



EUROPEAN CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF TRANSPORT
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

Council of Ministers

SUSTAINABLE URBAN TRAVEL

IMPLEMENTING SUSTAINABLE URBAN TRAVEL POLICIES: APPLYING
THE 2001 KEY MESSAGES

This document was examined under item 4.2 "Sustainable Transport Policies - Specific topics: Sustainable Urban Travel" of the Agenda for the Dublin Council of Ministers.

Ministers:

- discussed their countries' achievements and persistent challenges in implementing sustainable urban travel policies;*
- noted the report and affirmed their commitment to implementing the 2001 Key Messages for Governments;*
- agreed the additional specific Key Message emerging from the recent work.*

JT03209924

1. INTRODUCTION

Urban areas are vital to the economic, environmental and social future of our world. Cities in ECMT and OECD countries account for approximately 80 per cent of the population and around 90 per cent of economic activity. But their transport systems, and the use made of them, also pose serious problems. For example, across the EU15, cities account for close to 80 per cent of all congestion costs¹, 20,000 fatalities each year through road accidents, upwards of 100 000 premature deaths each year through traffic pollution,² and 15 per cent of all greenhouse gas emissions.³ German research suggests that 1,800 deaths - most in urban areas - are brought forward each year through excessive noise.⁴

Clearly, urban problems are not just a concern for local government.

The ECMT and OECD together developed an integrated strategy for tackling these problems in 1995.⁵ In 2001, the ECMT completed a review of the readiness of countries and cities to introduce such a strategy, and concluded that implementing integrated policy packages for sustainable urban travel had proven easier said than done. ECMT provided a series of Key Messages for Governments,⁶ arguing that they should:

- establish a supportive national policy framework;
- improve institutional coordination and cooperation;
- encourage effective public participation, partnerships and communication;
- provide a supportive legal and regulatory framework;
- ensure a comprehensive pricing and fiscal structure;
- rationalise financing and investment streams; and
- improve data collection, monitoring and research.

Since then the ECMT Sustainable Urban Travel Steering Group's work has focused on examining how these Key Messages are or are not being applied in different decision-making contexts.⁷ This has been done through a series of three regional workshops in Washington, D.C. (November 2003), Moscow (September 2004), and

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1. UK Department for Transport: *Feasibility Study of Road Pricing in the UK*, 2004.
 2. Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollution: *Quantification of the Effects of Air pollution on Health in the UK*, 1998.
 3. *Towards Sustainable Urban Mobility*: report of the ASTRAL seminar, January 2002; <http://www.lutr.net/>
 4. Schade, W, *Transport Noise: a Challenge for Sustainable Mobility*, International Social Science Journal, June 2003.
 5. See Annex 1 for a description of the main elements of this ECMT-OECD project.
 6. Annex 2 contains an abridged listing of the Key Messages for Governments.
 7. The Terms of Reference for this work are found in Annex 3 to this report.

Tokyo (March 2005).⁸ At the same time, several specific studies have been conducted to examine barriers to implementing cycling measures (an area ECMT had not studied before) and in organising and financing public transport. A third topic of specific focus - how to improve urban travel data collection and monitoring - has been investigated by a special task force.⁹ The Steering Group has also been able to take account of the ECMT's related work on CO₂ emissions, accessibility, congestion and the policy instruments of road pricing and corporate mobility management.¹⁰

This brief report summarises the findings from the work to date. It starts by recalling the principal objectives of sustainable urban travel and the policy instruments available to work towards that goal. The report then reviews the barriers to their implementation and the need for a logical process for strategy development and implementation. Finally it expands on the seven Key Messages for Governments of 2001 and highlights several additional issues which have emerged as important since their formulation.

2. THE GOAL OF SUSTAINABLE URBAN TRANSPORT

An expanding agenda for sustainable transport

The 2000 ECMT report on Sustainable Transport Policy¹¹ defines the goal of sustainable transport in terms of a set of key objectives:

- improving transport safety;
- creating wealth;
- improving access;
- reducing congestion;
- reducing severance, fear and intimidation;
- protecting ecology;
- reducing noise;
- reducing greenhouse gas emissions; and
- improving air quality.

Since then, a number of other themes have emerged as important and integral to sustainable transport. Transport is seen increasingly as contributing to wider

8. All papers presented at these workshops are available from the ECMT web site <http://www.cemt.org/topics/urban/index.htm>.

9. These specific inputs to the work are a study on *National Policies to Promote Cycling*, the conclusions of which were agreed by Ministers in 2004 and published thereafter; a report on *Organisation and Financing of Urban Public Transport*, currently in final stages of preparation; and a study on *Improving the Collection and Monitoring of Urban Travel Data*, also being finalised at present. Examples of experience for this Summary are primarily taken from these studies.

