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What users think about Mobility as a Service?

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The success of Mobility as a Service (MaaS) depends on having a deep understanding of the motives, expectations, perceptions and concerns of key actors. This study used a mix-method approach to gain an understanding of MaaS users in Hungary and the UK. It found that, while there was a willingness to join a MaaS, a lack of data and app programming interfaces were key operational/technical barriers. The study provides useful insights for MaaS actors to make informed decisions to implement MaaS schemes.

MaaS has the potential to contribute to a more sustainable transport system. The main goal of MaaS is to offer travellers flexible, reliable and seamless door-to-door mobility based on travel needs, made feasible by combining different transport modes from various mobility service providers and by the use of technology.

Transport planners, operators, policy makers and citizens are interested in how the MaaS market will evolve in the future. Existing research indicates that MaaS could contribute to reducing dependence on private vehicles and transport-related emissions; and enhancing transport system reliability. However, potential societal, operational, financial and regulatory barriers might limit its success. The potential benefits of MaaS will only materialise if the requirements of the involved MaaS actors are satisfied, needs and expectations of customers are met, and the existing barriers to MaaS implementation are identified.

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This study provides evidence from stakeholders and end users with regards to different aspects of MaaS by combining qualitative and quantitative data. It explored stakeholders' and end-users' motives, expectations, perceptions and concerns regarding MaaS. Stakeholder workshops, focus groups and an on-line questionnaire were undertaken to gather input from end-users in Budapest (Hungary) and Greater Manchester (UK).

The findings suggest that several aspects of MaaS deserve attention such as expected benefits, partnership issues, offered products and services, payment and ticketing, anticipated barriers to implementation and end-user concerns.

In general, different motives and perspectives among MaaS actors were identified in the two different geographical and cultural contexts. The analysis showed that gaining access to better-quality demand data, and increased revenue and market share could strongly motivate mobility service providers to join MaaS. For end users, travellers expect a MaaS scheme to provide reliable, real-time and flexible transport services. Therefore, all available transport modes in each city should be integrated under the umbrella of MaaS. In addition, having a MaaS app is an important component of a MaaS system. It could facilitate MaaS payment and ticketing and provide travellers with several mobility-related services, such as personalised mobility recommendations based on their needs and habits, and notifications regarding selected route/mode.

Despite the positive aspects of MaaS, a number of barriers regarding its implementation were identified. From a social perspective, the reliance of people on private vehicles is considered to be the strongest in both study areas, but stakeholder perspectives were different due to different transport and cultural characteristics.

Regarding operational/technical barriers, the limited availability of app programming interfaces was found to be the strongest barrier in Greater Manchester, while the unwillingness of transport operators to share data was expected to be the strongest barrier in Budapest. In both studies, institutional/regulatory barriers included the reorganisation of business by the MaaS actors, the creation of a monopoly in the long term, and the unwillingness of mobility service providers and MaaS operators to cooperate. Privacy issues, mainly driven from the exchange of tracking credit-card data, constitute a significant concern of end users regarding the MaaS acceptance rate.

The study provides insights into the needs of MaaS actors and barriers to the adoption of MaaS. The comparative analysis provides evidence that important variations may exist in geographic areas due to differences in culture, politics, level of technology readiness and transport system maturity. Therefore, a case-specific analysis should be undertaken to ensure the successful implementation of MaaS.