PART III
Overcoming Automobility Dependence: Policy Interventions

13 Part III: Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide familiarity with the phenomenon of sustainable mobility and the policies that are supporting and promoting this emerging paradigm. This chapter aims at creating a body of knowledge about possible policy interventions for gradually overcoming the structural auto dependence in urban mobility. The author aims at giving guidance to urban policy-makers and other involved parties who deal with the diversity of policy instruments and approaches in their specific urban context.

This chapter relies chiefly on reviewing available literature. However, also relevant insights from formal semi-structured in-depth interviews have been included. The interviews were conducted with 5 selected mobility experts from Switzerland in May 2014. These interviews were intended to form a ‘pilot study’ for developing the case study of City of Basel in the subsequent next step. The knowledge acquired during these interviews has set an important pillar for drafting this chapter. A detailed approach to analyzing the data acquired during the interviews is described in chapter 16.3: Research Design, Methodology and Methods.

Therefore, the results of this chapter constitute the foundation for the development and in-depth analysis of the case study of the City of Basel. The case study is complementary to the work conducted so far and is presented and discussed in Part IV of this work.

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25 The list of experts is stored in Appendix 6 and can be accessed via OnlinePLUS.

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14 Policies for Sustainable Mobility

14.1 Introduction

Sustainable mobility requires a clear and structured approach to all possible methods of delivering significant reductions in CO₂ emissions, congestion, pollution, and community disruption. One approach to the need for structure has been described as the ASI method (Dalkmann, Brannigan 2007):

1. Avoid - through appropriate land-use and accessibility planning distances are kept short. Destinations are co-located within residential areas which leads to a lower level of car usage and a higher level of non-motorized mobility.
2. Shift - wherever possible shift the mobility demand to public transport, mobility sharing concepts and slow modes. The modal shift aims at transferring the demand to more sustainable modes, i.e. less carbon intensive.
3. Improve - so that vehicles are designed to be more fuel efficient, for example, by transitioning to electromobility.

It has been claimed that users should be taxed for the true costs of their actions to achieve more efficiency in transport. Imposing taxes, such as pollution taxes, would be in line with the core principle of economic policies for sustainability. However, the literature suggests that there are many other instruments that can be implemented to make sure that beside sustainability goals, such as reduction of GHG emissions, also social and economic co-benefits are generated. For example, Lah (2015) suggests that a combination of fuel pricing, differentiated vehicle taxation, vehicle standards must go along with the provision of additional modal choices.

Whitelegg et al. (2010) proposed a package of measures that covered spatial, fiscal, behavioral and technological interventions. The policy package aimed at producing a maximum impact scenario for a reduction in GHG for UK transport. Banister (2005) has addressed the important topic of combining policies and packages. Following Santos et al. (2010a) and Santos et al. (2010b) there are four distinct classifications of possible policy instruments for the urban transport sector that could lead to a sustainable mobility system: economic, physical, soft and knowledge policies. Economic instruments aim at directly passing on the negative externalities of the road transport to the emitters by direct policies such as taxes and charges. Physical policies mean infrastructural improvements to the road transport system and covers interventions in public transport and land use. Soft policies aim at inducing behavioral change by providing the required information to the public about the negative impact of their mobility choices and possible