

Dear reader,

Mobility poverty not only affects the individual, but society as a whole. Mobility experts need to better understand the issue, and therefore it is the subject of several national and international research projects. Mobility management can greatly reduce mobility poverty and this e-update provides some examples.

What is Mobility Poverty?

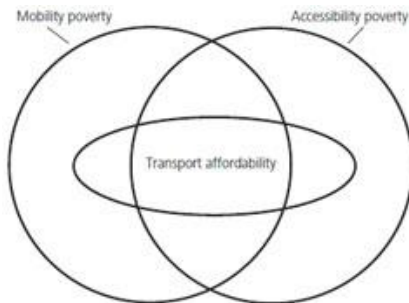


Figure 1. Transport poverty and related sub-concepts (authors' own elaboration)

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Defining this concept is not totally straightforward, therefore a full explanation is required at the beginning of this e-update. According to the University of Leeds study "[Transport poverty and its adverse social consequences](#)", mobility poverty is identified as "a systemic lack of (usually motorised) transport that generates difficulties in moving, often (but not always) connected to a lack of services or infrastructures".

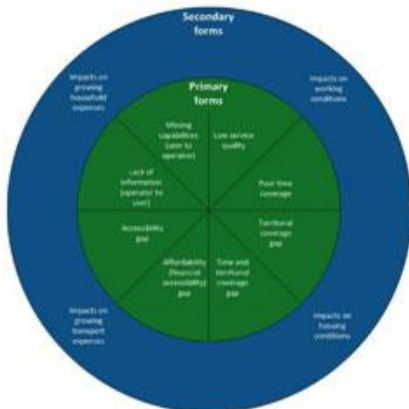
Mobility poverty sits within the broader concept of transport poverty, which identifies a research/policy field and encompasses the following sub-concepts: mobility poverty, accessibility poverty, transport affordability and exposure to transport externalities.

It is the recent approach on levels of accessibility to the public transport systems and services and how this is related to factors like pricing and coverage.

Mobility poverty refers to a systemic lack of transport and mobility options. However, huge amounts of public funding are spent on mostly car-based infrastructure. Unfortunately this tends to benefit the wealthier car-owning segment of the population over the poor who cannot afford a car. Mobility problems are thus often the result of poverty, and at the same time the problems are compounded by transport planning decisions.

Mobility poverty appears in primary and secondary forms. While the primary form describes the lack of services and infrastructures (low service quality, poor time and territorial coverage, affordability and accessibility gap, lack of information, etc.), the secondary form specifies the impact deriving from poor mobility offers like e.g. the limited access to the labour market or increased household and mobility expenses, that subsequently lead to strong inequalities.

[Further reading](#) on various examples of primary and secondary mobility poverty can be found [here](#).



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Mobility Platforms Increase the Chances of Finding a Job



© WIMOOV

In France, when travel difficulties hinder access to employment, **associations propose actions to improve the mobility capacities of people** facing these difficulties. More than a hundred 'mobility platforms' are organising and coordinating these actions at the local level.

This service is mainly aimed at people who are facing significant social and professional difficulties. They are usually referred to the platform by a social worker or employment service counsellor.

In practice, a platform lists all existing public transport offers and mobility services. Professionals teach beneficiaries to make better use of public transport. When the required service level of public transport is insufficient or lacking, the platforms rely on associations



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that organise solidarity carpooling. Finally, if no other solution is possible, some platforms offer loans of scooters or cars. Sometimes access to micro-credit allows the individual to purchase a vehicle.

Wimoov (in French) is an example of a platform whose activities were extended to the entire national territory. Another example, among many others, is the **Plate-forme Emploi** (in French) based in the Southern Auvergne Rhône Alpes region.

Programme to Support the Reduction of Public Transport Fares in Portugal



© Instituto da Mobilidade e dos Transportes

Portugal has recently approved the Programme to Support the Reduction of Public Transport Fares (**PART** - website in Portuguese), an initiative aiming to combat negative impacts of mobility, such as social exclusion (along with congestion, greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution, noise, and energy consumption).

Following the economic crisis, there was a shortage of financing the public transport system, which led to fares that increased social exclusion, especially in metropolitan areas where the greatest inequalities were observed.

Thus, PART intends to be a tool of territorial and social cohesion, comprising a financing model that guarantees equity between the Metropolitan Areas of Lisbon and Oporto and the rest of the national territory. Aiming to attract passengers to public transport, PART supports transport authorities in operating a balanced fare model, within the framework of their competences.

The distribution of funding over the metropolitan areas (Lisbon and Oporto) and inter municipal communities, takes into account public transport passenger volumes, service levels and system complexity.

Access to PART financing is subject to a minimum contribution from the inter-municipal communities or the metropolitan areas that in 2019 corresponds to 2.5 percent of the total financing amount.

The following actions are eligible for funding within the scope of this initiative:

- a) Support for the reduction of fares across all users;
- b) Support for fare reductions or free passes for specific target groups;
- c) Support for 'family passes';
- d) Support for fare changes resulting from the redesign of transport networks and the modification of fare systems.

The **Institute for Mobility and Transport** monitors PART and will present a national report assessing its impact on the national public transport and mobility system by spring 2020.

Transport of Social Utility Provides Mobility to Impoverished People in France



© Les Retz'Chauffeurs

When individual or collective transport is non-existent or inaccessible, associations offer a rescue solution called 'transport of social utility' (TSU).

The **service is intended for people with limited access to public or private transport**.

