



Press release

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Sustainable Mobility for European Cities: Experts Sketch the Future

Mobility experts call for long term visions and clear goals for future urban transport systems // Knowledge brokerage consortium RESPONDER stresses the importance of combining technological solutions with a change on the demand side // Urban mobility future in brief: Less private vehicles – more walking, cycling and public transport

Bratislava/Vienna, 25 March 2013 – Urban mobility is crucial for making Europe's cities more sustainable. The key for improvement is concerted and goal-directed planning, say Europe's leading mobility experts. It is important that the cities develop long-term goals for their respective mobility future. Last week, more than 66 professionals from 16 European countries discussed in Bratislava the trends, barriers and approaches for sustainable mobility in European cities. The experts agreed that it is necessary to focus on clever combinations of technological and infrastructural solutions with measures to stimulate changes on the demand side. In a nutshell, sustainable urban mobility in the future has to opt for clean technologies, smart infrastructures and to favour the change of modal split towards more walking, cycling and public transport.

The Multinational Event "Towards Sustainable Mobility in European Cities" held on 21-22 March in Bratislava was organized by the consortium RESPONDER, which enables scientists and policy makers to exchange experiences and knowledge with regard to sustainable consumption issues.

"No success without a long-term urban mobility vision"

"Transportation infrastructure has planning horizons which makes corrections in retrospect very difficult", says Richard Filcak from the Institute for Forecasting Studies in Bratislava.

"Therefore, especially for coming up with sustainable urban transport systems, it is of uttermost importance to develop long-term scenarios. Only if a city follows clear goals, it will arrive at a mobility structure which will satisfy citizens' needs and match with the requirements of sustainable development."

Adapting infrastructure, developing "compact city strategies"

The experts found out that in the past GDP growth has always also led to an increase of traffic. This is also the situation in the host city, declared Tibor Schlosser, Chief Traffic Engineer of the City of Bratislava. "Each day, we have a traffic jam on all axes to the city; more than 250,000 cars moving daily across the river Danube app 150 -200,000 commuters enter our city of 430,000 inhabitants. Therefore, we have to create smart transport conditions", he declared.

"Our sustainable urban mobility plan will prefer public transport, prepare smart services for the people living in the city and elaborate a new strategy in our parking policy". The specialists stated that a new approach to city planning is required: "To avoid urban sprawl, a higher density in cities is needed", explained Prof. Petter Næss from the Norwegian University of Life Sciences, adding "We need a compact city strategy".

More ambitious mobility policy

The experts called for more ambitious mobility policy which builds on measures that address both the technological side and the demand side. Appropriate means for stimulating behavioural changes could be, e. g., ticket pricing of public transport or more consistently internalizing the external costs for cars. "It is necessary that the municipal politics explores any potential option to achieving a modal split that improves the city's individual mobility record. There is a number of inspiring examples to learn from", stated Frieder Rubik from the Institute for Ecological Economy Research in Heidelberg. "The German city Munster, e.g., has achieved a share of more than 50 % for walking and cycling. Other European cities like Tallinn in Estonia have recently experimented with public transport for free."

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About RESPONDER:

The European project RESPONDER aims to promote sustainable consumption by assessing potential contradictions with economic growth. The project links four communities by facilitating a structured dialogue: science, policy, pro-growth, and beyond growth.

Further information: <http://www.scp-responder.eu>



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The RESPONDER consortium comprises ten partners from eight European countries. The participants are:

Organisation	Country
Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien, Research Institute for Managing Sustainability (project coordinator)	AT
Institute for Ecological Economy Research (IÖW)	DE
Sustainable Europe Research Institute	AT
University of Barcelona, Institute of Environmental Science and Technology	ES
Technical University of Denmark, Department of Management Engineering, Innovation and Sustainability	DK
University of Surrey, Centre for Environmental Strategy	GB
Institute for Forecasting of the Slovak Academy of Sciences	SK



Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Center for Environmental and Sustainability Research	PT
Swiss Federal Office for Spatial Development, Sustainable Development Section	CH
German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety	DE