Problems in the collection and monitoring of urban travel data

Mary Crass
ECMT-Paris
ECMT-USDOT International Workshop on
Fostering Successful Implementation of
Sustainable Urban Travel Policies

PROBLEMS IN THE COLLECTION AND
MONITORING OF URBAN TRAVEL DATA

encountered in the

ECMT-OECD SURVEY OF TRAVEL IN CITIES
2000
Objective of survey = understanding progress toward sustainable travel in urban regions

- 168 responses out of 274 surveyed in 32 countries and 3 continents
- **Design**: data and policy information requested regarding travel, land use and environment.
- **Length**: Only 12 questions but, lengthy document due to explanations/definitions.
- Number (400) and type of indicators reveal problems in availability of data: e.g., 20 responses out of 168 for some.
URBAN DATA PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED

Getting the right information

- Lack of harmonisation of definitions (e.g., geographic region -- city / agglomeration ?)
- Incomplete data sets
- Inadequate scope and questionable relevance of data
- Lack of data continuity due to insufficient time series data
- Lack of transparency and inaccuracy of information
Making data collection and monitoring useful: some observations

• Data collection and monitoring exercises need to **serve decision-making**; they are not ends in and of themselves.

*It is helpful to have a clear driver for the data collection/survey exercise, e.g., the monitoring process for a policy or strategy. This provides a conceptual framework and focus for the exercise.*

• Monitoring **serves the policy cycle** as an input to evaluation of implementation by measuring performance and outcomes.

• Greater emphasis needs to be placed on output/result indicators – **what can be learned from the data**
Experiences?

- Federal-level monitoring in ISTEA and TEA-21
- Multi-modal transportation planning in Portland
- Copenhagen 2003 Transport Plan
- I-95 corridor
- Chicago Regional Land use Framework Plan
- …