COVER STORY
Making company mobility management a reality
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Many cities use mobility management strategies to deal with transport problems, however to do so effectively they need to get companies on board. Mobility management has various impacts, such as improving the travel options available; providing incentives for users to change the frequency, mode, destination, route or timing of their travel; or simply reducing the need for physical travel through mobility substitutes or more efficient land use.

Companies and organisations have reaped the rewards of using mobility management, with reductions of 25 percent in single-car commuting reported in some cities in the UK. There is no reason why CIVITAS cities cannot emulate this success, as several already boast best practice examples. The key conclusion of the recent CIVITAS training event on company travel planning in Széntendrét, Hungary, is that organisations will only pursue mobility management if there is something in it for them.

Walking and cycling improvements support transit and are critical to reducing per-capita motor vehicle trips.

Experts are invited to exchange experiences and contact their peers through a mobility management themed discussion group. To do so, contact Ivo Cré (ICre@polis-online.org).

For more information, contact Tom Rye (T.Rye@napier.ac.uk).
CITY NEWS

Bus drivers improve driving style in Tallinn

The Estonian capital has launched an ambitious eco-driving behavioural change initiative for bus drivers in the city, and has also equipped buses with various sensors.

Tallinn has introduced 100 new buses, however, many drivers haven’t adapted their driving style according to the capabilities of the new engine technology. Efficient driving behaviour can directly reduce fuel consumption, maintenance costs and pollution, as well as improve the quality of the public transport service.

The eco-driving training is carried out during regular route service, making it both challenging and effective. Tallinn bus company TAK has also equipped 10 buses with equipment to monitor the drivers’ performance and analyse data from the sensors on the vehicles.

The sensors measure hard acceleration, hard braking, high curve speed and fuel consumption. Furthermore, the status of the vehicle and all event symbols are displayed on a map in the city office. It is also possible to monitor a selected driver in real-time via GPS.

For more information, contact Anu Leisner [anu.leisner@tallinnlv.ee]. Tallinn is a member of the CIVITAS MIMOSA consortium.

Biodiesel bus fleet in Coimbra

The city of Coimbra, Portugal, began a biodiesel bus trial in February on four public buses. It is an important step toward wider use of biodiesel for public buses.

The city aims to have four buses running on 30 percent biofuels by the end of the trial. The local transport company is running the tests, which, if successful, will lead to a gradual increase in the quantity of biodiesel used. The trial started with 10 percent biodiesel use and will increase by 10 percent in each phase in order to reach the maximum level by the end of 2012.

The maximum level achieved will depend on engine maintenance and efficiency, as well as environmental and economic considerations. The city’s goal is to implement at least 30 percent of biodiesel in the fuel mix used by the bus fleet.

This means a substitution of 900,000 litres of mineral diesel fuel per year with biodiesel. It would be an impressive achievement given the hilly topography of Coimbra, which means the bus fleet needs powerful engines to deal with the terrain on a daily basis.

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For more information, contact Margarida Redinha [Margaridaredinha@itap-net.org]. Coimbra is a member of the CIVITAS MODERN consortium.

Virtual maps guide cyclists in Ústí nad Labem

Ústí nad Labem, Czech Republic, has launched a cycle web portal as part of its CIVITAS activities. The portal is currently available as a trial version.

Citizens have been asked to give feedback to determine where improvements can be made before the final version is released. It provides information about cycling opportunities, services and popular tourist areas in the Ústí region. It also includes interactive maps of cycle routes, giving information on the characteristics of each route and warnings about narrow sections and steep hills.

In addition, the portal shows suitable routes for in-line skating; road, track and mountain bikes; and videos that give users a taste of what the routes look like.

The site also has information on technical equipment such as cycle stands, rest areas and services with a corresponding photo gallery, and interesting locations in the area. All this is presented with descriptive text and pictures from the locality. The website is available at: http://cyklomapa.usti-nl.cz.

For more information, contact Katerina Oktabcova [katerina.oktabcova@mag-ul.cz]. Ústí nad Labem is a member of the CIVITAS ARCHIMEDES consortium.

