



Project planning vs. strategic planning: Promoting a different perspective for sustainable transport policy in European R&D projects



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ABSTRACT

The European Commission is heavily engaged in financing R&D projects to support the development of sustainable transport. One of its largest initiatives is CIVITAS, which was launched in 2002 to re-think transport initiatives and policies in order to create cleaner, better transport in cities.

The European Commission has stated that, despite all the efforts, the transport sector is not yet on the path to sustainability. In view of the discrepancy between its programmatic goals and current transport development in Europe, the CIVITAS initiative needs to be scrutinized: is the initiative able to effectively promote the development of sustainable transport? In dealing with this question, the authors draw on more than ten years of active participation in projects of the CIVITAS initiative. Focusing on the MIMOSA project, a cooperation between five European cities in five different countries, the authors show how shortcomings within the organizational framework of the initiative lead to immense transaction costs.

In conclusion, the authors propose a programmatic shift from project planning to a strategic approach and make recommendations concerning the political and administrative structures needed to implement this strategic approach.

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1. Introduction

According to the European Commission (EC), the transport sector constitutes one of the most pressing challenges in European policy. Today, transport accounts for around one quarter of EU CO₂ emissions. Scenarios developed by the European Commission based on unchanged policy and an annual economic growth rate between 1.2% and 2.2% predict an increase in personal transport of 51% and in freight transport of 82% in the EU in the period 2005–2050 (COM, 2011b). Moreover, the transport sector is the only one in which carbon dioxide emissions are still increasing (EEA, 2015b). Against this background, the most recent White Paper for transport, which reflects on ten years of European transport policy, concludes that, despite the success in establishing an internationally competitive single market, the transport sector is not moving in the direction of sustainable development (COM, 2011a). Should there be no changes in the political circumstances, the EC outlines a rather dramatic scenario:

“If we stick to the business as usual approach, the oil dependence of transport might still be little below 90%, with renewable energy sources only marginally exceeding the 10% target set for 2020. CO₂ emissions from transport would remain one third higher than their 1990 level by 2050. Congestion costs will increase by about 50% by 2050. The accessibility gap between central and peripheral areas will widen. The social costs of accidents and noise would continue to increase” (ibid., p. 4).

The recently published *Report on the Implementation of the 2011 White Paper on Transport* confirms this statement and thus recommends that “the list of the initiatives and action points proposed in the White Paper should be adapted and complemented on a regular basis, and evaluated against their effectiveness to reach the overarching long-term objectives” (COM, 2015, p. 30). The principal message is that the European Union still has no planning strategy and has not used its power to formulate a sustainable transport policy. Business as usual is not an option and all past activities have to be reviewed in order to learn from the failure to reach the goal of developing a sustainable transport system, formulated in the White Paper (ibid.). In addition, a fundamental decarbonization of the transport sector will require not just technological solutions but also policies that encourage significant changes in behavior (EEA, 2015a).

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One particular field that the EC is heavily engaged in is financing R&D projects to support the development of sustainable transport. One of its largest initiatives is CIVITAS (CItY-VITaLity-SustainabiliTy), which was launched in 2002 to rethink transport measures and policies in order to create cleaner, better transport in cities. Over the last ten years, the initiative has provided support for more than 200 cities with EU-funded investments of well over EUR 200 million, and thereby succeeded in examining about 800 measures and urban transport solutions. With regard to the continuation of CIVITAS in the context of the overall research initiative HORIZON 2020, it is time to take a closer look at its impact on the development of sustainable transport and to learn from the experience gained.

The present paper focuses on the CIVITAS project MIMOSA, in which the Technische Universität Berlin played a vital part, and also evaluated the measures. This has provided us with distinct insight into the overall mode of operation and into the corresponding results. The findings will be situated in the context of European transport planning and policy as a fundamental part of market integration. On the basis of a political-economic approach to European integration, the case study MIMOSA will be interpreted in the context of conflicts concerning European transport policy and planning for a competitive and sustainable transport system (Section 2).

