



CiViTAS
Cleaner and better transport in cities

ARCHIMEDES

AALBORG • BRIGHTON & HOVE • DONOSTIA-SAN SEBASTIÁN • IASI • MONZA • ÚSTÍ NAD LABEM

Donostia – San Sebastian

T 23.2 – Paid parking in business areas
in Donostia – San Sebastian

Donostia – San Sebastian

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background CIVITAS

CIVITAS - cleaner and better transport in cities - stands for City-VITALity-Sustainability. With the CIVITAS Initiative, the EC aims to generate a decisive breakthrough by supporting and evaluating the implementation of ambitious integrated sustainable urban transport strategies that should make a real difference for the welfare of the European citizen.

CIVITAS I started in early 2002 (within the 5th Framework Research Programme);
CIVITAS II started in early 2005 (within the 6th Framework Research Programme) and
CIVITAS PLUS started in late 2008 (within the 7th Framework Research Programme).

The objective of CIVITAS-Plus is to test and increase the understanding of the frameworks, processes and packaging required to successfully introduce bold, integrated and innovative strategies for clean and sustainable urban transport that address concerns related to energy-efficiency, transport policy and road safety, alternative fuels and the environment.

Within CIVITAS I (2002-2006) there were 19 cities clustered in 4 demonstration projects, within CIVITAS II (2005-2009) 17 cities in 4 demonstration projects, whilst within CIVITAS PLUS (2008-2012) 25 cities in 5 demonstration projects are taking part. These demonstration cities all over Europe are funded by the European Commission.

Objectives:

- to promote and implement sustainable, clean and (energy) efficient urban transport measures
- to implement integrated packages of technology and policy measures in the field of energy and transport in 8 categories of measures
- to build up critical mass and markets for innovation

Horizontal projects support the CIVITAS demonstration projects & cities by :

- Cross-site evaluation and Europe wide dissemination in co-operation with the demonstration projects
- The organisation of the annual meeting of CIVITAS Forum members
- Providing the Secretariat for the Political Advisory Committee (PAC)
- Development of policy recommendations for a long-term multiplier effect of CIVITAS

Key elements of CIVITAS

- CIVITAS is co-ordinated by cities: it is a programme “of cities for cities”
- Cities are in the heart of local public private partnerships
- Political commitment is a basic requirement
- Cities are living ‘Laboratories’ for learning and evaluating

1.2 Background ARCHIMEDES

ARCHIMEDES is an integrating project, bringing together 6 European cities to address problems and opportunities for creating environmentally sustainable, safe and energy efficient transport systems in medium sized urban areas.

The objective of ARCHIMEDES is to introduce innovative, integrated and ambitious strategies for clean, energy-efficient, sustainable urban transport to achieve significant impacts in the policy fields of energy, transport, and environmental sustainability. An ambitious blend of policy tools and measures will increase energy-efficiency in transport, provide safer and more convenient travel for all, using a higher share of clean engine technology and fuels, resulting in an enhanced urban environment (including reduced noise and air pollution). Visible and measurable impacts will result from significantly sized measures in specific innovation areas. Demonstrations of innovative transport technologies, policy measures and partnership working, combined with targeted research, will verify the best frameworks, processes and packaging required to successfully transfer the strategies to other cities.

1.3 Participant Cities

The ARCHIMEDES project focuses on activities in specific innovation areas of each city, known as the ARCHIMEDES corridor or zone (depending on shape and geography). These innovation areas extend to the peri-urban fringe and the administrative boundaries of regional authorities and neighbouring administrations.

The two Learning cities, to which experience and best-practice will be transferred, are Monza (Italy) and Ústí nad Labem (Czech Republic). The strategy for the project is to ensure that the tools and measures developed have the widest application throughout Europe, tested via the Learning Cities' activities and interaction with the Lead City partners.

1.3.1 Leading City Innovation Areas

The four Leading cities in the ARCHIMEDES project are:

- Aalborg (Denmark);
- Brighton & Hove (UK);
- Donostia-San Sebastián (Spain); and
- Iasi (Romania).

Together the Lead Cities in ARCHIMEDES cover different geographic parts of Europe. They have the full support of the relevant political representatives for the project, and are well able to implement the innovative range of demonstration activities.

The Lead Cities are joined in their local projects by a small number of key partners that show a high level of commitment to the project objectives of energy-efficient urban transportation. In all cases the public transport company features as a partner in the proposed project.

2. Donostia – San Sebastian

The city of Donostia -San Sebastián overlooks the sea and, with a bit more than 180,000 inhabitants, keeps a human scale. Some people consider the balanced combination of small mountains, manor buildings, and sea as the setting for one of the most beautiful cities in the world. We have a tradition in favouring pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.

For about twenty years, the city has been enforcing a strong integrated policy in favour of pedestrians, bicycles and public transport. Consideration of walking and cycling as modes of transport has led to the building of a non-motorised transport network for promoting this type of mobility around the city.

Likewise, the city has extended its network of bus lanes. The city holds one of the higher bus - riding rates, with around 150 trips per person per year.