10. The final report of the project will be completed by autumn 2006 and is designed to offer guidance for Governments and cities on the development and implementation of sustainable urban travel strategies.

11. ECMT (2000) *Sustainable Transport Policies*, <http://www.cemt.org/online/council/2000/CM0001Fe.pdf>

government objectives such as economic growth, employment, health, education and social inclusion. Equity both within the current generation and between generations is seen as of increasing importance. In recent years the security of the urban transport system has also been brought into focus.

With this expanding agenda, sustainable transport has become a decidedly more complex enterprise for policy-makers.

Need to set objectives and priorities

Several current ECMT studies focus on specific objectives for sustainable transport: reducing congestion, mitigating CO₂ emissions; improving road safety and improving accessibility for disabled and older people¹². All of these are challenges for urban areas; the reports indicate potential solutions and what can realistically be achieved.

Perhaps the most important message is that these objectives sometimes require different solutions and thus might come into conflict with one another. As a result, maintaining balance in the policy package is not always easy and tradeoffs are sometimes necessary. For example, traffic management measures to reduce noise and enhance safety can be different from those designed to relieve road congestion. On another level, there may be potential conflicts between certain policy incentives to encourage larger taxi vehicle dimensions for improved accessibility and measures designed to enhance vehicle fuel efficiency (and therefore reduce CO₂ emissions).¹³

Different countries - each with different starting points and decision-making traditions - will have different specific policy priorities for improving travel in their cities. This was clearly illustrated in the Group's three workshops: In Washington, it was demonstrated how statutory national clean air requirements can impact urban travel policy. In Moscow, finding ways to address growing urban congestion and the environmental and health impacts of travel in Russia and more widely in the CIS region were highlighted as priority. Pressures from growing congestion in some Japanese cities and added concerns over how to handle increasing greenhouse gas emissions were noted as special concerns in Tokyo.

As the Group's report on urban public transport¹⁴ stresses, specific policies and the financial support for them should only be determined once the objectives to be achieved

12. These studies are as follows: ECMT-OECD Joint Transport Research Centre study on *Tackling Congestion in Large Urban Areas*, currently under preparation; *Review of CO₂ Abatement Policies for the Transport Sector*, presented to Ministers under CEMT/CM(2006)15; a block of work on Road Safety, presented to Ministers under CEMT/CM(2006)18-20; and *Improving Transport Accessibility for All: Guide to Good Practice* and its accompanying *Policy Messages*, presented to Ministers in published form and under CEMT/CM(2006)7.

13. This has been briefly explored in the ECMT-IRU Task Force on Improving Access to Taxis, whose work is currently under completion.

14. ECMT report on *Organisation and Financing of Urban Public Transport*, (currently being finalised).

have been clearly defined. Policy options to pursue those objectives should then be thoroughly assessed.

3. POLICY INSTRUMENTS AVAILABLE

In their 1995 report, the ECMT and OECD identified the wide range of possible policy solutions to urban transport problems, and stressed that a combined package of regulatory, pricing and technology measures, coordinated across modes, is needed to send the right signals to urban land use and transport markets.

The evolving policy package

Over the decade since the 1995 report, a number of new policy instruments have emerged as important in the policy package, while others have found less favour. Technological improvements to vehicles and fuels have helped reduce air quality problems, increase energy efficiency and are seen as a key contributor to the reduction of greenhouse gases. However, it is clear that they will not, on their own, solve the environmental problems of urban transport. Total travel is still growing and while cars have become more fuel-efficient, there is also a trend towards larger vehicles such as SUVs.

New infrastructure will continue to have a place in overall strategies, but needs to be designed to be cost-effective and consistent with the overall strategy.

There has been a greater focus, instead, on better management of road and public transport networks, to improve quality, reliability and safety and to reallocate capacity to the more sustainable modes of transport. This emerged in the Moscow workshop in particular as a cost-effective short-term solution. Allocating road capacity to foot and cycle paths as well as investment in facilities for bicycle parking have been identified as cost-effective solutions for promoting non-motorised modes of travel in urban areas, as shown in ECMT's work on implementing cycling policies.¹⁵

Regulation of urban public transport, highlighted in the 1995 report as a key element in a sustainable policy package, remains a critical issue. Improving Russia's extensive public transport system was targeted as priority in the Moscow workshop, and organisation and financing of public transport were a focus in Tokyo as well. The evidence emerging from these discussions supports an increased role for the private sector to improve efficiency and encourage innovation. However a system whereby competition among service providers is clearly set out in a regulatory context and overseen by authorities seems better able than complete deregulation to deliver sustainable transport objectives.

