lines and in walkable neighbourhoods, especially for young urban millennials who are interested in car-free lifestyles.

Lack of investments in the sustainable transport offer

“Changing preferences are not enough to change transportation behavior, because a person’s behavior heavily depends on their options.” Daniel Hertz, cityobservatory.org. If you are going to promote walking, cycling and public transport, there have to be at least some

Supernarrow bike/pedestrian path in Parma
Photo KHP

Reclaiming street within 3 weeks – example from New York Department of Transportation

basic, safe infrastructure and convenient services. This does not mean that every street requires for instance a separate bike lane, a common misconception among citizens who won't try cycling because "it is not safe". The fact that several media give a lot of attention to accidents and safety warnings ('dangerisation') obviously does not help overcome these fears.

When there are few public transport users, cyclists or pedestrians, decision makers will be less inclined to invest in infrastructure or services, which in turn makes it harder to attract more users. Even in a bicycle paradise like the Netherlands, there are complaints that there is not enough budget reserved for good walking and cycling infrastructure. In all countries, a lot of budgetary efforts go into the maintenance and upgrading of road infrastructure for motorised transport. A good road network is important for the economy, but there is no direct link between road supply and GDP in a country (see VTPI's paper Are Vehicle Travel Reduction Targets Justified, 2013, p 17). Another common misconception is that parking capacity is directly related to the turnover of local shops (see Giuliano Mingardo's presentation on parking management at the CIVITAS Summer Course 2016). Walkability on the other hand, has extensively been documented to generate economic benefits, e.g. in this recent report about America's 30 largest cities. And did you know that you can find out much about the walkability of streets by the photos that citizens upload on the social media?

Example of a solution: bring out the paint bucket

In New York City many road segments and parking spaces have been transformed into attractive pedestrian areas almost overnight, using paint and temporary materials. This approach bypasses the lengthy, expensive design and construction procedures and provides real-life prove that pedestrian-oriented designs work, rather than relying on the predictions of traffic models. In this way a little parking lot in Dumbo, Brooklyn, was transformed into a square, after which the retail sales went up 172%. Find out more in the TED talk by Janette Sadik-Khan.

Fragmentation of the transport offer

Downtowngal Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0

Oyster Card, the famous smart card ticketing system in London. Photo by Wayne77 - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0

Often sustainable modes cannot bring you door-to-door. In order to compete with the car, these modes should be easy to combine, but very often they are not. Problems can include long waiting times or long walks between modes, completely different pricing structures and separate ticketing systems per mode, or lack of information or signs to other modes in stations (see these CIVITAS Summer Course recommendations for Maria Zambrano station in Malaga: group 1, group 2).

Especially in cities where multiple public transport providers are active, there is often a labyrinth of information, tickets and services. Many cities have integrated their public transport ticketing systems, for instance with a single smart card, but there are not many examples where other modes like bike sharing, bike rental, car sharing or taxis are also included, neither in ticketing nor in route planning. Aligning the interests of different providers and combining their offer into a clear and simple information and ticketing system is obviously a complex and time-consuming task. Moreover there are no European or global data standards to make sure that information systems of different providers are compatible.

Example of a solution: integrating different modes in the Clermont-Ferrand railway station

The French city of Clermont-Ferrand has already started improving its most important transport hub, which now features direct, accessible and safe links between the local and regional public transport, a bike sharing depot, bicycle parking and a taxi stop directly in front of the station. Following this first phase, the city is redeveloping the interior of the train station (2015-2018), and increasing the capacity of its parking lot from 250 to 420 places. Integrating carpooling is also part of the second phase.

Example of a solution: Mobility as a Service (MaaS)

Undoubtedly the buzz word of the past year is MaaS. The concepts implies a completely integrated transport offer, very much comparable to the tariff plans of mobile phone operators. First steps towards implementation have already been taken in Finland.

Overcoming scepticism and opposition

People generally do not like change. Large infrastructural measures can provoke equally large protest movements, stalling decisions for years (e.g. in Antwerp, Belgium). But also

Temporary experiment on the Anspachlaan in Brussels

very small infrastructure projects often get opposed by local residents (the nimby effect) or by local business owners, justly fearing loss of revenue during and after the works.

On different policy levels, there is also an uncertainty about how to engage with the public and get public support for more fundamental transformations that are necessary to bring about a low-carbon future. Very often, authorities communicate too late, when decisions have already been taken, or use public hearings and information meetings as 'window dressing'. A promising new way to involve citizens is the so-called participation 2.0 approach, using ICT to interact. See for instance this CIVITAS policy note on the use of social media to involve citizens, this presentation on crowd-sourced planning by Andrew Nash, or the ENDURANCE e-update on Participation 2.0.

Example of a solution: temporary experiment in Brussels

When Brussels introduced its car-free zone on the Anspachlaan last year, it was introduced as a temporary experiment. Similar to the approach in New York (see above), the street was furnished with temporary structures such as wooden benches, petanque sandpits and table tennis tables. After a one-year trial phase, some parts of the zone, such as the De Brouckereplein, will become accessible to cars again due to complaints from local businesses.

Example of a solution: the Roadworks Survival Guide in Madison, Wisconsin, USA

Madison's Chamber of Commerce found that 68% of business respondents found their revenues declined during a road construction project and 54% of them indicated their businesses did not return to prior levels after completion of construction, and for some continued to decrease. That is why the City Council made a survival guide with many tips for local shop keepers to protect their business during road works.

A lot of work to do!

EPOMM advocates Mobility Management at the informal meeting of the European transport ministers in Amsterdam

These were just a few of the barriers that prevent mobility management from being implemented or being successful on a large scale. Other problems include:

- a complicated or barely existing funding landscape for mobility management – see our e-update on funding
- institutional fragmentation, lack of cooperation and know-how – see the ENDURANCE e-update on cooperation
- reinventing the wheel or lack of a systematic, large-scale or long-term approach
- lack of monitoring and evaluation in order to show results – see the ENDURANCE e-update on monitoring and evaluation
- lack of national, regional, local and site-specific modal split targets
- lack of EU standards to measure modal split, making it hard for cities, countries and regions to benchmark

To most decision makers and even to most experts it is unclear what mobility management is, what impact it could have and how it could contribute to the EU objectives in transport. It is EPOMM's mission to raise more awareness about the concept, importance and cost-effectiveness. As advocated in last year's Declaration of Utrecht, EPOMM is working on a European Master Plan to get mobility management more firmly anchored in sustainable mobility policies. Even in times when electrification of transport and driverless cars seem to shift the debate to more technological issues, mobility management is still indispensable as the 'glue' that holds sustainable mobility policies together (see EPOMM's Athens Resolution).

Upcoming events

- **CIVITAS Forum Conference**
  28-30 September 2016 - Gdynia, Poland
  www.civitas.eu
- **European Transport Conference**
  5-7 October 2016 – Barcelona, Spainf
  www.etcproceedings.org
- **Act TravelWise Annual Conference – 'Sustainable Travel in a Changing World'**
  17 January 2017 – Birmingham, England
  www.acttravelwise.org (papers submission deadline: 31 August)

For more events, please visit the EPOMM calendar