2.1 Objectives in CIVITAS

The CIVITAS project is a perfect opportunity to expand our Sustainable Urban Transport Strategy. With the package of CIVITAS measures Donostia-San Sebastián wants to:

- Increase the number of public transport users
- Decrease the number of cars entering in the city centre
- Increase the use of the bicycle as a normal mode of transport
- Maintain the high modal share of walking
- Reduce the number of fatal accidents and accidents with heavy injuries
- Reduce the use of fossil fuels in public transport.

3. Background to the Deliverable

This deliverable refers to ARCHIMEDES Measure number 23, Changing Parking Behaviour in Donostia - San Sebastián. This measure has formed part of ARCHIMEDES task 3.6 'Business Parking Charges'.

According to figures provided by the survey of mobility of the Basque government (2007), work is the main reason for traveling with 30.6% in the Basque Country, increasing to 35.8% if we focus on the province of Gipuzkoa where Donostia – San Sebastian is located. The modal split of this type of mobility is based primarily on the private car, 60.1%. The study conducted in measure 33 with workplace travel plans, reveals that numbers are even more conclusive when only business areas are considered ranging from 80 to 90%.

The numbers are compelling enough to imply the need to initiate some type of intervention in these journeys because of the impact which is caused to society in general and in terms of quality of life and to the traffic of the city in particular.

In spite of the figures shown above and the efforts made to initiate a way to foster a dialogue between different participants leading to a more sustainable travel culture in business areas, political and social barriers did not help us to overcome the difficulties and meet the objectives of the measure.

Unfortunately, this document is an example of a measure that failed to be implemented successfully, but should serve to consider all the barriers we have found during the implementation process in order to anticipate ways to overcome them and lessons learned as a result of the problems.

3.1 Summary Description of the Task

Task 3.6 was initially defined to promote two main activities in business areas surrounding Donostia – San Sebastian. The first activity was related to start a “soft” regulation of parking provisions in business areas with the intention of serving short and mid-stay demand, mainly resulting from loading /unloading services and visitor parking due to their difficulties to find parking places in the middle of the day when all spaces were already occupied.

The second was related to promotion of car-sharing and car-pooling initiatives among employees of business areas creating specific parking zones for them. Car-sharing scheme could be used by employees who usually needed a car for their business travel, as well as for their commuting journeys whilst car-pooling could be useful for those with similar work schedules.

The car-sharing initiative in work centres was planned as a second stage of implementation of the car sharing scheme and was conditional upon the implementation of the service in the city. As discussed in the measure, this has undergone 56 different delays that adversely affected its implementation.

4. Paid Parking in Business Areas in Donostia – San Sebastian

4.1 Description of the Work Done

As Deliverable R23.2, *Study of Paid Parking in Business Areas in Donostia – San Sebastian* described in detail, the initial stage of the measure Task 11.3.2, the research and development of the parking places location in each business was completed.

As it was agreed during the research phase, a 15% of the parking supply would be destined for external visits and for loading / unloading operations for the business areas of Zuatzu, Miramon and Igara. The parking regulation bylaw was amended to define new, regulated zones in the mentioned business areas.

The following step was conducted through various workshops, mainly with affected neighbourhoods near Igara and Zuatzu business areas and in Miramon to inform about next steps and providing detailed information about the range of actions that were to be carried out with companies within the business area. At the workshops there was a general consensus among companies against the measure to be adopted, as detailed in the following section.

The idea was that after these workshops an information campaign to publicise the initiative would be launched not only among business areas but also for all of the city, but as we will see, the impact of the measure came long before it could accomplish anything, which forced us to suspend its implementation.

4.2 Problems Identified

First contact with involved companies happened during the workshop held in Miramon business area. Focusing on the features of that business area the main key points presented to justify the need to regulate the parking supply were the following ones:

- Although the parking ratio is 1.37 spots per employee, the reality is that parking in the business area after all employees arrive to their works becomes a very difficult task.
- There are many empty private parking spaces inside buildings (on the ground floor or in the basement) whose owners prefer to park on the outside for convenience.

- The illegal parking ratio is very high and users park their cars on the pavement or on crosswalks.

Taking into account these precedents, the regulation of a limited provision for rotation of parking places (110 spots) and another one for loading and unloading operations (146 spots) was suggested.

The opinion of the companies was clearly contrary to the implementation of that regulation. Some expressed understanding of the problem and they were agreed about the need to do something to improve mobility situation in the business park, but they also considered that it was not the time to bring this solution due to the economic crisis which would affect employees.

Larger companies were the ones which expressed their rejection in the strongest way and their non-acceptance of the proposal was based primarily on the defence of their employees.

Similar research process was conducted in the other business areas, Zuatzu and Igara. The numbers of reserved parking spots proposed for each action was documented in Deliverable R23.2.

Meanwhile various groups of employees at each business area started to join to create different platforms against the measure. Their main concern about the introduction of regulated parking was the need to start paying for parking in their workplaces and they associated the proposed action with a strategy by the municipality to raise money through a measure that could be shown in the workshop to have no reported benefit to the companies based there.