Information provision is being used to greater effect. Information technology is now used more widely to support the needs of users, operators and network managers - this element was a key part of the Japanese approach described at the Tokyo workshop - while education, awareness and better co-operation have emerged as particularly

15. ECMT (2004) *National Policies to Promote Cycling*.

promising means of encouraging individuals and firms to better manage or reduce their demands on the transport system.

Finally the application of pricing schemes received a substantial boost with the successful introduction of congestion charging in London, but how to transfer this experience to other urban areas - a question long-asked about the highly observed and prolifically documented road pricing scheme in Singapore - is a question many are asking. The pilot congestion charging scheme in Stockholm – currently under way for a seven-month period until 31 July 2006 and scheduled for referendum in September 2006 - will no doubt greatly increase understanding of the different critical factors in implementing road pricing. And the Edinburgh pricing plan, resoundingly rejected in a referendum vote by Edinburgh residents in early 2005, has already leant considerable insight into the implementation factors leading to the demise of that scheme.

Despite this growing range of policy instruments at their disposal, Governments frequently still place too much reliance on the supply-side measures of infrastructure and technology and too little on management, regulation, information and pricing. This is clearly highlighted in the ECMT report on reducing CO₂ emissions, but was also an important theme in the Moscow and Tokyo workshops, both of which stressed the value of more cost-effective transport demand management measures in cities at an earlier stage of motorisation. However, information on the performance of many of these demand-side measures remains too limited.

Above all, the Group's workshops and studies reiterate the need for an integrated package of mutually reinforcing policies and measures that combined help cities move toward sustainability. Effective urban public transport operations require an appropriate combination of service improvements, better management of the road network, improved information for users, appropriate fare structures and stronger price signals to car users. Benefits from promotion of non-motorised means of travel (cycling and walking) can only be realised when seen as integral parts of the policy package - linked, for example, with improvements to public transport and the road network - instead of relegated to the margins of urban travel policy as they often are as policy afterthoughts. Congestion charging in London has worked well precisely because it was combined with improvements to management of the road network and substantial enhancements to the bus service.

4. BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES

However, as the Group's 2001 report stressed, implementing integrated policy packages for sustainable urban travel has proven easier said than done. From its survey of 167 cities¹⁶, workshops and national policy reviews, a number of common barriers to implementation were identified and explored.

16. Conducted in 2000, this survey served as the empirical basis for the conclusions of the 2001 Report to Ministers on *Implementing Sustainable Urban Travel Policies*.

First, institutional weaknesses included lack of a national policy framework, excessive or incomplete decentralisation, poor policy integration and coordination and counterproductive allocation of responsibilities. Legal and regulatory barriers included a lack of enabling legislation for new policy instruments such as pricing, inconsistent fiscal frameworks and ineffective controls on the performance of private sector transport service providers. Financial barriers were reflected in limited budgets and, more seriously, in inappropriate restrictions on the ways in which those limited funds could be used. Finally the acceptability of many policy instruments by the public and the media remained a barrier, and led too often to wavering political commitment.

The Group's work since then has confirmed that these barriers remain, and need to be overcome if effective sustainable urban travel plans are to be implemented.

There has been a clear trend towards greater decentralisation of responsibilities for urban transport, with, for example, the Netherlands gradually transferring more responsibility and financial control from national government to cities, and more recently, France devolving responsibility for urban public transport to its regional and local authorities.

Clearly, decentralisation plans such as these make sense in that they are designed to situate decision-making for managing car travel and public transport provision at the local level where its impact is best understood. Problems can arise, however, when decentralisation is excessive or incomplete – such has been the case in a number of countries, notably (but not exclusively) several of those that underwent economic transition in the early 1990s, such as Hungary and Poland. Hungary, for example, found that too rapid a devolution of power left the central government unable to define a coordinated framework for urban transport, and local areas without commensurate resources to assume their new responsibilities.¹⁷

5. DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY: BARRIERS IN THE PROCESS

In its recent work, the Group has highlighted a further set of barriers, which relate to the *process* by which sustainable urban transport strategies are developed and implemented.

