



Wednesday 3rd June 2009

Berlin 2009

The Berlin conference took place from 3 - 6 June 2009 at the WZB (Social Science Research Center Berlin)

The theme for this conference was 'Close the gap'. The topic responds to the increasing gap between obligations placed on cities and the possibility of cities to meet those targets. How can cities meet standards (eg environmental) set at National, European and International levels?

The conference opened with welcoming words from Paul Stoop of the Social Science Research Center, which also provided the venue for the conference. There was a welcome address from Maria Krautzberger, IMPACTS President and greetings from Ingeborg Junge-Reyer, Vice-Mayor & Senator for Urban Development, Berlin.

Friedeman Kunst of the Senate department for Urban Development began the presentations telling us why 'Berlin is different....'. The main reason of course, is the fact that it was divided in half for 40 years. Since the wall came down 20 years ago, much has been done to re-connect the two halves of the city. The most marked difference is the tram network in the East, this is totally absent in the West, which is served by metro and buses. Berlin is also isolated from other large conurbations, the area surrounding it is sparsely populated. Historically urban development follows transport development in the city, the new Central Station is a transport node and driver for new urban developments in the area. Other initiatives include promotion of cycling in the city and intermodality - making it easy to switch between sustainable transport modes.

Session One, The European Gap, was chaired by Maria Krautzberger - Permanent Secretary of State and President of IMPACTS.

The first presentation of the session, 'Identifying the Gap: Ambitious policies - limited instruments', was presented by the conference organiser, Diana Runge, Senate Department for Urban Development, Berlin. A gap in the network was identified between the new Central Station and the tram network. The route for this new link is heavily congested and compliance with emissions and noise limits is a challenge. The new transport masterplan for Berlin has to take into account European directives including Air quality, noise, climate change and safety.

Angelika Winkler of the Department for Transport Planning and Mobility Strategies in Vienna tells of the Evaluation of Transport Master Plans 2003/08. Plans are important to have, but are they effective in delivering change? Do they reach their intended audience? By evaluating the master plan, you can see if goals have been met and what still needs to be done and is an instrument for methodical discussion about interim results of a longterm concept. The main goal was to reduce car trips - resulting in lower emissions, reduction in

noise pollution, and better safety. There were 370 measures identified in the masterplan, 58% of these were addressed or in progress.

We were pleased to welcome Franz-Xaver Söldner, European Commission, Directorate-General for Energy and Transport Unit A4 - Clean transport & urban transport, talking about The European Commission's Green Paper Action Plan and other EU initiatives including:

- European transport policy;
- CIVITAS Programme;
- Green Paper on Urban Mobility;
- New urban mobility actions.

Session Two, chaired by Karlheinz Hora, City of Vienna, was entitled Urban & Transport Policy: Gap or Bridge?

Fabio Nussio, ATAC Rome gave the first presentation, Close the Gap in Rome: Sustainable mobility plan fitting to EU directives. Rome has high car use and has introduced some innovative ways to reduce car trips in the city. These include Limited Access Zones (LTZ). These zones have gates with ANPR cameras for enforcement. Since the first City centre zone was introduced in 2001, pollution levels have decreased year on year. Other benefits of the scheme have been an increase in pedestrianised areas and enforcement of bus lanes. ATAC have introduced real time travel information for mobile devices. Encouraging car sharing and cycling are further initiatives.

Visnja Bedenko of City of Zagreb shared some alternatives to road pricing in urban areas. In Zagreb 40% of traffic is driving around looking for somewhere to park. The number of vehicles has doubled in the last 10 years, while the population has remained the same. To alleviate the problem, Zagreb have removed surface parking and made public transport free for everyone in the city centre.

Amsterdam's perspective on individual transport vs. sustainable development was presented by Rene Meijer, City of Amsterdam. Increasing parking charges has reduced traffic in the city centre by 30%. Cycling has been the most popular mode of transport since 1993 with nearly half of all trips made by bike. Pollution is still a problem in the city centre, however, so car sharing, park and ride, encouraging clean or electric transport and improvements to the cycle network are all measures which are being implemented.