The low proportion of regulated places did not convince the workers that the places covered by the regulation were intended to provide a parking option for external flows. They considered it as an initial strategy to enter gradually into the workplaces and gradually increase this regulated parking proportion over time with the intention to increase cash generated in the medium to long term. The impact began to rise through the action of the press which began reporting on the creation and activities of these groups, providing misleading data that served to strengthen its position and penalise the development of the measure, even before the launch of an information campaign.

Fig 1. Pic of one of demonstrations held in Miramon business park published in the media



As mentioned in the previous Deliverable R23.2, all the demonstrations coincided with the municipal election period in the city, and taking advantage of the social impact that these mobilisations were having, the political groups who were in opposition used them to attack the current municipal government, which forced the mayor to cancel the implementation of the measure.

4.3 Mitigating Activities

Considering the impact that starting a parking regulation can have among users of business areas, it is necessary to consider a less “invasive” activity as the first stage of the process to make all stakeholders that are part of the workplaces aware about a problem which already exists in all work centres across the whole city, which is the mobility to access workplaces.

One of the first conclusions drawn from the workshop in Miramon business area, was the need to create a ‘Mobility Commission’ formed by both the management and by the companies based at the work centre. The creation of this work group represents an example of how a measure that could not be implemented has led to other initiatives beneficial to the interests of the problem in question.

Implementation of car-pooling zones in Miramon and Zuatzu business areas is one of the strategic lines which should promote the afore-mentioned “soft” or less “invasive” activities. With these kinds of initiatives it is possible to start limiting the parking supply and show to users that the use of modes of transport in a sustainable way can offer benefits to the users instead of the municipality, in this case, providing preferential parking spots to those who share their car with other users.

A shuttle bus pilot project started in early May 2012 is another example of an activity that has been launched targeted towards employees’ needs, in order to facilitate access to the workplace and maintaining a consistent service frequency.

The impact of this kind of initial initiative should serve as an indicator to establish more ambitious targets in order to discourage the use of private vehicles and to promote a more sustainable use of mobility related elements (PT, parking spaces, non-motorised mobility....etc.)

4.4 Main Outcomes (Lessons Learnt)

Historically, the parking regulation has been a controversial issue in Donostia – San Sebastian. Since it was first implemented in the first neighbourhoods it has been an issue that has always led to debate. This debate has spread to business areas at the time when the possibility of implementing them in those places, although its use philosophy was quite different in comparison to the city.

As can be seen, the fundamental barrier that we have faced has been the fact that some groups have linked the regulation of the provision of business parking areas to regulation of demand city parking, and since the latter generates a negative opinion among citizens this has reflected negatively on the implementation of the measure. Furthermore, if that way of linking two scenarios wrongly it is promoted with other types of support (internet, media...), the negative impact increases exponentially.

Given the need for dialogue with all stakeholders from the beginning of the measure it makes it difficult for all parties to interpret the measure from the same point of view so it may be important to anticipate the possible interpretations that the proposal may have.

For all these reasons, it may be interesting to promote measures that cannot be interpreted in a negative context as has ultimately happened with this measure. During the research of the measure different formulas to reduce the supply of available parking for private vehicles were presented. These included areas for loading and unloading operations, car-pooling / car sharing areas etc. Consideration of loading/unloading operations is necessary for business activity and as they are already installed and accepted throughout the city, they should not generate any kind of rejection. In car-pooling/ car sharing cases, due to the novelty of both systems in the city, citizens still have no previous idea about them. Both kinds of zone (loading /unloading and car-pooling/sharing ones) can be considered for implementation with the aim of reducing parking provision without fear of protest from users, in contrast to the idea of introducing financial charges.

In short, these could be considered the most relevant aspects to consider when facing a measure of parking regulation in business areas:

- Current parking provision. If the parking rate is higher than 1 place per user, that means that users do not have many problems to park and therefore in most cases they will commute by car.
- Private parking provision. Although it is not possible to have access to this type of parking it is necessary to research about the use that is given to private parking and what criteria is used to allocate these places.
- Public Transport offer. It is important, regardless of other formulas such as car-pooling or car sharing, that people affected by the application of the measure have a competitive travel alternative by public transport or non-motorised modes.
- Business area activities. It is useful to know the journeys generated by the business park not only from external visitors but also from employees during their working hours, since in this case for instance, the parking demand may be different if they come back home at midday to have lunch and consequently leave free parking places in the middle of the day..
- Illegal parking. The amount of illegal parking can give us an idea of the parking demand that can have the work centre, and if those illegal parking are spread throughout a working day or only for specific operations.

4.5 Future Plans

Commissioning of car-pooling zones in Miramon and Zuatzu should be the next step in the “soft” measures initiatives. An initial parking area proposal has been agreed with the business parks’ management and the amendment of the traffic bylaw of the city should be performed to include this type of free-of-charge regulation on the road.