In order to ensure a sound interpretation, we will place the CIVITAS project MIMOSA in the theoretical frame of European Policy, Economic Sociology and European Transport Planning (Section 3). In referring to the theoretical insights of European Policy we interpret European integration as a primarily market-driven integration process. The theoretical approach of Economic Sociology reveals the supposedly “natural” market integration to be a social construct, which can be politically shaped. This fundamental insight leads us to understand European Transport Planning as a constant tension between economic competition and political cooperation, which has been pushed forward in favor of the former over the last thirty years, but which can be politically rectified in the direction of positive integration, in favor of more cooperation. With regard to this theoretical background we will discuss the MIMOSA case study, in the process identifying three so-called “traps” (Section 4), before we present three recommendations concerning how to escape the identified traps by setting as a goal a politicization in the field of European transport (Section 5).

2. Furthering innovation in mobility and sustainable actions: the case of CIVITAS PLUS MIMOSA

2.1. CIVITAS, CIVITAS PLUS and MIMOSA

CIVITAS is an initiative of the European Commission to promote cleaner and better transport in cities. The initiative is designed to assist European cities to achieve a more sustainable, cleaner and more energy-efficient urban transport system, by implementing and evaluating an integrated set of technology and policy-based measures. The CIVITAS Initiative has been carried out in four generations of demonstration projects over the last decade: CIVITAS I, CIVITAS II, CIVITAS PLUS and CIVITAS PLUS II. It started in early 2002 within the 5th Framework Research Program of the European Commission Directorate General for Energy and Transport (DG TREN) and included 19 cities clustered in four projects (MIRACLES, TELLUS, TRENDSETTER and VIVALDI). Following the success of the first phase of the Initiative, CIVITAS II was launched in 2005 to provide support for 17 cities in four additional projects (CARAVEL, MOBILIS, SMILE, SUCCESS), funded by the 6th Research Framework Program. CIVITAS PLUS, funded by the 7th Research Framework Program, began in 2008 and included 25 cities (three of which were part of CIVITAS I or II) in five demonstration projects (ARCHIMEDES, ELAN, MIMOSA, MODERN, RENAISSANCE). The current CIVITAS PLUS II is much more modest in scale: only two projects are being funded (DYN@MO, 2MOVE2), providing support for 8 cities (www.civitas.eu).

Hence each phase has included several projects, or clusters of demonstration cities with similar interests and areas of emphasis, such as clean fuels, mobility management, etc. To implement the measures concerned, the cities involved formed partnerships with other local stakeholders, both public (e.g. public transport providers, universities) and private (technology vendors, freight logistics companies, and employers, etc.). CIVITAS is thus centered on municipalities, but strongly encourages the integration of other public and private parties and therefore offers co-financing to these as well. Since the inception of CIVITAS more than ten years ago, the basic structure and key elements have remained the same. The four key elements of CIVITAS are:

- CIVITAS is coordinated by cities: it is a program “of cities for cities”
- Cities are at the heart of local public-private partnerships
- Political commitment is a basic requirement
- Cities are living “laboratories” for learning and evaluating

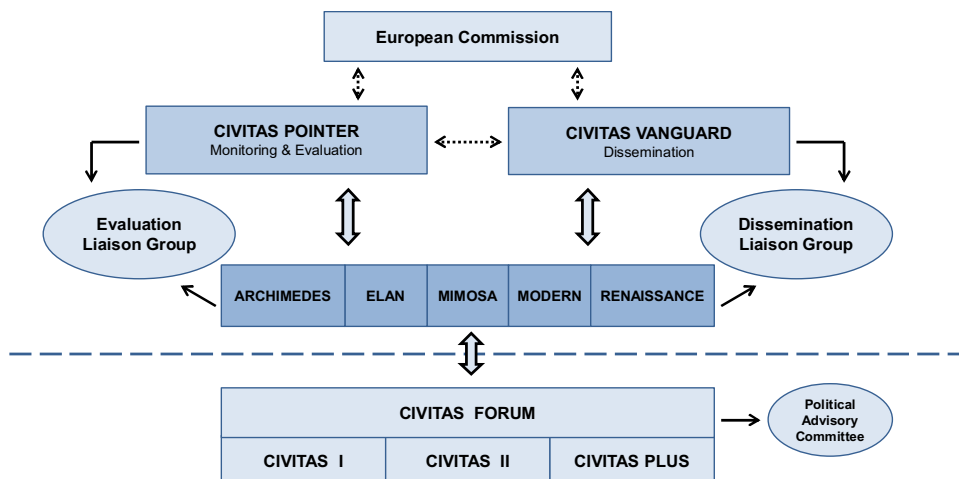


Fig. 1. Organizational Structure of CIVITAS PLUS.