EU NEWS

White paper lays foundation for sustainable transport system

The European Commission has published its new White Paper on Transport, providing a roadmap of 40 initiatives for the next decade to build a competitive and resource-efficient transport system.

Under the title “Transport 2050 - Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area”, the paper outlines how Europe can increase its level of mobility, boost the economy and create new jobs. In parallel, the comprehensive strategy will reduce Europe’s dependence on oil imports and significantly decrease carbon emissions from the transport sector. Collectively, the proposed steps will contribute to a 60 percent cut in Europe’s transport emissions by 2050.

European Commission Vice-President Siim Kallas, responsible for transport, says, “Transport 2050 is a roadmap for a competitive transport sector that increases mobility and cuts emissions. We can and we must do both.” He went on to say that, “curbing mobility is not an option; neither is business as usual. We can break the transport system’s dependence on oil without sacrificing its efficiency and compromising mobility. It can be win–win.”

For more information, visit http://ec.europa.eu/transport/strategies.

ELTIS sustainable mobility web portal revamped

The European Commission recently unveiled the redesigned ELTIS web portal, which is now available in 11 languages.

The portal serves as the European platform for the exchange of information and good practice in the field of sustainable urban mobility.

ELTIS offers its users the opportunity to upload their own news stories, case studies and events and to share these with fellow professionals.

For more information, visit http://www.eltis.org.
Gates the key to traffic control in Perugia

Despite the successful implementation of a limited traffic zone in the historical centre of Perugia, Italy, the city still faces environmental challenges.

To increase the effectiveness of the limited traffic zone, Perugia installed automatic gates in various locations in the centre in 2002. However, the system did not cover all the entry points, and users were able to bypass the gates, thus creating potential security problems.

With the help of CIVITAS, Perugia has installed a new electronic gate, as part of a more ambitious plan to introduce a total of 10 gates in the most suitable parts of the zone. The strategy aims to improve the citizens’ quality of life and reduce traffic levels, pollution and energy consumption.

After the new gates are installed, the monitoring centre and existing software will be upgraded to monitor the traffic flow and calculate the length the vehicles’ stay, thus establishing a basis for a potential road pricing system. In addition, the gates can be used to control who enters and exits the zone, allowing officials to gather information on criminal activities.

For more information, contact Lucia Cristea [lucia.cristea@eiproject.eu].

Perugia is a member of the CIVITAS RENAISSANCE consortium.

Making Iasi accessible for all

Iasi, Romania, is making public transport more accessible for disabled people, starting with the bus fleet. The city is introducing measures, that are the first of their kind in the region.

At the beginning of 2011, ten minibuses were equipped with special mechanisms for physically disabled persons. Electro-hydraulic lifting platforms suitable for wheelchair users were attached to each minibus. The lifting platform has a linear movement, 350kg weight lifting capacity, is completely automatic, and can be adapted to a wide range of vehicles.

When a disabled person wants to use the vehicle, the driver simply uses a remote control to deploy the equipment and the users can then wheel themselves into the back of the bus. The public transport operator plans to further improve its fleet by equipping buses with automatic platforms.

Iasi began its accessibility scheme in 2009, when audible warning equipment was installed in 20 signalised intersections along the CIVITAS corridor. In 2010, 50 stations and bus stops were built to provide easy access to public transport for people with disabilities.

For more information, contact Ninel Vlaicu Berneaga [ninel.berneaga@gmail.com]. Iasi is a member of the CIVITAS ARCHIMEDES consortium.

Seniors voice their opinions in Zagreb

Senior citizens have become an important public transport user group and the Croatian capital has engaged in a stakeholder consultation process to ensure their needs are met.

The process is one of the building blocks of CIVITAS, and gives citizens a say in the development of policies. To this end, CIVITAS representatives visited a senior citizens’ home in February and discussed the group’s public transport habits.

Seniors highlighted several problems, including accessibility problems for pedestrians in wheelchairs due to cars parked in their way and a lack of ramps in many places. They also remarked on problems with the accuracy of travel information and access to trams and buses. They did express their satisfaction with the recently introduced low floor trams.

The senior citizens’ comments and recommendations will be passed on to the relevant officials. CIVITAS will also incorporate them in a leaflet entitled “How to use public transport and be safe”. Zagreb is organising a series of activities to improve the safety of seniors when using public transport and to encourage them to be fit and mobile.