Setting objectives

The central requirement for this process is - as mentioned earlier - a clear statement of the objectives to be pursued. These objectives can be presented, as appropriate, in terms of performance indicators and targets for improving the sustainability of urban transport. Clearly articulated objectives and targets can in turn help ensure that the problems and their causes are correctly identified. This should provide the foundation for selecting possible policy strategies and measures. As the reports on organising and

17. ECMT (2004), *Implementing Sustainable Urban Travel Policies*, National Peer Review of Hungary.

financing urban public transport, cycling and congestion charging¹⁸ make clear, these measures need to be designed in different ways to tackle different priority problems. For example, a public transport fare policy primarily targeting increased economic efficiency will be different from a fare approach designed to encourage modal shift away from cars; and will differ again from a fare policy to promote social inclusion. Participation by the public, interest groups and stakeholders at these early stages can help to ensure a common understanding of the problems and generate a wider range of possible solutions. All too often, pre-selected solutions are taken as the starting point of the strategy.

Appraisal

Once a range of possible solutions has been identified, they need to be appraised to assess their relative performance against the stated objectives. This process is often incomplete or inconsistent, with the appraisal concentrating exclusively on economic rather than also on environmental and social impacts, and with different appraisal methods for different types of solution. Public participation at the appraisal stage can help ensure that the best solutions are chosen. This in turn should ease the process of implementation.

Monitoring and evaluation

It is important, too, that the process does not stop with implementation. The Washington workshop stressed the value of regular monitoring to ensure that problems are being overcome and to check whether new ones are emerging. Evaluation of the impacts of more novel measures such as congestion charging can also help considerably in improving our understanding of their performance and potential. Finally, benchmarking of the experience of one city against that of other cities can provide valuable insights into factors leading to successful (and unsuccessful) policy outcomes. This can be helpful as cities work towards greater sustainability of their transport systems.

Need for robust urban travel data

The whole process of strategy development is reliant on high quality data. The Group's report on *Improving the Collection and Monitoring of Urban Travel Data* has focused on identifying the types of data which are needed, improving standards of collection, providing the finance to support data collection, and ensuring that data collected, particularly by the private sector, is readily available for public use, but in a way that protects commercial confidentiality.

18. Report of ECMT Conference on *Managing Transport Demand through User Charges: Experience to Date*, London, United Kingdom, 23 January 2004.
<http://www.cemt.org/topics/taxes/taxdocs.htm>

6. APPLYING THE KEY MESSAGES: FINDINGS OF THE WORK

So in light of the findings of the recent work, what can be said about how the ECMT's Key Messages of 2001 hold up in different countries, decision-making contexts and policy frameworks?

This section sets out some of the main issues emerging from this "testing" phase that shape, nuance, and further develop the Key Messages of 2001.

6.1 National Governments should establish a supportive national policy framework

This remains an essential requirement if cities are to be able to introduce sustainable urban transport strategies. All three workshops highlighted the issue: Washington demonstrated how a coordinated national transport planning and air quality framework impacts urban transport planning; this takes place in a devolved decision-making structure that allows flexibility on the local level for definition of objectives and use of federal transport funds to meet these air quality objectives; Moscow shed light in particular on the need for local areas to have national legislative and regulatory support in order to apply policy instruments to improve urban travel – notably to reduce urban congestion; Tokyo revealed the importance - in a highly deregulated context - of a national framework to enable local governments to apply innovative policy instruments.

Emerging from all the workshops was the message that national governments need to establish a high-level vision and goals for urban transport. This will provide a context for local government, which must be enabled to use the full range of policy instruments identified earlier in this paper. It will also help to ensure coherence among approaches taken by individual cities. National government also needs to employ policy levers such as taxation in ways which are consistent with its vision for urban transport. Finally, local governments need guidance on good practice and encouragement to enhance their performance.

6.2 National governments should improve institutional coordination and cooperation

Horizontal co-ordination

Of all the Key Messages, this is the most multi-faceted. There is a pressing need at the national level for greater collaboration between the Transport Ministry and others such as Finance, Planning, Environment and Industry ministries which influence transport. The implementation barriers arising from inconsistent policies are starkly drawn in the ECMT reports on CO₂ abatement, road safety and accessibility; they were also clearly identified in the ECMT's earlier reports on sustainable transport¹⁹ and on the successes and

19. ECMT (2000) *Sustainable Transport Policies*, <http://www.cemt.org/online/council/2000/CM0001Fe.pdf>

failures of transport policy²⁰. Ideally all these Ministries need to adopt a common policy approach to transport, which should be articulated by the Transport Ministry.

At regional and local levels similar horizontal coordination is needed. Ideally one authority should have responsibility for the full set of policy instruments which can help achieve sustainability so that integrated packages can be effectively implemented.

In particular, all three workshops demonstrated once again that transport and land use need to be planned together. Moreover, the transport impacts of policies on health, education and social inclusion, and the potential contributions of transport to those policies, need to be fully integrated into the overall strategy.