Innovation within the context of CIVITAS has to be considered in the social, economic and even geographical context of the city. In some cases, the application may not be technically innovative but in the context of the culture and history of the country/city it may represent an innovative and challenging departure from the norm.

Fig. 1 shows the organizational structure of CIVITAS PLUS, in order to illustrate interaction between the projects within the overall context of the CIVITAS Initiative. The lower part of the figure shows the organizational structure, highlighting the strong network character of the former CIVITAS cities which are still exchanging ideas and experiences within the framework of the CIVITAS FORUM, a conference held annually in one of the FORUM cities. Furthermore, there is the Evaluation Liaison Group (ELG), composed of POINTER and Project Evaluation Managers of the CIVITAS PLUS projects. To ensure cross-project information exchange and decisions on evaluation processes, the ELG holds regular meetings. The Political Advisory Committee is a group of locally-elected officials who are appointed by the European Commission from among the CIVITAS Forum Network members. The CIVITAS Political Advisory Committee serves as a conduit for policy issues related to CIVITAS and its objectives and outcomes. On the one hand, the CIVITAS Political Advisory Committee represents the CIVITAS Forum Network cities at high-level European discussions and events; on the other hand, it provides a sounding board for the European Commission for issues related to urban transport, in addition to the member states-oriented Expert Group on Urban Mobility.

MIMOSA (Making Innovations in MObility and Sustainable Actions) was one of the projects encompassed by CIVITAS PLUS. Its demonstration cities encompass quite diverse physical, climatic and cultural conditions, since they extend geographically from the Baltic north-east to the Atlantic south-west. The cities of Bologna (Italy), Funchal (Portugal), Gdansk (Poland), Tallinn (Estonia) and Utrecht (The Netherlands) have implemented a total of 69 demonstration measures. At times, more than 16 partners from 7 countries worked together towards three main long-term objectives: improving the quality of life, reducing transport-related CO₂ and NO_x emissions and increasing the modal split in the direction of sustainable modes of transport.

2.2. Evaluation in MIMOSA

A key part of all the projects within CIVITAS is evaluation, since it is important to understand the nature and extent of the impacts of the measures introduced in the cities, and of the processes involved. For each CIVITAS measure implemented by a city, both impact and process evaluation have to be carried out and fully reported. In specific cases and by agreement, such as where implementation is too late for any meaningful impact evaluation to be carried out, process evaluation is the minimum acceptable output. The aim is to ensure that the evaluation within individual cities and projects is undertaken in such a way that the impacts of individual measures, or sets of measures, are understood in a clear and unambiguous way, with rigorous statistical interpretation where this is possible and valuable. Methods, approaches and outputs are coordinated and comparable across cities, so that a coherent overall understanding can be developed at a European level. The method of evaluation was the result of a dialogue on the European level (e.g. Evaluation Liaison Group) and the learning process within CIVITAS.

In MIMOSA the management of project evaluation was carried out by the Department of Integrated Transport Planning at the Technische Universität Berlin (TUB). Fig. 2 shows the structure of the evaluation group within CIVITAS PLUS in the case of CIVITAS MIMOSA. Project evaluation management is the link between POINTER and the city evaluation teams, known as local evaluation

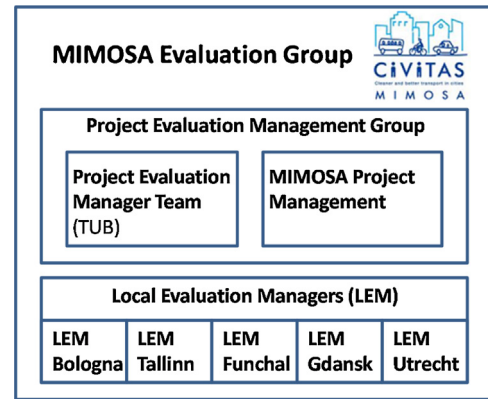


Fig. 2. MIMOSA Evaluation Group.

management. All CIVITAS PLUS project evaluation managers meet twice a year with POINTER and the EC in the Evaluation Liaison Group to discuss and modify evaluation activities at the cross-project level.

