

Dear reader,

Mobility management has a major role to play in achieving a positive effect on well-being and happiness. According to research, citizens are happier where public space is reclaimed or redistributed to slow traffic, and space is created that invites and encourages social contact and active mobility. Such innovations at neighbourhood level act as growth poles for local development and function as important nodes within the larger urban environment.

With this e-update, EPOMM throws a spotlight on the topic of well-being and happiness, and how these can be achieved by taking mobility management into account.



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Happiness, well-being and sustainable mobility for a better life

Happiness is a mental or emotional state of well-being defined by positive or pleasant emotions ranging from contentment to intense joy.

To recognise the relevance of happiness and well-being as universal goals, the United Nations declared 20 March the [International Day of Happiness](#).

People-oriented transport and mobility include both new ways to translate people's needs into more active mobility solutions, as well as new ways to deliver those solutions. Despite the enormous diversity of cultural backgrounds, demographic trends, economic potential and social conditions, **neighbourhoods and urban districts are an appropriate benchmark for piloting mobility innovations addressing some common issues of sustainable urban mobility**. These issues include improving access to mobility services, healthcare, education, jobs and enterprise, as well as a sustainable way of life. Behaviours, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions caused by mobility, noise reduction, increased use of alternative fuel vehicles, public transport and safety issues. In addition, new uses of public space for different mobility users could be developed and tested at neighbourhood level.



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Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans and quality of life

The positive effects of sustainable mobility policies go well beyond environmental and monetary benefits. At the very centre of a [Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan](#) (SUMP) is the idea of quality of life. This includes the level of happiness experienced by citizens, their sense of community and connectedness to other people, their physical health and their mental well-being. **Sustainable mobility can make a large contribution to a happy city with healthy citizens**. It also helps to create vibrant public spaces where people can meet and local economy can thrive. **Health and well-being inequalities in transport are an outcome of car-based transport planning**.

Taking due consideration of health and well-being among transport objectives should therefore steer decision makers to select measures that have a population-wide impact, encourage physical activity, greater social inclusion and well-being. Here we are in the heart of mobility management with measures that focus on active travel, accessibility, parking management and sustainable land-use planning.

On the relationship between mobility, health and well-being there is a **consensus on the future policy agenda**. This topic therefore is explicitly featured in the forthcoming 'SUMP 2.0'.



© *Cycling Without Age*

Feel the wind blow through the hair again

In 2012, **Ole Kassow** had an idea about bringing elderly people back on their bicycles. An important obstacle he had to overcome was their limited mobility. The answer was found in a trishaw, a human powered cycle rickshaw. With this two-passenger bike, he started offering rides to the residents of a local nursing home. This gave birth to the **Cycling Without Age** initiative as a **social enterprise**. The organisation's purpose is to offer recreational mobility to **seniors** in the form of volunteer-piloted **trishaw** rides.

It did not take long to develop the initiative, and several spin-offs have been launched throughout the world, with the goal of increasing the well-being of residents and their connection to the wider community.

To '**break down the age boundaries and bring back the pure joy and childhood memories of cycling**' can be seen as the overall mission of the initiative.

Several European countries currently run a Cycling Without Age initiative: **Austria, Belgium, Denmark, England, Finland France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Scotland, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden** and **Switzerland**.



© *Fietsschool Antwerpen*

You're never too old to start something new

The happiness associated with cycling with kids **is a primary intrinsic motivator** for adults [LVK1] to eventually take the step towards learning to cycle themselves.

Teaching adults to cycle is a highly valuable activity from numerous perspectives, especially from a well-being point of view. Learning to cycle is a great facilitator for overcoming societal challenges faced by migrant groups in particular (learning the language, getting to know people, breaking social isolation...). And learning to cycle also has great emancipatory function to fulfil. Learning to cycle also boosts self-confidence, independence and resilience.

The adult cycling schools are a common practice in Belgian cities, such as **Leuven, Antwerp, Brussels**. But also other European countries are experimenting with concepts to teach adults cycling, such as the UK (**Devon Cycling Training**), Germany (**Bremen Fahrradschule, Radfahrerschule in Berlin**) and France (**Velo-école de Montreuil**).



© *Good Move, Brussels Capital region*

Well-being and health in the centre of mobility plans

In April 2019, the Brussels-Capital Region has ratified a proposal for a **new regional SUMP**. The '**Good Move**' framework sets out the guidelines (**Dutch and French**) for the mobility strategies being ratified between now and 2030. The ambition of Good Move is to support and accompany the 19 municipalities of the region to implement a set of concerted and coherent actions in the context of their local mobility plans.

The programme's mission is to **improve the quality of life in the neighbourhoods by reducing traffic and offering high-quality public spaces**. Especially the dimension of health, one of seven of this framework, is interesting to highlight in this e-update's context, since it stands for promoting mobility that has a positive impact on physical and mental health.

Including health measures into the objectives of the SUMP is an encouraging trend we notice in various member states and cities. For example, the **Viennese SUMP (Step2025)** includes a strong public health target: 'The proportion of the Vienna population that undertakes 30 minutes of physical activity as part of their daily travel will increase from 23 percent in 2013 to 30 percent in 2025'.



© Maria Garz, Grünau bewegt sich

Research to boost children's health in Germany

Children's health promotion and obesity prevention are the focus of the research project **GRÜNAU BEWEGT sich** (in German). The project's goal is to **sustainably improve developmental opportunities for children through health-promoting changes** in children's lifestyles and within their communities.

Together with children, parents and local partners, district-specific interventions to promote children's health are being implemented. This goes hand in hand with the broader goal of creating a **'movement city plan'** with the aim of an improved use of existing leisure and recreational opportunities (such as sports facilities, green spaces and playgrounds).

The knitting together of **promoting activity from a health and sustainable mobility perspective** is something which has been carried out in several (inter)national campaigns, including, for example, the **Traffic Snake game**. The promotion of children's transport autonomy is therefore hitting more than one bird with a stone and maybe even three: health, happiness and sustainability.



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Conclusion: Planning for people's well-being!

Our society faces major challenges in the areas of climate, energy, security, congestion and accessibility. Providing the right choices and making the right decisions can address key mobility challenges as people in their neighbourhoods become happier and healthier. However, making the right choices implies behavioural changes that are often difficult for humans. To facilitate these decisions, it is important to **engage people and make sure that people are better off with new solutions**.

One of the main drivers of well-being is physical social connections. Physical meetings are crucial to improve social interactions, while virtual social networks do not seem to have the same positive effects on well-being.

We need a cross-sectoral policy approach with a central role for mobility management in order to bring about happy, healthy and sustainable cities.

Upcoming events

- **Cycle education – get on your bikes**
10-11 September | Lund, Sweden & Copenhagen, Denmark
16-17 October | Utrecht & Amsterdam, The Netherlands
<https://learning.climate-kic.org/...>
- **CIVITAS Forum Conference 2019**
2-4 October | Graz, Austria
<https://civitas.eu/forum2019>
- **Walk21 Conference**
7-11 October | Rotterdam, The Netherlands
<https://www.walk21.com/rotterdam>
- **ITS World Congress**
21-25 October | Singapore, Singapore
<http://www.eltis.org/...>
- **Smart City World Expo Congress**
19-21 November | Barcelona, Spain
<https://cities4people.eu/...>
- **Polis Annual Conference**
27-28 November | Brussels, Belgium
<https://www.polisnetwork.eu/2019conference>

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