For more information, contact Lidija Pavic-Rogosic [lidija@odraz.hr]. Zagreb is a member of the CIVITAS ELAN consortium.

Networks break down virtual language barriers

CIVINET has launched enhanced web facilities for members of the five CIVITAS National Networks. The additional features went online at the start of March 2011 in the members-only area.

The section allows members to access relevant sustainable mobility information in their own languages – English, Italian, Spanish, French and Slovenian. Some cities have felt distanced from the CIVITAS Initiative due to language and contextual barriers. However, the improved web facilities connect these cities and municipalities to CIVITAS, bringing the initiative’s approach to sustainable mobility to their “virtual doorstep”.

Each national network provides members with up-to-date information from network events and technical guidance in the national language of the network. Members can download information such as newsletters, background documents, promotional material, translated documents and much more.

A forum has also been created to allow members to exchange information, ideas and experiences, or to find partners to work with. Members can also attend regular events run by each network and download the material from previous events.

For more information, visit http://www.civitas.eu/civinet or contact civinet@civitas.eu.
Vitoria – Gasteiz, Spain

Vitoria – Gasteiz, Spain, is the capital of the autonomous community of the Basque Country and won the CIVITAS Award for public participation in autumn 2010.

The award recognised the city’s efforts to involve citizens and other stakeholders during the planning, implementation or evaluation of initiatives. It is also helping Vitoria-Gasteiz to introduce several measures as part of its Sustainable Mobility and Public Space Plan.

The plan, which was initiated in 2006, analyses the current mobility model in the city and develops proposals for the future to resolve the problems detected. The final product will be an integrated proposal for different mobility networks in private vehicles, and public transport, by bicycle or on foot, and their interconnections. CIVITAS helps the city implement these proposals in order to verify the theoretical model established in the Sustainable Mobility Plan.

Vitoria – Gasteiz is noted for balancing new development with environmental concerns and social initiatives. The city won the title of European Green Capital for 2012, beating a number of high profile cities.

For more information, contact Juan Carlos Escudero Achiaga [jcescudero@vitoria-gasteiz.org]. Vitoria – Gasteiz is a member of the CIVITAS MODERN consortium.

Mobile Graz puts its citizens first

The city of Graz, Austria, is introducing strategies to make the concept of soft mobility a reality. Soft mobility involves promoting walking, cycling and the use of public transport as forms of sustainable, eco-friendly, socially acceptable and safe means of transport.

In Graz this has been achieved by improving green areas, pedestrian zones and bicycle traffic. The Green Network, which covers 550 kilometres, connects these green areas and links residential areas with parks, playgrounds and woods on the periphery. The historic city centre and outskirts on the right bank of the river form a continuous pedestrian zone where, in certain locations, only bikes are allowed to cross.

Together with Graz, other CIVITAS CATALIST partners such as Bremen, Bristol, Kaunas, Krakow, Nantes, Rotterdam and Toulouse are promoting their successful experiences of soft measures and demonstrating how changing transport policies can give space back to the people.

For more information, visit http://www.civitas.eu/network and click on Thematic Groups.

EVENTS

Workshop on integrated planning

A CIVITAS training workshop plans to provide participants with a thorough understanding of integrated planning as a means to better manage transport in cities.

The workshop will take place from 26-27 May 2011, in Bucharest, Romania. Using real life experiences, presenters will substantiate the need for integrated planning, providing insights into the planning and operational process, and presenting the tools currently available.

For more information, visit http://www.civitas.eu/events or contact [training@civitas.eu].

Spotlight on clean vehicles and fuels

Donostia-San Sebastián, Spain, will play host to Clean Fuels, Clean Vehicles, Clean City, a conference on the practical deployment of clean vehicles and fuels strategies in cities.

The conference is complemented by two training workshops and takes place from 15-16 June 2011. The first workshop will focus on how to establish policies and implement measures concerning electric vehicles, biofuels and used cooking oil collection in tourist regions.

The second will give participants an insight into clean vehicle procurement and tools for public authorities.

For more information, visit http://www.civitas.eu/events or contact [training@civitas.eu].