The ECMT work has shown, however, that despite widespread agreement that spatial and transport planning need to be co-ordinated to ensure sustainable development for urban areas, it remains a remote objective for many cities: urban transport planners and spatial planners still largely have difficulty finding a “common language” – even when policy and institutional structures are designed to promote and accommodate this interaction. And with the other sustainability imperatives cited above (health, education and social inclusion, etc.) the integration task has become that much more complex.

Ideally, transport policies in the larger cities should be planned by one body for the whole travel-to-work area; where this is not feasible, spatial coordination between adjacent authorities needs to be facilitated. Many types of regional or agglomeration-level transport authorities exist (e.g., the “autorités organisatrices” in France, the Metropolitan Planning Authorities in the United States) but in most cases, with only transport planning authority – not control over land use.

Vertical co-ordination

Effective vertical coordination among the tiers of government is also essential. National, regional and local government need to have common goals and objectives, with each providing a context for the next. National governments can achieve more by decentralising responsibility to lower tiers, but need to provide the necessary financial and advisory support and encourage collaboration. The decentralisation process undertaken in the Netherlands in the late 1990s and clarified for the transport sector in the recently promulgated National Mobility Policy Document is an example of how this can be done.²¹ As the ECMT report on organising and financing urban public transport emphasises, implementation is more efficient when the main responsibility for any one policy instrument is allocated to one tier of government. The Moscow workshop demonstrated the particular challenges of urban transport planning when such responsibilities are unclear.

20. ECMT (2003) *Fifty Years of Transport Policy: Successes, Failures and New Challenges*. <http://www.cemt.org/online/council/2003/CM0301e.pdf>

21. ECMT (2001), *Implementing Sustainable Urban Travel Policies, National Peer Review of the Netherlands*.

Public-private sector co-ordination

Finally there needs to be clear coordination between the public and private sectors, both in terms of investment in new transport facilities and in the provision of services. The urban public transport report suggests that there needs to be single agencies responsible for the strategic planning and tactical development of all aspects of public transport, even if operations are split between several public or private entities.

6.3 National governments should encourage effective public participation, partnerships and communication

Public involvement needs to be encouraged throughout the policy process: from the identification of problems, through articulation of possible solutions, to acceptance of preferred strategies and support for their implementation.

Public consultation in the design and implementation of transport plans is a key part of the US transport planning framework, as was clearly demonstrated in the Washington workshop, and public consultation is seen as an essential element in the development of realistic and achievable plans

An interesting example of public involvement in all phases of the planning process is the Envision Utah²² programme in the US, whereby an extensive public and stakeholder consultation was carried out for the design, assessment and implementation of a Quality Growth Strategy for the corridor surrounding Salt Lake City in which 80 per cent of the state's residents live. Of particular note is the "hands-on" nature of this consultation, whereby stakeholders were asked when presented with several growth scenarios for the area to indicate zones for preferred development, transport corridors, as well as preferred types of transport infrastructure development.

However public consultation it is not always an easy undertaking. Strasbourg and Oxford²³ - two cities that have implemented long-term, major changes to their transport systems - have had significant - if not always supportive - public and stakeholder involvement in the planning and implementation phases for these changes. Both examples demonstrate, however, as does the London congestion charging experience, the value of preparing users for the introduction of new and controversial measures.

The media play an increasingly important role in influencing public acceptance, and public authorities need to fully engage with them to articulate a clear understanding of problems and the case for preferred solutions.

Another message emerging from the experience in London is that whilst public preparation was indispensable to the successful launch of the scheme, a clear political

22. <http://www.cemt.org/UrbTrav/Workshops/InstBarriers/Thompson.pdf>

23. <http://www.cemt.org/UrbTrav/Workshops/InstBarriers/Williams.pdf> and <http://www.cemt.org/UrbTrav/Workshops/Carscities/Freani.pdf>

champion embodied in the Mayor was equally crucial to the scheme's early success. Political commitment at the Mayoral level - observed perhaps most strikingly in the now famous example from the 1970s of Curitiba, Brazil - has also been an important factor in the recent implementation of major changes to the public transport network in Paris - particularly the construction of exclusive bus lanes as well as the extension of the tramway system.

These examples demonstrate that strong political commitment is often a deciding factor in the success of policies designed to significantly change urban travel patterns.

6.4 National governments need to provide a supportive legal and regulatory framework

Many countries have enacted strong legislation and regulation to support local implementation of urban travel policies and measures—particularly as concerns the organisation and financing of urban public transport.

In some cases, however, legislation is still needed to enable local government to apply certain types of policy instrument; particularly certain demand management measures. In the United States, recent changes to transport legislation have made certain types of road pricing more feasible. The Moscow workshop demonstrated the difficulties of formulating strategies to manage demand where legislation is limited. The Japanese experience examined in Tokyo showed how a highly de-regulated environment for public transport can function quite well under certain circumstances, though effecting improvements to the system may be more difficult as policy levers are largely out of public hands.