This scheme is organised by associations or public local authorities and brings together volunteer drivers. When an applicant requests transport, the association identifies a volunteer driver who can accompany and support the applicant. The driver may be compensated for the travel on the basis of a fare.

One of the many local initiatives is **The Retz'Chauffeurs** (In French) that provides TSU services in the urban area of Pornic-Pays de Retz (55,000 inhabitants, spread over 14 municipalities).

The Netherlands Researching Indicators to Map the Risks on Mobility Poverty



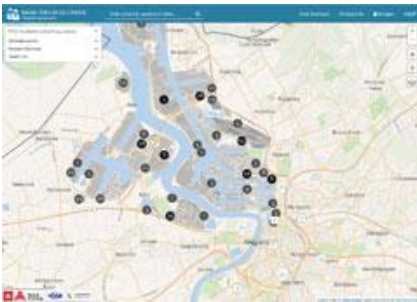
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Statistics Netherlands (CBS), the national statistical bureau, has developed a **new indicator marking the risk of mobility poverty**. Astrid Kampert, statistical researcher, explains:

“Before a lot of the research on mobility poverty was done in a qualitative fashion and solely focussed on a specific region. The CBS, with data from the entire Dutch territory, both on an individual and household level, has allowed the researchers to plot the risk of mobility poverty on a neighbourhood level. Six characteristics make up this indicator: income, vehicle ownership, distance to public transport, distance to public services, physical or mental disability and age. Second, a geo-visualisation was plotted of the risk of mobility poverty for the cities of Heerlen and Utrecht, allowing mobility poverty to be highlighted on a neighbourhood level.”

The developed indicator is a first trial and is laying foundations for further refinement and the use of additional information sources. CBS is launching an open call to all parties and cities, to enhance and enrich this indicator, discussed in [Risico op vervoersarmoede](#) (in Dutch).

Development of Digital Tools for Mapping Jobs and Their Mobility Options in Belgium



© naarjobsindehaven.be, Nazka Maps

Access to jobs is one of the main indicators of secondary mobility poverty. Improving access to employment is one of the **main challenges of policy makers in overcoming mobility poverty**.

In Belgium a pilot digital mapping tool was developed to bring together the job openings and the different mobility options in reaching those jobs in the Antwerp port area. The tool called [naarjobsindehaven.be](#) can be translated as “**towards jobs in the port**”.

This large and sprawled industrial area is one of Flanders’ main employment sites, with a constant pool of low and medium skilled jobs on offer. Suitable candidates for these jobs mostly encounter some kind of mobility poverty, since the transport options in this area are very diverse and linked to the specific location of each workplace. By intelligently bringing together the range of job openings and the numerous transport options under one roof, this map and tool is very useful for the employment agency (VDAB) and other parties.

Convinced of the success, the project partners designed a follow-up project called ‘[Naarjobs.be](#)’ (full website in Dutch online by June ’19) to spread out this practice throughout the whole Flanders region. This project received funding from the [Smart Mobility Belgium](#) fund launched by the Federal Government, enabling the further development of this successful tool.

Three European Projects on Mobility Poverty in Progress



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Mobility poverty and its sticky societal consequences require a proper paradigm shift, across the board, in the approach to mobility systems, planning and policy making. Step by step, progress has been made in the past few years with several pioneering projects piloting and researching mobility poverty in its different forms. Currently, **three European projects are ongoing in the mobility poverty field**: Horizon 2020 [HiREACH](#) & [Inclusion](#) and the [SMARTA](#) project (smart rural transport areas). Each has its specific focus and emphasis in the broad mobility poverty field. SMARTA is focussing on finding the connections between sustainable shared mobility and public transport in rural areas, while Inclusion works on the accessibility and inclusiveness of transport solutions in remote urban and rural areas. HiREACH works on innovative mobility solutions to cope with [transport poverty](#).

Conclusion:

From academic research to innovative examples showcased above, mobility poverty is finally stepping out of the shadows. There do remain challenges such as: the new barriers, the increasingly technology-driven mobility system is creating, the disproportional presence of solely urban area-focused solution thinking and the big question of coping with the mobility of an ever-aging population.

The challenge remains pushing and aiming for the inclusiveness of all these technological advancements.

We should continue to strive to make mobility poverty really an overarching point of attention in all policy fields. We should definitely try to avoid the trap of considering mobility poverty as only a ‘nice to have’-topic on the side with only small-scale local initiatives launched as small

drops in the big ocean. It is about time to embed mobility poverty both policy-wise and financially in the broader picture, by putting money where the mouth is. If we want to evolve from our twentieth century car-focused mobility thinking into the modern human-centered mobility system, we so desire, properly dealing with mobility poverty should be on top of our priority list.

Upcoming events

- **International Transport Forum Summit**
23-24 May | Leipzig, Germany
<http://2019.itf-oecd.org/>
- **EPSO Annual Conference**
23-24 May | Livorno, Italy
<https://www.espo.be/events>
- **UITP Global Public transport Summit**
10-12 June | Stockholm, Sweden
<https://uitpsummit.org/>
- **SUMP Conference**
17-18 June | Groningen, The Netherlands
<http://www.eltis.org/participate/...>
- **Velo-city**
25-28 June | Dublin, Ireland
<https://www.velo-city2019.com/>
- **CIVITAS Forum**
2-4 October | Graz, Austria
<https://civitas.eu/forum2019>
- **Walk21**
7-11 October | Rotterdam, The Netherlands
<https://www.walk21.com/rotterdam>

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

