

Peer review of city of Kaunas



Peer Review of the progress towards sustainable urban transport
City of Kaunas
29th May - 2nd June 2006



A Sustainable Urban Transport Plan?

- The European Commission recommended and member states support the preparation by Cities of “*Sustainable Urban Transport Plans*” (SUTP’s) as the key tool to manage urban transport problems and help to provide solutions to urban transport problems. (See the “*Thematic Strategy for the Urban Environment*”)
- The European Commission is looking to the 12 Bustrip cities to be the first to prepare and implement SUTP’s and to share their experiences and learning.
- European experts have helped to develop the model of a SUTP - the process of preparing the plan and the policies it should include - now lets see if it works!



Peer Review of the progress towards sustainable urban transport
City of Kaunas
29th May - 2nd June 2006



Kaunas - a sustainable city?

- Already you have looked at your own progress and shared this with us - your “*self assessment report*”.
- An expert team, including representatives from other Bustrip cities has carried out a peer review of your city over this week to provide friendly independent constructive criticism in support of your SUTP headline findings today - report in a month or so.



Peer Review of the progress towards sustainable urban transport
City of Kaunas
29th May - 2nd June 2006



The Team

Mrs. Maria Lindholm - Chalmers University of Technology, Göteborg, Sweden (team leader)
Mrs. Anna Granberg - Union of Baltic Cities - Environment Commission
Mr. Sakari Saarinen - Union of Baltic Cities - Environment Commission
Mr. Gunnar Persson - City of Örebro, Sweden
Mr. Björn Gunnarsson - City of Göteborg, Sweden
Mr. Michael Frömming - City of Bremen, Germany
Mr. Matti Salonen - City of Turku, Finland

- ✓ Has carried out a desk review of your self assessment report before they arrived.
- ✓ Has met and discussed your progress, your concerns and your issues.
- ✓ Has made more than 25 interviews with important actors within the city (business representatives, officials, politicians and stakeholders).



What were we looking for?

A Transport system that:

- Allows the basic access and development needs of individuals, companies and societies to be met safely and in a manner consistent with human and ecosystem health, and promotes equity within and between successive generations;
- Is affordable, operates fairly and efficiently, offers a choice of transport mode and supports an competitive economy as well as balanced regional development;
- Limits emissions and waste within the planets ability to absorb them, uses renewable resources at or below their rates of generation, and, uses non renewable resources at or below the rates of development of renewable substitutes while minimising the impact on the use of land and the generation of noise.

EU transport council 2001)

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/trans/index.htm>



Peer Review of the progress towards sustainable urban transport
City of Kaunas
29th May - 2nd June 2006



We found.....

The city of Kaunas;

- Has a great share of public transport - but, needs to keep the share of car traffic under control and develop the public transport so that it stays competitive.
- Has many of the elements of a Sustainable Urban Transport Plan (SUTP) - but, elements are not yet integrated and there is a lack of funding, analyze methods, coordination and monitoring.
- A city with an international and open minded atmosphere.



Peer Review of the progress towards sustainable urban transport
City of Kaunas
29th May - 2nd June 2006



What were we looking forDoes the city.....

Have a sustainable transport plan that is integrated with an overall sustainable development strategy that deals with:

“ The movement of goods and people in a more sustainable way, comprehensively addressing public and private transport, motorised and non motorized transport, moving and parked vehicles and well as freight transport and logistics”.



Peer Review of the progress towards sustainable urban transport
City of Kaunas
29th May - 2nd June 2006



We found.....

- Plenty of strategies for spatial and transport planning.
- Sustainable planning is already a key issue in plans and strategies.
- Horizontal cooperation between departments, divisions and stakeholders has started.



Peer Review of the progress towards sustainable urban transport
City of Kaunas
29th May - 2nd June 2006



However:

- The implementation of the plans seems to lack a stable support and interest. Many good plans are new or in progress and haven't yet been put into practise.
- There seems to be an insufficient system for monitoring and evaluating the current situation or the development of the city of Kaunas.
- Sustainability does not yet have the importance of action (more words than actual meaning).
- The development of the SUTP will need a closer cooperation between all departments within Kaunas as well as regional level.



Peer Review of the progress towards sustainable urban transport
City of Kaunas
29th May - 2nd June 2006



Does the city.....

- Understand and effectively manage the implications of transport arising from **all** development in the city and in the region;
- Efficiently manage the infrastructure to achieve economic growth whilst restricting transport growth;
- Implement the principle of the polluter pays and ensure that users of transport infrastructure pay the actual and external (environmental and social) costs.