In each of the five demonstration cities the appointed local evaluation manager was responsible for coordinating the evaluation, for the elaboration and drafting of the Local Evaluation Plan, the collection and analysis of data and reporting the evaluation results. The local evaluation manager worked closely with the site manager, who is responsible for the overall local management of MIMOSA measures in the city. At the level of individual measures, measure leaders were appointed to guide their implementation. Each city organized the evaluation in a specific way, involving different partners by outsourcing the activities related to evaluation, which resulted in various multiplier effects as well as hampering mechanisms. Often, the LEM was also responsible for implementing the measures, resulting in the peculiar situation whereby the final reports have to fulfil two – sometimes conflicting – objectives: first, to justify the taxpayer-funded investments in the measure and second, to outline exactly what the measure involved and how it was evaluated. The latter means that “bad” results or unsatisfactory results also need to be reported and the processes analyzed. In the case of certain cultural contexts, this will require a change in attitude (Riedel et al., 2013). That is henceforth referred to as the “legitimacy trap”.

In MIMOSA and also in CIVITAS PLUS, generally speaking, significant efforts were made to apply good evaluation practice in order to show the effects of the implemented measures and to make the information gathered and the lessons learned available to other cities and future projects. However, despite comprehensive plans, support activities and preparation on the part of the evaluation management, the evaluation activities and results reported can in the end deviate from the guidelines. It is important to state that there is a gap between the ambitious concepts of evaluation based on classic evaluation theory and the actual evaluation activities conducted on the local level within the cities. The reasons for this are multifaceted—for instance timing problems, limited resources or a lack of skills at the local level (Dziekan, 2012).

The importance of evaluation was supported by the organizational structure (see Section 2.1), headed by CIVITAS POINTER, which played an active role as the interface to the EC. POINTER was in charge of creating a common approach to evaluation among the cities by providing guidelines as well as the accompanying monitoring and evaluation support activities, including initial training. POINTER training courses took place mainly in the first half of the project and included topics ranging from general overviews of evaluation to specific aspects, such as cost-benefit

evaluation. In most cases, the Local Evaluation Managers were unable to postpone their everyday activities in order to spend up to two or three days away from home for a half-day workshop. Additionally, those who did participate in the training courses were either not always responsible for the area under focus, or their local responsibilities changed in the course of the project. Hence the knowledge they acquired through the training was, with the exception of a few cases, no longer available in the second half of the project lifespan (Riedel et al., 2013). But even actively participating in POINTER workshops did not in itself necessarily translate into good practice evaluation on the level of individual measures. Often, the information provided during the training was very basic, due to the diverse backgrounds of the participants, and had to be adapted to the city in question and to the measure-specific context. As a result, additional individual training was necessary, tailored to the respective cities. The lack of continuity in the area of personnel and the resulting low level of competence is referred to as the “fluctuation trap”.

Communication and cooperation with all partners and authorities was essential for the success of each measure and for meaningful evaluation. During the project, the practical support for the cities provided by the Project Evaluation Team included organizing relevant topic-oriented workshops and training sessions, managing the evaluation working group meetings in the context of consortium meetings and holding bilateral consultations to ensure the advice and support provided were relevant to the context and the measures in question. On the European level, the Project Evaluation Team regularly informed POINTER on the state of evaluation work, to which they in turn gave important feedback regarding the comparability of results. While it was possible for some of this communication to take place in the form of regularly scheduled telephone conferences, most activities required a face-to-face meeting. This is referred to as the “communication trap”. Consequently, frequent travel across Europe was necessary for all project partners. Since most of these trips were done by plane due to the great geographic distance between the partners, the question remains whether all this travelling was ultimately sustainable.

3. Interpretive tools: European transport policy and planning

If one places the identified inadequacies in a theoretical framework of European policy and transport planning, it is possible to interpret the current situation and to make recommendations for future European R&D projects. Fundamental to European policy as well as to planning theory and more particularly to transport planning is the concept of integration. However, a closer look reveals that “integration” is often understood in quite different ways.