Regulation needs to be consistent across transport modes and tiers of government. In particular, as mentioned earlier, there seems to be a clear case for some degree of competition in public transport - defined in a regulatory framework - whereby public agencies determine strategy and tactical planning of services, fares and information, and provide the context within which the private sector competes for the provision of efficient, high quality services. One continuing challenge is the need to encourage and support innovation where services are procured through contracts with private operators.

A message from the Group's recent work is the importance not just of effective regulations but of effective enforcement of those regulations. All too often controls on operators and users are made less effective by failure to devote resources to enforcement. This is particularly true, for example, with restrictive parking, speed limit and traffic calming schemes, which have limited effect if not backed up by robust enforcement measures. There is a strong case for involving Interior ministries directly in this aspect of transport policy.

6.5 National governments need to ensure a comprehensive pricing and fiscal structure

A comprehensive pricing policy should include measures addressing public transport fares, parking charges and possibly charges for road use. The valuable role that direct pricing of road use can play for managing traffic congestion and raising revenues for public transport has been shown in London's charging scheme. This then set a challenge for governments to decide how widely such measures can be applied. At the same time the report on organising and financing urban public transport has indicated the need for greater clarity in the setting of fares, with subsidies focused on those people in particular need, and more flexible pricing approaches to encourage public transport use. Overall, pricing needs to be consistent across transport modes, with charges approaching the marginal costs of travel.

6.6 National governments need to rationalise financing and investment streams

As the urban public transport report stresses, devolved financing needs to accompany devolved responsibilities, with Governments providing finance that is secure in the longer term and providing flexibility in the use of those finances. Finance, and the appraisal processes which support it, needs to be carried out in a consistent way across all modes and types of policy instrument. Since budgets will continue to be constrained, greater emphasis needs to be placed on the most cost-effective solutions; the US planning framework stresses the importance of financial realism in strategy development. There remains a case for identifying new sources of financial support, whether from hypothecation of charges for road use or from value capture from those whose property values rise as a result of transport investment.

6.7 National governments should improve data collection, monitoring and research

As noted above, the report on improving urban transport data collection and monitoring has focused on identifying the types of data which are needed at each of the stages in the process, improving standards of collection, providing the finance to support data collection, and ensuring that data collected, particularly by the private sector, is readily available for public use. The Group's workshops and urban public transport report all stressed the value of regular monitoring to understand trends and identify emerging problems, and benchmarking to help cities learn from one another and enhance their own performance. Finally they emphasise the need for more consistent evaluation of new or innovative policy instruments so that cities are able to learn from specific successes and failures. In particular, National Governments can help to promote development of competence and skills among agencies responsible for regular data collection and monitoring.

7. ASSESSMENT OF THE MESSAGES: HOW DO THEY HOLD UP?

It is clear from the Group's work that its seven Key Messages to Governments remain essential factors in the pursuit of transport sustainability in urban areas. Within them, a set of additional barriers to implementation of sustainable urban travel policies has been identified; they include problems (e.g., lack of technical skills/ competence, budgetary limitations) arising during the *process* of developing and implementing urban travel strategies, specifically during the:

- setting of objectives,
- appraisal of possible policy solutions, and
- monitoring and evaluating their results.

National Governments have a role to play - be it through technical, budgetary, or other means of support - in facilitating the development, appraisal, monitoring and evaluation process of integrated urban travel strategies at local or regional levels. Improvements to urban travel strategy development should then be monitored and evaluated to ensure the impact of this support.

An additional Key Message for Governments

With this in mind, an additional specific Key Message has emerged from the recent work, that:

National Governments should support local or regional authorities through technical, financial or other means as necessary and appropriate in the development, appraisal, monitoring and evaluation of integrated, sustainable urban travel strategies.

The ECMT's work on Implementing Sustainable Urban Travel Policies and its Key Messages for Governments provide a comprehensive policy and planning framework for Governments at all levels – particularly authorities at a national level – to improve the sustainability of their urban transport systems. In light of the recent focus on how these Messages apply in different decision-making structures and administrative contexts, the Key Messages appear to hold up – applicable to most all decision-making environments be they, for example, highly devolved, relatively centralised, or more deregulated.

With different starting points in countries shaped by a variety of factors - notably, decision-making structure, level of economic development, and size and density of urban areas relative to the country as a whole - there will clearly be no one approach to improving urban travel among the almost 50 countries now around the ECMT table.