We found.....

- The authorities encourage horizontal cooperation between departments.
- The discussions between urban planners and environmental office shows a good starting point for intersectoral cooperation.
- Technopolis could be an example of economic growth with great potential.



However:

- There is no proof of effort to decouple (to break the link between) economic growth from transport growth.
- The awareness of the relation between the structure of the city and the transport development is weak.
- Lack of understanding of the principles of sustainable development
- External settlements sometimes have poor access to public service.



Peer Review of the progress towards sustainable urban transport
City of Kaunas
29th May - 2nd June 2006



Does the city.....

Reduce the need for transport:

- Provide door to door access choices across the city;
- Promote a compact city with an efficient use of land and space;
- Strengthen the use of information and communication technologies.



We found.....

- Kaunas is today a compact city with easy access both into and within the city.
- Schools are usually located near residential areas (i.e. children are able to walk to school).
- A vision to reduce the usage of private cars in the city centre.



However:

- Car traffic is increasing and most people doesn't seem to see this as a problem.
- Urban sprawl seems to increase and the awareness of an attractive compact city is not recognized.



Peer Review of the progress towards sustainable urban transport
City of Kaunas
29th May - 2nd June 2006



Does the city.....

- Reduce congestion
- Enhance modal shift and inter-modality
- Provide easy to understand traveller information
- Optimise the use of infrastructure
- Use financial incentives and taxes
- Promote behavioural change
- Optimise freight and logistics
- Use intelligent transport and management systems



Peer Review of the progress towards sustainable urban transport
City of Kaunas
29th May - 2nd June 2006



We found.....

- A public transport system that is highly used and popular. It is used for most work trips and shorter trips within the city.
- An innovative plan and strategy for a five mode intermodal terminal for freight in Kaunas - as the only one in Europe! -, with access for air, river, road and two types of train carriers (both Russian and European standards).



However:

- Although the public transport share is high, there is no bus lanes or priority traffic signals (yet).
- The national freight flows are mainly concentrated to roads, not rail - because of lacking infrastructure. The road freight transports are increasing which causes negative impacts on urban traffic flows.
- Traffic safety is lacking in the urban area. Pedestrians and cyclists do not feel safe. Good infrastructure, with dedicated lanes, traffic signals, bike stands etc. would increase the interest and safety of cycling as a mode of transport.
- Parking management is insufficient in Kaunas city centre.



Peer Review of the progress towards sustainable urban transport
City of Kaunas
29th May - 2nd June 2006



Does the city.....

Provide a clean and fair transport system

- With clean and energy efficient vehicles
- That meets the needs of all social groups
- That improves the quality and condition of the city's environment and contributes to reducing the impact of the city on the global environment
- That is improving road safety and security



We found.....

- There exist plans and if used they will form a good basis for concrete measures to improve the public transport system.
- More passengers in 55 modern new buses increase the demand of public transport. As a result of those new buses the number of old minibuses decreased.
- The trolley buses are still very popular since they are “ecological” and the comfort inside the bus is good without any emissions.
- Demand keep the prices of the public transport system low. Basically everyone can afford to go with and have access to the public transport system.



However:

- Bus services after 10 pm are very poor.
- The average age of trolley buses is 18 years and the comfort of trolley buses and ordinary buses is not good. Low ticket prices contributes to low standard.
- Cycling in the urban area is rare.
- The standards of taxis and minibuses are low due to economic conditions. There are no incentives on national or local level to decrease the number of old vehicles.



Conclusions...

See BUSTRIP project as an **opportunity** to ...

- Improve the image and the function of the public transport to keep the usage at today's very high level!
- Raise the awareness of the importance of sustainable planning!
- Develop the communication between stakeholders, departments and divisions!



Peer Review of the progress towards sustainable urban transport
City of Kaunas
29th May - 2nd June 2006



Questions?

- Did we miss anything?
- Did we get anything wrong?



Peer Review of the progress towards sustainable urban transport
City of Kaunas
29th May - 2nd June 2006



What next.....

- For us:

Write up our assessment as a report which will be with you in about a month's time

- For Kaunas:

Comment and correct our report

Start your work on preparing a Sustainable Urban Transport Plan!



Peer Review of the progress towards sustainable urban transport
City of Kaunas
29th May - 2nd June 2006



Thank you for your hospitality and support and we look forward to our partnership in the future.



Peer Review of the progress towards sustainable urban transport
City of Kaunas
29th May - 2nd June 2006