Session four followed a roundtable discussion, and was chaired by Friedemann Kunst, covered Strategies to close the Gap(s). The first presentation, given by Ruedi Ott, from Zurich explains how good transport contributes to quality of life. In Zurich, car has a mode share of only 25%. This is achieved by providing dedicated roadspace and zero wait time at signals for public transport, free transfer between modes (you only need to buy one ticket), restrictions on private parking and making walking a pleasant experience.

Julio Garcia Ramon, City of Barcelona gave us an insight into the Barcelona Masterplan 2006-12.

Frederic Bessat and Mathieu Iglesias gave a presentation explaining the political difficulties they face in Geneva implementing transport projects as the city is made up of 2 countries, 2 cantons and 1 region.

Session five, Electro Mobility

Improving air quality in cities is one of the main driving forces for promoting the use of electric vehicles, which deliver a reduction in emissions of particulates, NOx and CO2 compared to conventional vehicles. Electric vehicles are a relatively new innovation, recent

advances in battery technology now give them a range of up to 300km between charges, making them a more viable option. Electric vehicles need to be marketed in the right way in order to encourage adoption by a reasonable proportion of the general public. This marketing strategy must include:

- Availability of infrastructure;
- Marketing by vehicle manufacturers;
- Education of the sales force;
- Awareness and acceptance from the public;
- Incentives.

There are also many technological challenges which need to be overcome to encourage people to change their behaviour and switch to electric vehicles:

- Battery Storage/exchange;
- Integration into the power grid;
- Standardisation of power plugs;
- Use of renewable energy.

Case Study -London - Electric Vehicle Delivery Plan

Air quality is a big problem in cities, for example in London 66% of particulate, 42% of NO_x and 22% of CO₂ emissions come from road transport.

The UK government needs to take actions to reduce these figures to meet EU targets, to improve the health of Londoners and to help reduce the effects of climate change.

Much has already been done to improve the bus network, walking and cycling provision to encourage people to use more sustainable modes, but some journeys can only be made by car. If some of these car journeys can be made using electric vehicles, they would produce 30-40% less CO₂ emissions, rising to 100% less if the energy used to produce the electricity came from renewable sources.

There are already 1,700 electric vehicles registered for exemption from the Congestion Charge (worth up to £1,700 per year) in London, as well as 15,000 hybrids. Electric cars also benefit from reduced parking charges in some boroughs (worth up to £6,000 per year). These savings are a good incentive to switch to electric vehicles.

On average, 84% of car trips in London are less than 20km and 95% of London motorists travel less than 75km per day. This means that the limited range of electric vehicles is less of an issue than in other areas of the UK.

The challenge moving forwards, is to develop a comprehensive network of electric charging points, there are currently 100 charge points, this will be increased to 150 by the end of 2009 and a further 100 points will be added in 2010. This will reduce the barriers to people considering switching to electric modes.

There are currently three different types of charging points available:

Slow (6-8 hours) - 240V, 13A for re-charging overnight at home, or all day at work.

Fast (1 hour)- 240V, 32A for re-charging while undertaking daily activities e.g food shopping, the gym, cinema etc.

Rapid (10 minutes) - 500V, up to 200A.

Home charging is not often practical in London, as most parking is on-street and few people have garages with power. The plan is to provide 2,000 fast charging points in public car parks by 2015.

There are 670,000 workplace parking spaces in London, the government will work with businesses to deliver at least 22,500 charging points in these locations by 2015. The cost of the charging point will be covered by the government, and the business will pay for installation.

All new developments with at least 5 parking spaces, will be required to supply at least 20% of their spaces with electric charging points.

The greater London Authority is leading by example, it is responsible for a fleet of 8,300 vehicles including buses, police vehicles, fire vehicles. Half this number are non-response support vehicles. They plan to deliver 1000 electric vehicles by 2015.

For the 2012 Olympics, which is being marketed as “the greenest games ever” a fleet of 4,000 vehicles needs to be procured and a substantial number of these will be electric. After the games, they will be transferred into the public fleet.

Buses in London run for an average of 18 hours a day, making current technology electric vehicles impractical. TfL currently has almost 60 hybrid diesel-electric buses, and from 2012, all new buses will be hybrids.

To encourage the general public to switch to electric vehicles, national incentives will be introduced in 2011, with a rebate of £2,000 - £5,000 when purchasing an electric vehicle. These vehicles will also be exempt from road tax saving at least £155.