3.1. European policy: the dominance of negative integration

From the very beginning, the process of European integration was dominated by austerity policies (Möller, 2015). Even though this policy was often challenged, a technocratic understanding of integration with a clear focus on market integration prevailed, while social and political integration lagged behind (Brunckhorst, 2015). Consequently, social and political regulation on the national level was gradually abandoned in favor of market competition—so-called negative integration (Scharpf, 2007). What is more, there was no compensation through social and political regulation on the European level.

This narrow view of European integration was widely criticized for its neglect of growing social disparities and of the continuous dismantling of political power (Joerges et al., 2005). The critique draws on the work of the economic historian, Karl Polanyi (1977).

In his study of 19th-century ‘laissez-faire capitalism’, Polanyi describes a process of what he calls dis-embedding the economy from the social and political context. As long as negative market integration based on competition between economic agents prevailed, positive integration involving social cohesion and political regulation based on cooperation were largely suspended. As a consequence, social relations were disrupted and political power reduced to an instrument of economic advantage. Society, as Polanyi puts it, turned into a “Devil’s mill” where everybody is fighting against each other.

Many observers interpreted the global financial crisis in 2008 and in particular the consequences for the European Union as a direct result of this misguided, neo-liberal path of economic development, where the social and political dimension of societal integration was increasingly neglected (Streeck, 2009; Crouch, 2011; Offe, 2014). Currently, the “Brexit” reveals the fundamental lack of political integration in Europe, in terms of both social coherence and political regulation. From this point of view, Europe is therefore faced with the challenge of politicizing European integration (Hoeglinger, 2016). Before discussing what ‘politicizing’ means in the field of European transport policy and planning, we will first describe the approach taken by the new Economic Sociology, which is particularly helpful in conceptualizing market integration.

3.2. Economic sociology: the economy as a polity

Even though European Integration has so far been mainly market driven, it is in no sense a one-way street. In fact, economic integration has been increasingly accompanied by a considerable number of rulings by the European Court of Justice (ECJ) meant to protect social rights (Ferrera, 2005). In analyzing the individual social rights that the ECJ granted to labor migrants and their families, and referring to Polanyi, Caporaso and Tarrow (2009) take the established legal system as proof of the social embedding of market forces. By contrast, Höppner and Schäfer (2010) convincingly point out that social rights are subsumed under the freedom of settlement, of services and of movement. European social rights are intended to support the free market integration regardless of the national situation and particular needs. In serving a negative integration, the European legal practice of social rights is embedded in market integration, not the other way round. The “Brexit” can be interpreted as a symptom of this technocratic approach, which is not able to provide answers to the pressing social and political questions of European Integration.

Even if we do not go along with Caporaso’s and Arrow’s interpretation, namely that market forces are already embedded in the current European legal system, their reference to the emergence of a comprehensive European legal system nevertheless points to an important development. For the existing legal institutions could be used in the framework of a political strategy to foster positive European integration. But that requires a more advanced political-economic analysis, focusing on European integration as a contested political decision-making process from the outset (Hooghe and Marks, 2009). The new economic sociology is concerned with analyzing the social and institutional embedding of market actors and their specific practices (Beckert and Zafirovski, 2006). It takes the empirical phenomenon of coordination problems as the starting point of its investigations, and its insights into the institutional, cultural and social constitution of markets can be utilized for the analysis and a better understanding of European market integration (Beckert, 2002).

In an historical perspective, market societies develop only in evolution with modern structures of state government (Fligstein, 2001). Looking back on human history, Acemoglu and Robinson (2012) identify what they call extractive and inclusive political

structures and distinguish two different types of economic institutions which pursue either a negative or a positive societal integration. While extractive political structures are caught in a vicious circle of precarious conditions with a tendency to political instability, inclusive structures are much stronger and consequently more successful in fostering social balance. With respect to European transport policy and planning, which has so far failed to achieve sustainability, the question remains as to how inclusive political structures and economic institutions that favor positive integration can be established, which would then facilitate integrated transport policy and planning (Marshall and Banister, 2008). This requires a closer look at the state of affairs in European transport planning.

