From National to Local Level in
The Netherlands
Henk Pauwels
Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management
AVV Transport Research Centre
From National to Local Level in The Netherlands

Henk Pauwels
Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management
AVV Transport Research Centre

5 November 2003
Population 16.2 mio
16,040 mile²
- 13,083 mile² dry
- 24% below sea level
1200 inh./mile²)
living in Randstad:
- 40% (6.5 mio)
- 2600/mile²
GDP/head (2001):
- $ 29,200
  (US: $ 35,200)
F & F (2)

- Netherlands in Europe
Facts and figures (3)

- Pass.cars per 1000 (1999): 401 (US: 488)
- Average mileage: 19.8 miles p.p.p.day
- Modal split (2002):
  - Trips: 49% 5% 25% 21%
  - Miles: 76% 12% 7% 5%
- During peak: 80% of trips on motorways < 19 miles
Integrated Transport Policy in 1990’s:
2nd Transport Structure Plan (SVV2)
1990-2010

- Ambitious targets: mobility, safety, environment: quantitative targets
  - containing car-mobility growth to 30% instead of 70%
- Ambitious policy package, i.e.:
  - Pricing (parking, congestion)
  - Improving alternative modes
  - Land-use (e.g. ABC-policy: restricting employee parking)
  - Create Metropolitan Transport Auth.
But...

• Too technocratic approach ("shapeable world/blueprint")
• National plan with national goals, no regional differentiation
• No "elaborated" vision on decentralisation issues (e.g. centralised funding!)
• Insufficient legislative framework
• And (up to now)...lacking political support for road pricing
Lessons learned

- Look for the right authority for policy implementation
- Match role – responsibility - discretionary powers - funding of government tiers
- Make adequate legislative framework
- How is accounting organised
“Decentralised unitary state”
Tiers of local government

1. 12 Provinces
   - env. management, spatial planning, energy, sport, culture
   - provincial networks (road, canals)

2. 489 Municipalities
   - water supply, traffic, housing, schools, social services, health, sport, culture
   - municipal networks (road, rail, canals)

3. 7 Urban “Metropolitan” Regions
   - centralized responsibility for PT, transport and spatial policy, but no jurisdiction over roads

4. Most funding comes from central govt.
“Decentralised unitary state”
Tiers of local government

1. 12 Provinces
   - env. management, spatial planning, energy, sport, culture
   - provincial networks (road, canals)

2. 489 Municipalities
   - water supply, traffic, housing, schools, social services, health, sport, culture
   - municipal networks (road, rail, canals)

3. 7 Urban “Metropolitan” Regions
   - centralized responsibility for PT, transport and spatial policy, but no jurisdiction over roads

4. Most funding comes from central govt.
Decentralisation of transport policy: a step-by-step process

• First: Traffic Safety
• Then: Public Transport (including new PT Act)  
  And: Funds for smaller infrastructure projects
• Now: transition to decentralising funds for larger infrastructure projects and PT subsidies

• And in the mean time:  
  Knowledge transfer (AVV together with VERDI Platform)
Legislative Framework: Transport Planning Act

- Establishes planning hierarchy
- Requires strategic transport plans from provinces/urban regions, in compliance with National Strategic Transport Plan
- Requires compliance from municipal policy with provincial/regional strategic plan
- National plan should be result of agreement between all tiers of gov't. (“bottom-up”)
- Requires monitoring (input from provinces/regions/municipalities within national monitoring system)
Organising transport policy: planning hierarchy scheme

Central government
Province/region
Municipalities

Monitoring

<Essential elements>
Vision on Public Management

- Business-like approach: make it when it is beneficial
- Decentralise if possible, centralise if necessary, use joint international (EU) action if possible
- More public-private partnership
- Flexibility in planning: no blueprint for 2020
Preparing the New Strategic Transport Plan…

- Earlier proposal rejected by parliament
  - Not ambitious enough
  - Not sufficiently financed
- Society has changed since 2002
  - Recession
  - Political instability
- Lessons learned from interaction with provincial/regional authorities preparing their strategic plans (anticipating to earlier proposal)
National Mobility Plan:
New Strategic Transport Plan 2004-2020

• “Realistic ambitions”
• Mobility to be accommodated, but not unrestricted; no moralisation about mode choice
• Priorities national networks:
  1. Guarantee reliability/LOS (maintenance!)
  2. Better organisation between networks (national/provincial/local)
  3. Optimize capacity utilisation
  4. Capacity expansion
National Mobility Plan: (2)

- Organising regional accessibility: \textit{area-wise} and \textit{user oriented} approach from door to door instead of from network operator to network operator
- Clear division of responsibilities
- Quantitative targets remain for traffic safety and environment
- Road Pricing: Not before 2010 except (possibly) trucks. Options for urban pricing schemes?
Vision on Urban Transport

- Area-wise approach
- Involve all relevant partners (govt, operators, private, NGO’s)
- Do not focus on responsibilities, but on the problem and how to tackle it
- Foster co-operation
- Realistic, no “grand designs”
- Step-by-step, start with what’s feasible
Challenges

- Horizontal co-operation vs. Vertical planning hierarchy
- Decentralised funding needs funds to provide an incentive!
- Developing the adequate ‘common’ monitoring system in co-operation with regional/local govt.
• Thank you