The ECMT's Key Messages, however, articulate a common set of principles for all Governments for improving implementation of urban travel policies. It is hoped that Governments will find in these Key Messages an efficient, realistic, manageable way forward to better implementation of policies for sustainable urban travel.

ANNEX 1

Urban Travel and Sustainable Development: The 1995 ECMT/OECD Strategy

This strategy proposes a flexible, integrated approach based on three reinforcing strands of good practice, innovations and pricing to encourage sustainable urban development by reducing vehicle-kilometres travelled and fuel consumption. All three strands work towards these same goals, but the more progressive policy elements -- those of Strands 2 and 3 -- are intended to bring cities closer to achieving a reduction in congestion and energy consumption, improved access, higher environmental standards, as well as a reduction in costs. The strategy includes policies aimed at different levels of government. It also tries to account for the different needs of cities of different sizes. The idea is that the three parts of this policy strategy should be applied together, to ensure that a comprehensive, long-term approach to urban sustainability is undertaken. The report focuses on the impact of key policy tools, notably the:

- role of economic incentives and disincentives;
- role of land-use planning;
- potential of traffic management schemes;
- use of marketing, telematics and other innovations to improve public transport.

The main aspects of the ECMT/OECD policy approach are as follows.

- ⇒ Strand 1, *Best Practice*, involves raising the effectiveness of current land-use planning and traffic management measures -- such as parking control and provision and encouragement of other means of transport -- to the level of those in the best-managed cities. This entails wider use of measures that have already been tried and tested in cities, along with the adoption of standards and targets pertaining to road safety, environmental quality and social welfare.
- ⇒ Strand 2, *Policy Innovations*, entails developing new policies to shape urban development into less car-dependent forms and applying congestion pricing to traffic management, the objective being to bring demand for car travel into balance with road capacity. The land use planning measures include those dealing with which types of settlements should expand and where new developments should locate. Integration of land use and public transport routes, roads, cycling paths and walkways is a principal aspect of these policies, as are tighter and more extensive speed limit controls on through roads and traffic calming in residential and school zones. The traffic management initiatives include congestion pricing, parking reductions in city centre areas, priority for buses, park and ride services and further investment in transit infrastructure.
- ⇒ Strand 3, *Sustainable Development*, is comprised of repeated annual increases in motor fuel taxation to promote more economical vehicles, a shift in travel away from solo driving and greater use of environmentally friendly transport modes. This final aspect of the ECMT/OECD policy package holds what the report considers to be the key to reducing vehicle-km travelled and quantity of fuel consumed: a progressively increasing fuel tax. The report concludes that a 7 per cent annual increase in real terms in the price of fuel over a 20-year time period would reduce vehicle km-travelled to around two-thirds of the level forecast for this period and the amount of fuel used to approximately half of its projected level. According to the strategy, this strand is the only one of the three to bring CO₂ levels down to climate change targets established at Rio de Janeiro in 1992. If the price increase were applied along with the measures outlined in Strands 1 and 2, the report says that based on preliminary analysis and allowing for some uncertainty, vehicle-km travelled would fall to approximately 85 per cent and fuel consumption to about 60 per cent of 1991 levels by 2015. Savings would come from an approximate 25 per cent reduction in car trip lengths, slower growth in car ownership, modal shifting from car to public transport, increased cycling and walking, limited improvements in fuel consumption from driver behaviour improvements and enhanced vehicle fuel efficiency due to advances in engine design.

The fuel tax would also increase the effectiveness of land-use planning policies, increasing the costs of travel and thereby serving as an incentive for bringing jobs, homes and shopping closer together. Public transport systems, cycling paths and walkways would also see an increase in use because of the fuel tax.

The report concludes that all three strands of the policy package are necessary to reduce car travel -- especially in cities -- to achieve sustainable urban development. Together, the strategy suggests, they could substantially reduce the environmental costs of travel in OECD and ECMT countries.

