

Policy brief: Demand management strategies

Statement of Issue

Demand management strategies can reduce traffic through a variety of economic incentives, regulatory measures, and modern communication technologies.

CIVITAS cities experiment with a range of demand management measures to learn about the merit of different initiatives and share lessons learned. These include access restrictions, road pricing, parking policies, and marketing campaigns.



Pricing strategies can work as powerful incentives to get people to try modes of transport and make the private car a less appealing choice.

Some of the incentives cities are testing include special parking tariffs for low-emission vehicles, financial rewards for avoiding peak times, and a “mobility credits” scheme that attaches a financial value to saving or exceeding emissions.

Policy options from the CIVITAS 2020 project PUSH and PULL

Parking management and incentives as successful and proven strategies for energy-efficient urban transport

The project, which lasted from March 2014 to February 2017, aimed to improve urban mobility by means of parking space management combined with mobility management (MM) measures. By introducing paid parking, increasing parking fees, reducing or limiting parking supply, or implementing comparable measures, car drivers were pushed to use more sustainable transport. At the same time, (parts of) the income generated from parking space management were used for incentives to promote alternative modes, thus pulling or attracting users towards public transport, walking, cycling, and other sustainable modes. This served as the ‘core funding mechanism’.

The project was implemented in eight cities/locations: each introduced measures related to parking space management and mobility management. In seven locations, the core-funding mechanism to use money gained from parking to finance mobility management.¹

¹ <http://www.push-pull-parking.eu>

‘16 Good reasons for parking management’

The brochure² on the 16 Good reasons for parking management was designed to strengthen the position of politicians, decision-makers, and journalists in the process of taking what may be, at first glance, unpopular, but in fact rational and sustainable decisions to manage parking.

The arguments are developed in the form of facts and figures with a picture/diagram and an explanatory text that is easy to follow and quickly summarises key issues. For more complex issues, links to more detailed descriptions are given. The 16 arguments are as follows:

1. Parking management is key to managing urban mobility.
2. Public space has a high value and therefore parking there should be paid for.
3. Parking management contributes to a better modal choice and thus quality of life.
4. Parking management leads to less traffic searching for parking!
5. Parking management has a good impact – acceptance ratio!
6. People usually moan before new parking management is introduced but initial opposition turns to support when they realize the impacts!
7. Parking management protects European historic cities from the invasion of parked cars.
8. Parking management will not kill your high street - it will support the local economy.
9. User-friendly parking areas within walking distance of key locations is acceptable!
10. Parking management won't stop companies investing in your city!
11. Guaranteed parking spaces at workplaces influence modal choice significantly.
12. Parking management contributes to road safety!
13. Enforcement of parking violations is necessary – and not harassment of car users.
14. Parking standards can have a positive impact on housing and other real estate projects.
15. Correct rates, prices and appropriate fines are key to the success of parking management.
16. Parking management can raise municipal revenue that can be used to encourage sustainable mobility!

² <http://www.push-pull-parking.eu/index.php?id=15>

Policy recommendations

EU Guidelines on non-binding guidelines on urban vehicle access regulations

The European Commission published a study³ on Urban Vehicle Access Regulations (UVAR) that aims to assist policy makers in their implementation.

UVARs are measures that regulate vehicular access to urban infrastructure. Examples include congestion charging, low-emission zones (LEZ), and restrictions on certain types of vehicles.

A proliferation in the ways in which they are implemented has led to a fragmentation of UVAR schemes across Europe. With this comes the risk that possible benefits relating to economies of scale will be limited, whilst achieving Europe-wide compliance with UVAR standards also becomes more difficult.

To create a more common approach amongst cities and Member States to issues such as vehicle categories, enforcement, exemptions, pricing, and information provision, six non-binding guidance documents (NBDGs) have been composed. They form the core of the study. The topics they explore are:

- Information and communication;
- Vehicle types, exemptions, and (cross-border) enforcement;
- Planning, consultation, and design;
- National legal frameworks;
- Evaluation and assessment;
- Technology options and interoperability.

A set of recommendations based upon the NBDGs has been developed for cities considering the introduction of a UVAR scheme. Examples include:

- UVARs should be integrated into a larger transport and mobility plan. A local or regional Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) serves as the ideal vehicle for them. UVARs aid the promotion of sustainable mobility measures and compliance with air quality legislation, both key SUMP goals.
- Local authorities could consider exempting cars running on zero-emission devices from LEZ access limitations, such as battery-electric and fuel cell-electric vehicles.
- In areas such as air pollution and CO₂ emissions, national legislation should be clearly linked to EU and national policy goals. Legislation should also guide cities on how they can establish sustainable mobility alternatives.

³ https://ec.europa.eu/transport/sites/transport/files/uvar_final_report_august_28.pdf