



STARS

Shared mobility opportunities And
challenges for European cities

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Policy brief on car sharing

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SUMMARY

Based on the STARS research that has been carried out so far, which revealed interesting information on car sharing providers, users and cities, a policy brief for car sharing has been established. The aim of this policy brief is to launch 10 general recommendations for car sharing in Europe, in order to inform and activate policy makers and stakeholders on all levels.

1 Create an EU framework for car sharing

Car sharing is expanding rapidly within the EU. The MOMO-report and STARS-research¹ are showing the strong increase of car sharing organisations and initiatives in the EU over the last decade. For this reason, there is a strong aim for a European legal framework for car sharing. This should clearly define indicators to be recognized as a car sharing operator with room for innovation. A framework ensures among other a level playfield and a concept lead by socio-economic impact before revenue maximisation. By this, car sharing as terminology can be used in a correct way and can be a valuable alternative for private car ownership.

2 Invest in performant public transport and safe walking and cycling infrastructure

Living without a privately owned car is only possible when one can rely on easy to use and safe mobility alternatives. Therefore, next to easy access to shared cars, performant public transport and safe walking and cycling infrastructure are indispensable. As already stated in the Interreg North Sea Region project CARE-North policy recommendations, walking and cycling should be an attractive and accessible alternative to car-based transport and must not compete with each other for space in the urban realm. Future investments in public infrastructure, for example in mobility hubs - physical locations where different sustainable mobility modes meet - should therefore be regarded from a pedestrian or cyclist point of view.

¹ Deliverable 2.1

3 Anchor car sharing as a sustainable solution in a mobility action plan

In order to achieve a broad social transition towards shared mobility, it is important to embed these sustainable solutions for private car ownership in policy papers, at all governmental levels. An action plan for car sharing, containing ambitious and achievable goals on short and medium term, is a first important step and should also be part of the SUMP rather than a self-standing initiative outside ordinary transport planning activities. The action plan for car sharing contains among other measures in the field of parking policy, integration of car sharing in new housing (or renovation) projects, installation of mobility hubs, targeting non-traditional audiences and monitoring the use of space by (shared) cars. Considering car sharing as a component of the overall transport system is essential to maximize the social, environmental and economic benefits of car sharing.

4 Aim for a suitable mix of car sharing schemes

The STARS-research² classified a range of different types of car sharing, each with their own unique features. It is not only possible to use a car from a car sharing provider but also to share privately owned cars via online platforms or via decentralized community groups. Aiming for a suitable mixture of car sharing makes it possible to start sharing in areas which are not (yet) on the radar of car sharing providers with an own fleet (for instance in less urbanized regions or the countryside). So, when communicating about car sharing, keep an eye on different forms of car sharing and emphasize their complementarity.

5 Invest in on- and offline MaaS

As stated in the STARS-research project³, smart technology is helping to improve the user friendly experience of car sharing, making it easier to book, to access and to use shared mobility solutions. It is advisable to invest further in this evolution by creating a framework to facilitate the integration of the services offered by different providers. Furthermore, investments in mobility hubs are necessary to optimise MaaS. These mobility hubs foster the integration of car sharing, public transport and other shared mobility modes in order to reach the main goal: replacing private car ownership. Within the SHARE-North Interreg North Sea Region project, mobility hubs are currently being installed in Germany, Norway and Belgium.

² Deliverable 2.1

³ Deliverable 2.2

6 Make citizens and stakeholders aware of the benefits of car sharing

The integration of car sharing in parking and housing policy can have large positive effects on the number of cars in a city and the number of driven kilometres by private cars. However, the idea of car sharing is still quite unknown among citizens and other stakeholders. Moreover, the transition from car ownership to the use of shared cars is taking some time. It is a mental shift which is not easy to make, but once established people tend to embrace the advantages. Therefore (local) governments could inform on the advantages of car sharing, both on personal and societal level, using a variety of communication strategies.

7 Integrate car sharing in your parking management plan

The STARS⁴ survey pointed out parking policy problems are one of the biggest barriers for car sharing schemes. In order to level up car sharing, a well-balanced parking policy is needed. Every category of car sharing requires a different approach. Depending on the city-specific situation, a mixture of fixed parking places and parking permits should form the basis of a well-thought parking management, based on the real impact of different car sharing schemes. Moreover the integration of car sharing in parking policy and spatial planning enables cities and project developers to reduce the number of parking places in certain areas, resulting in large financial profits and more open space. In addition, the rise of electric mobility also causes major changes. When building new charging stations, it is an opportunity to integrate space for car sharing.

8 Include car sharing in more policy areas

In order to create an optimal policy framework for car sharing, car sharing itself should be included in other policy areas as it touches different topics such as mobility, public space, new housing developments and even social cohesion and work. Integration of car sharing in all these fields avoids conflicting legislation. For instance, fiscal policy can have an immense positive or negative impact on car sharing (e.g. company/salary cars), parking standards and car sharing go hand in

⁴ Deliverable 2.3

hand, access to an affordable shared car can make the difference to find a job... To maximise integration we recommend the appointment of a car sharing/shared mobility officer.

9 Rethink fiscal systems to better citizens' lives

Following STARS research⁵ VAT rates for car sharing are fluctuating around 20% in all European countries under research⁶ and are always at the same level as those for car rental. Considering car sharing has a proven positive effect on public space, modal shift and liveability of neighbourhoods, VAT rates for car sharing could be reconsidered. In addition, current fiscal incentives for company and salary cars must be reformed as they are one of the biggest thresholds for further growth of car sharing. Also fiscal stimuli for a mobility budget should be considered. This system offers employers and employees a number of alternatives for the company car.

10 Practice what you preach

(Local) governments should not own cars themselves, but instead make use of car sharing fleets. In Belgium, recent researches show that most of local governmental cars do not travel more than 10.000 km per year. Moreover, during weekends and outside the office hours, these vehicles are not used at all. Why not replacing them by shared cars promoting car sharing at the same time and optimising fleet costs?

⁵ Deliverable 3.2

⁶ Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Portugal and Spain.

GLOSSARY

- ★ **Car sharing:** a membership service available to all qualified drivers in a community. No separate written agreement is required each time a member reserves and uses a vehicle. Car sharing companies offer to their members access to a dispersed network of shared vehicles 24-hours, 7 days a week. It should be highlighted that the trips are not shared between drivers, only the vehicles are shared at different times by different drivers.
- ★ **MaaS (Mobility as a Service):** combining several mobility services from public and private transportation providers through a unified gateway that creates and manages the trip, which users can pay for with a single account.
- ★ **Mobility hub:** physical location where different sustainable mobility modes meet.
- ★ **SUMP:** Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan

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