

Reducing air and noise pollution in cities

Hall 3, Level +1

Friday, May 20, 2016,

09:00 - 10:30

Globally more people now live in cities than in rural areas, and the number of city dwellers is climbing. According to the UN, by 2050 the urban population is expected to rise to 62% in Africa, 65% in Asia, and 90% in Latin America. Urban expansion creates challenges for policymakers in terms of managing air and noise pollution.

This is particularly the case in the transport sector which accounts for the greatest proportion of air and noise emissions in cities. As people and goods concentrate, intensification of commuting and logistics flows creates more opportunities for efficiency savings but also adverse impacts on people's health and wellbeing.

If the cities of tomorrow are to succeed, policymakers need to continue their efforts to design and implement better measures to mitigate noise and air pollution in more and more densely populated cities. This cannot be achieved without considering the impacts of transport on social inequality. It cannot only rely on relatively expensive technologies like electric cars but needs to provide clean, safe, reliable and secure public transport and space for cycling. Getting commuters to change commuting habits is part of this. Policymakers should also ensure solutions are city-wide.

Panellists agreed that better air quality outcomes can only be achieved through a combination of policies that include encouraging a shift to less polluting transport modes, effective implementation of low-emission zones and, fundamentally, better integrated land use and transport policies. Dense mixed-use zoning and transit-oriented development remain key to making transport more sustainable.

There was nevertheless a consensus that technology has a very important role to play, particularly through the deployment of electric vehicles and offering shared mobility solutions to travelers. In order to reap the benefits of technological developments for their citizens, governments should not shy away from building effective partnerships with the private sector. One new opportunity toward making this a reality is for cities to embrace shared cars, shared rides, in addition to public and non-motorised transport, with the potential to vastly reduce off-street parking and convert on-street parking to other uses.

Reducing negative transport impacts in cities should not be constrained to passenger traffic but include policies to manage city logistics. Discouraging passengers from using their cars

often leads to increased demand for already popular e-commerce and home delivery which in turn puts more vans and trucks on city roads. There still is a lot to be done to deploy more environmentally friendly vans and trucks on the streets. While the technology is available it still is expensive and investment is needed to improve the business case. Electric vans are perhaps more central to addressing urban air pollution than electric cars and there is great potential for electric trucks, including for example in waste removal.

Panellists discussed how access to real-time location applications can significantly reduce congestion and contribute to enhancing quality of life, but also increase the attractiveness of cars for consumers. As remarked in an earlier panel, a green traffic jam is still a traffic jam. This should be addressed through pricing car usage in congested areas and offering affordable public transport alternatives.

Finally, a culture of acceptance needs to be built around real-time data collection and usage in order to enable governments and other third parties to realise its potential to the full extent. With applications in demand management and traffic management through intelligent parking and congestion pricing, in systems that identify free parking spaces – based on mobile phone data or sensors on cars to identify free spaces, something BMW is already testing. The full exploitation of the potential offered by big data can only be realized with collaboration between government and industry, in particular in regard to protection of privacy.

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Speaker

Michael Bültmann
Managing Director
HERE Berlin

Since 2014 Michael Bültmann has been Managing Director of HERE Berlin, the mapping division of Nokia. His responsibilities include working with regulatory entities and governments across the world. Bültmann joined Nokia in 2001 and was Managing Director of the mobile device business from 2008 to 2014.

Speaker

Philippe Citroën
Director General
UNIFE

UNIFE, the Association of the European Rail Industry, is an association of Europe's leading rail supply companies active in the design, manufacture, maintenance and refurbishment of rail transport systems, subsystems and related equipment. Philippe Citroën has been Director General since 2011.

Speaker

Colin Hughes
Director of National Policy
and Project Evaluation
**Institute for
Transportation Policy
and Development**

Colin Hughes directs global research on national transport policy, new mobility technologies, and sustainability evaluation at the Institute for Transportation Policy and Development. His previous work includes researching global transportation financing patterns, authoring the Bikeshare Planning Guide, designing bicycle networks and bikeshare systems, planning high-capacity Bus Rapid Transit, developing Green House Gas (GHG) accounting methodologies, mobility analytics and new policy approaches to shared and autonomous mobility.

Speaker



Pex Langenberg

Vice mayor, Mobility,
Sustainability and Culture

**Rotterdam, The
Netherlands**

Prior to his current position, Pex Langenberg has held positions at the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, and Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management. He was also transport counsellor at the Dutch embassy in Washington, USA.

Moderator



Greg Lindsay

Moderator

**New Cities Foundation
Senior Fellow**

At the New Cities Foundation, mobility expert Lindsay leads the Connected Mobility Initiative, addressing the need for cities worldwide to find viable mobility solutions of the future. He is a journalist, urbanist, futurist and speaker.