Moving towards sustainability? The consequences of residential relocation for mobility and the built environment

Ein Umzug in Richtung Nachhaltigkeit? Die Auswirkungen von Wohnortswechseln auf Mobilität und Siedlungsentwicklung

Funding: National (Switzerland)
Duration: Oct 2005 - Apr 2008
Status: Complete with results

Background & policy context:
Transport infrastructure makes up one third of the built environment in Switzerland. Particularly in agglomerations, traffic problems have increased. There is a consensus among experts that the transport policy measures implemented so far have not been able to promote a development towards sustainability. Part of society shows little interest in changing its personal mobility habits, which are characterized by deeply entrenched habits and routines.

Objectives:
Recent studies suggest that routine behaviour becomes weakened at certain moments when people reorganize their personal lives, for example when starting a family or moving home. With this in mind, the project seeks to identify potential for impacting personal mobility through transport policy, taking residential location into account. At the same time, the project aims at a better understanding of the mobility-relevant decision-making processes associated with moving house. The results should provide insight into the way people generally change their mobility patterns during a time of personal transition.

Methodology:
The project will be conducted in four steps:

1) In-depth biographical interviews in order to reconstruct the decisive relationships and effects in individual mobility behaviours

2) Panel survey in two phases, yielding representative evidence

3) Experimental intervention: One half of the survey participants will be provided with information and advice relevant to mobility; later differences in mobility will be tracked between the two groups

4) Qualitative case study to understand what impacts an intervention had on the target group

Parent Programmes:
NRP 54 - Sustainable Development of the Built Environment (National Research Programme 54)

Institute type: Public institution
Institute name: SNF - Swiss National Science Foundation
Funding type: Public (national/regional/local)

Partners:
Switzerland:
Interface - Institut für Politikstudien

Organisation: Interface - Institut für Politikstudien
Key Results:

The research demonstrates how individuals change their mobility patterns during a time of personal transition. It aims to shift people's mobility behaviour and preferred modes of mobility in the direction of greater sustainability.

The results show a move to central locations, which is - from the perspective of mobility - a move towards sustainability. Furthermore, total time spent in traffic time went back, in motorised transport even more than 40 percent, while more time for non-motorised transportation was spent.

It also realised that the potential of a sustainable mobility measure should not be overestimated. Behavioral changes due to the intervention are about 10 percent, within these behavioral changes mainly towards non-motorized traffic have moved.

Overall, the study demonstrated that the biographical interface of migration (moving to a new place of residence or place of work) should have more attention within a comprehensive mobility management. It is about looking for strategies on how people with a latent readiness can be addressed specifically to a change behavior, if possible even before the move.

Documents:

- 21_07_2011_08_19_20-NFP54MOBILITaeTSVERHALTENMovingtowardssustainability.pdf (Final report)

STRIA Roadmaps: Smart mobility and services
Transport mode: Multimodal transport
Transport sectors: Passenger transport, Freight transport
Transport policies: Safety/Security, Decarbonisation, Societal/Economic issues
Geo-spatial type: Urban