3.3. European transport planning: competition versus cooperation

For a long time, the planning disciplines confidently followed a “godfather” model. The so-called master builders assumed that, due to their position as experts with exclusive knowledge, they were able simply to choose between different planning alternatives and find the right one (Marcuse, 2011). But planners were not the only ones with this self-perception, politicians also went to the planning disciplines expecting clear solutions for complex societal problems. In this way, policy and planning as distinct spheres, each with a specific functional logic, proved to be mutually reinforcing.

This kind of “authoritarian” planning was widely criticized and planning as a primarily public task increasingly called into question (Klostermann, 1985). It was argued that government was less able to manage the highly-differentiated social relations in modern societies and as a result its actions were economically inefficient. Public policy was seen as being unable to cope with the growing variety of societal needs—put simply, it seemed to be overstretched. The solution to this governance problem in public planning was seen in market integration. It was believed that, in contrast to public organizations, the market has all the relevant information at its disposal and is thus predestined to assume the task of public planning and eradicate the latter’s deficiencies—the market knows best (Prasad, 2006). In order to make way for the market mechanism in the transport sector, those responsible for transport policy set about reducing the influence of public policy (deregulation), opened the transport sector to private competition (liberalization), with the final step being a partial withdrawal in favor of private stakeholders (privatization).

Ironically, as a result of the neo-liberal revolution, with its aim of enhancing individual freedom, a new authoritarian “godfather” model ended up being established in the field of transport policy and planning. While public policy had previously been based on clear, rationally-founded solutions proposed by omniscient planners, now, after imposing the rules of the market, it was the economist who served as the central point of reference for public initiatives. The authoritarian public planner, the almighty master builder, had been replaced by the guardian of the quasi-natural rules of the market, which had to be followed unquestioningly—The Masters of the Universe (Jones, 2012). Public authorities had surrendered their power to shape policy and planning, which was placed in the hands of the market, now the basis of all decisions and action. In light of the current situation, Campel et al. (2014) rightly ask if there is any space for better planning in a neo-liberal world.

European transport development over the last twenty years has been significantly influenced by the neo-liberal paradigm and shaped by an economically-driven transport policy, focusing on competitive market integration (Stead, 2015). An alternative to the prevailing idea of competitive markets is the programmatic guiding principle of integrated transport policy and planning,

formulated in the European White Paper on Transport. While the former, the champions of the market, pursue a strategy of deregulation meant to foster competition, the latter stands for cooperation and points to the necessity of regulations, on social and ecological grounds. The dominance of free market competition in the European transport sector means there is a wide gap between the European transport policy program outlined in the White Paper on Transport on the one hand and the real, unsustainable transport development on the other hand (Dyrhaug, 2013).

The contradiction between market competition and political cooperation is still inscribed in European transport policy and planning, as the recently published *Report on the implementation of the 2011 White Paper on Transport* shows. According to the European White Paper on Transport, even though the European transport system is not yet sustainable and major efforts are still required to transform it, it nevertheless still supports the economically biased “overarching vision to achieve a competitive and resource-efficient transport system” (COM, 2015, pp. 26). The entire report is marked by the dilemma consisting of decades of quite successful experience with negative market integration from an economic point of view and, at the same time, unsustainable transport development due to a lack of positive integration and policy implementation.

As a consequence of this devastating insight, the report advocates a common political strategy and selected interventions: “Mutually complementary action will be needed at national, regional and local levels of government as well as by citizens and industry themselves” (ibid.).

We agree with the report when it argues that establishing an inventory of past initiatives is a precondition for a European strategy in transport policy and planning. Because of a significant information gap between the objectives and the means by which they might be achieved, the activities should first be subjected to a thorough evaluation: “The very ambitious targets appear very difficult to reach, as long as they are not backed up with [sic] a more detailed and solid project plan, linked to realistic and workable short and medium-term targets along the way towards the long-term (2050) goals” (ibid.).

Taking up the question raised by Campel et al. (2014), namely whether there is space for better planning in a neo-liberal world, we will now discuss the political economy of the MIMOSA case, referring to the theoretical framework of European transport planning and policy.

4. Results & discussion

Against this theoretical background, with respect to the MIMOSA case study we were able to identify three structural problems of European R&D projects: (1) the legitimacy trap, (2) the fluctuation trap and (3) the communication trap. An analysis of these findings leads to recommendations on how to ameliorate the unsatisfactory situation.