The challenge now is to engage the public, to communicate the vision for the future and to convince people that electric cars can perform as well as conventional fuel cars, they may not do anything new, be different and may even be more expensive, but they will help to improve the air quality for everyone in London.

Case Study - Paris - Autolib

Paris are looking at a different approach to the same problem. Rather than persuading people to replace their existing cars with new electric ones, they are encouraging people to give up their cars altogether by providing a fleet of carbon neutral cars which can be shared and used only when needed.

The system will work by having 700 stations across the city, each station with at least 4 parking places (10 in off-street locations). These will be located near bus and train stations.

When the user picks up the car, they book the drop-off destination and the vehicles are monitored in real time. There will be many stations to ensure finding a car when you need one and as a last resort, employees can move cars from full to empty stations.

Parking at the destination will be guaranteed and is free. There will be a subscription charge of €15 per month plus €5 per half hour of use.

Marketing research has indicated that 73% of Parisians and 39% of people who live in the suburbs, are interested in participating in the scheme.

The expected benefits of the scheme will be:

- Reduction of pollution;
- Reduction in traffic noise;

- Reduction in road accidents;
- Increase of mobility and intermodality;
- Availability for all trip purposes;
- Reduce dependence on the car;
- 1 car in carsharing = 5 owned cars;
- Reducing the need to park 22,500 vehicles;
- Freeing up 18,000 parking places;
- A reduction of 22,000 ton CO2 emissions a year.

Session six, chaired by Keith Gardner continued the theme of Innovation focusing on Cycling. Helsinki, represented by Olli-Pekka Poutanen, Director of Transportation and Traffic Planning Division, talked about Innovative road safety measures for cyclists and pedestrians. His innovative presentation included video of pedestrian accidents, the presentation focused on pedestrian safety, reducing traffic speeds and using signalling as a tool to make roads safer places. This was followed by Focus on Bike Sharing - General Input: Success factors for bike sharing in Europe from Janett Büttner of choice GmbH, Berlin. She told us about the bike sharing scheme in Berlin and the way bike sharing has grown in Europe over the last 10 years.

The conference concluded with showcases from Paris, Barcelona and London. Claude Dargent explained that Velib was started in February 2007, when JCDecaux were commissioned to deliver a self-service bicycle system in Paris. By July the same year, there were 10,600 bicycles and cycle racks in 750 locations. By December, these figures had nearly doubled, and in July 2009, the scheme was extended to cover 30 towns on the outskirts of Paris.

The scheme is carbon neutral, repairs are made on site, or on a barge if the problems are more serious.

The success of the scheme has been attributed to:

- low charges;
- easily accessible;
- density of the network;
- quality of the equipment;
- quality of service.

There have been some problems, including the theft of 8,000 bicycles and vandalism to a further 16,000.

In the first 22 months of operation there were 50 million users, covering more than 187,000 miles per day - saving 26,000 tonnes of CO2.

Elena Pla Pineda spoke next to tell us about Bicing in Barcelona. The Barcelona region is one of the biggest metropolitan areas in Europe. The project started in March 2007, and by June 2008 had 6,000 bicycles and 400 stations, covering an area of 49km². The system is partly funded by advertising and partly from parking revenue. 15% of Barcelona's population are customers, making 97,140 cycle trips per day. The main problem to be overcome is the distribution of bicycles, as city centre stations tend to get full up, while those in the suburbs are empty.

The final presentation was given by Keith Gardner, talking about the Mayor's cycling revolution in London. Cycling mode share in London is only 1% despite seeing a 90% growth since 2000. This is largely due to a very low starting point, The target is to increase mode share to 5% by 2025.

Congested roads and overcrowded public transport have pushed people to consider cycling, while improved cycle lanes, advanced stop signs and high media coverage act as a pull.

The London Cycling Action Plan of 2004 put in place several measures including:

- 10,000 school cycle parking spaces;
- Bikeability cycle training;
- London cycle guides;
- 550km of LCN+ cycle lanes;
- Finsbury Park secure cycle parking station.

The central London cycle hire scheme is due to launch in May 2010 with 6,000 bikes and 400 docking stations. Further measures include developing 12 cycle highways by 2012.

To see the full presentations, visit the website:

www.impacts.org/intercontconference/berlin09.htm