ANNEX 2

KEY MESSAGES FOR GOVERNMENTS (2001) *abridged*

- **Establish** a national policy framework for sustainable urban travel that supports and influences national, regional and local goals for land use, passenger and freight transport, health and the environment.
- **Improve** institutional co-ordination and co-operation, by co-ordinating national policy approaches on urban land-use, travel, health and the environment; decentralising responsibilities when possible; centralising when necessary; providing a consistent, integrated framework for National Government financing and investment in regional and local transport and land-use actions while ensuring adequate flexibility for local innovation...
- **Encourage** effective public participation, partnerships and communication;
 - Involve the public ... early in the strategy design process and provide for their active involvement throughout implementation and monitoring; Seek partnerships with different stakeholders in the transport system ...; Inform and communicate with transport system clients...
- **Provide** a supportive legal and regulatory framework
 - Ensure that rules and regulations for public transport clearly specify the relative roles of public and private sectors in service and infrastructure provision and financing; Ensure that measures to promote walking and cycling in urban areas as well as transport demand management tools... are supported in the legal and regulatory framework; Fully integrate air quality, greenhouse gas, noise and other environmental targets into transport and land-use policy and adopt (and rigorously monitor implementation of) technical standards for vehicles and fuels ...
- **Ensure** a comprehensive pricing and fiscal structure (that sends) the right messages promoting sustainable urban transport across sectors.
- **Rationalise** financing and investment streams.
 - Channel revenues from pricing initiatives (e.g., road or congestion pricing, parking fines, etc.) so that benefits can be felt by those bearing the costs; Allocate funding (investments or other) in a balanced way among different travel modes to maximise efficiency in the performance of the urban transport system and avoid development of one mode to the detriment of another. Funding decisions should be based on assessment of the relative environmental, economic and equity impacts of particular modes. Further, infrastructure investment decisions should fully take into consideration objectives for travel demand management.
 - Weigh national investment and financing in capital cities against funding needs in secondary and tertiary cities.
- **Improve** data collection, monitoring and research
 - (...)Urban data, particularly as concerns urban travel and land use and their interactions, remain sparse, inconsistent and often of overall poor quality. Data are not collected in a consistent way among cities and collection methods are often subject to modification within a given city. National Governments can take initiatives or support on-going activities to improve consistency of data collection.
 - Carry out consistent monitoring of implementation of urban travel and land use activities and their links to health and environmental objectives (...) and organise and finance research, development, and testing of potential solutions to promote sustainable urban travel and land use. Encourage exchange of best practice (...)

ANNEX 3

Terms of Reference Implementing Sustainable Urban Travel Policies: Moving Ahead (*abridged*)

Objectives of the Project

The principal objectives of this current phase of ECMT work are to carry forward the findings of the work on Implementation of Sustainable Urban Travel Policies, in particular, the Key Messages for Governments agreed at the Lisbon Council in 2001. Using the Lisbon Ministerial mandate as the guidelines for the work, try to better ascertain how the recommendations on implementation can be put into action in ECMT Member and Associate Member countries. The work is attempting to make the Key Messages more relevant and applicable in ECMT countries, thereby building capacity for implementation of sustainable urban transport policies at national and local levels.

The work is structured around three main elements:

- A series of workshops to test, disseminate and promote the findings and recommendations of the work;
- A series of studies on specific urban travel policy topics that will further understanding of the policy and institutional barriers to implementation. This includes further exploration of ways to improve consistency in urban data collection and monitoring;
- And using the previous elements as inputs, the development of guidelines for national governments on implementing sustainable urban travel policies.

Project Elements

1. Workshops to “test”, disseminate and promote the findings and recommendations of the work on regional/local levels. The purpose of these workshops is to:
 - promote and disseminate the conclusions and recommendations of the work on implementation, in particular the Key Messages for Governments;
 - evaluate how these implementation findings find relevance and applicability in different “macro-regions”, government systems and structures and when confronted with different urban travel situations and needs.

Three workshops have been carried out as follows:

- *United States*
 - *The United States Department of Transportation hosted the first workshop entitled Fostering Successful Implementation of Sustainable Urban Travel Policies, 5-7 November 2003 in Washington D.C.*
- *Russia and other CIS Countries*
 - *The Ministry of Transport of Russia hosted a Workshop entitled “Implementing Sustainable Urban Travel Policies in Russia and Other CIS Countries” 30 September-1 October 2004 in Moscow.*
- *Japan and other Asia-Pacific Countries*
 - *The Ministry for Land, Infrastructure and Transport in Japan hosted the third workshop in the series : Implementing Sustainable Urban Travel Policies in Japan & Other Asia-Pacific Countries, 2-3, March 2005 in Tokyo.*

.../...

Terms of Reference
Implementing Sustainable Urban Travel Policies: Moving Ahead (*cont'd*)

- 2 Studies on specific topics
 - Improving the Collection and Monitoring of Urban Travel Data
 - Organisation and Financing of Public Transport
 - National Policies to Promote Cycling
- 3 - Guidance for Governments on Implementation of Sustainable Urban Travel Policies will be prepared as the final output of the project drawing from the findings of the workshop series and the specific topic studies.

Project Organisation and Supervision

The project is carried out by the ECMT Secretariat in co-ordination with colleagues at OECD, the EC and other international bodies. The work is supervised as in the past by the ECMT's Sustainable Urban Travel Steering Group.