4.1. The legitimacy trap—lack of institutions

As was discussed in Section 2, the CIVITAS initiative is now a mature, well-established entity at the EU level. For more than ten years, CIVITAS has been continuously improved, learning from the past, which has resulted in a structure able to support the implementation of measures as well as high-quality evaluation of these measures. But while the internal organization of CIVITAS has been improved, there are two interfaces that have not: (a) the affiliation between the EU-level and the cities; (b) knowledge transfer from city to city.

The affiliation between the EU-level and the cities is characterized by a hierarchically-structured organization and project-driven, top-down management. This one-sided relationship is essentially legitimized by money transfers from the EU to the cities and is temporally limited to the duration of the project. As a result, the motivation on the local level to create durable joint institutions is quite low and it is thus quite difficult to put into practice an integrated transport policy and planning strategy to support the development of sustainable transport.

In addition, the idea of knowledge transfer between so called 'leading cities' and 'follower cities' lacks legitimization because of an unequal relationship and the absence of durable institutions. While on the one hand there is little reason for the participants from the well-established, leading cities to engage in the education of others in follower cities, on the other hand, the participants from the follower cities see themselves as failures and easily feel embarrassed. At an inter-city level, there has been a failure to create institutions that facilitate a durable integrated transport policy and planning strategy, and thus to motivate the participants.

EU transport policy and planning consists of multiple objectives and target groups. From its beginnings, CIVITAS has strived to include these different perspectives. While it is focused on municipalities, it strongly encourages and often relies on the participation of other private partners in the projects by offering co-financing and covering managerial expenses in full. Hence it is reasonable to expect knowledge transfers between the private and public sectors. This, however, proves to be rather difficult for two reasons: on the one hand, the private sector is reluctant (and maybe rightly so) to share information which conceivably could provide it with a competitive advantage. On the other hand, the public sector is often unable to benefit from new insights originating from the private sector because it lacks ways of integrating this knowledge into its existing, often inflexible structures. Hence, again, institutions which facilitate durable integration appear to be necessary.

4.2. The fluctuation trap—lack of time

As a direct result of the lack of institutions described above and the resulting low level of support for actors on the local level, the European R&D activities of CIVITAS are continually disrupted by changes in personnel and responsibilities. This instability is clearly harmful to the strategic policy and planning process in that it undermines competence-building in specific areas. The local people involved are mostly "on call" and have no long-term perspective. Often they do not have time to build up enduring structures such as social networks, which are an important precondition for an integrated transport policy and planning strategy. All of these factors only serve to reinforce the absence of a sense of loyalty.

The project-driven nature of the R&D initiatives on the EU-level is an additional factor that promotes a short-term perspective and it is in fact directly opposed to a strategic planning approach as described in the European White Paper on Transport (Marshall and Banister, 2008). While short-term project planning was considered to be an answer to long-term public planning and for a long time seen as an appropriate contribution to market integration, nowadays concepts of strategic public policy and planning are receiving increased attention (Allmendinger, 2009). Unlike the previous authoritarian "godfather" model of strategic policy and planning, the new concepts include collaborative forms of decision-making processes designed to match the particular needs of the people involved (Albrechts, 2012).

The recently published *Report on the implementation of the 2011 White Paper on Transport* discusses a common political strategy and selected interventions. With respect to the European R&D strategy

in the case of CIVITAS MIMOSA, the focus has to be on institution-building on the local level. If project planning demonstrates the lack of political integration, an integrated transport policy and planning strategy requires durable institutions that support political integration and thus enable strategic (transport) planning (Mazzucato, 2013).

4.3. The communication trap—lack of opportunities

During the lifespan of the project, face to face contacts were essential for building relationships, for training courses and in general to ensuring a good flow of communication. All those involved in the CIVITAS initiative thus have to travel throughout Europe. In the case of MIMOSA, for instance, all the trips made by the Project Evaluation Team alone in the course of the four-year project emitted at least as much CO₂ as could hypothetically be saved through one of the project's most successful measures, the Utrecht Beer Boat. In the latter measure, it was decided to expand the existing water transport by introducing a zero-emission electric vessel to transport goods to clients, shops, bars and restaurants in the city center. An impact evaluation showed a reduction of CO₂ emissions of more than 38 tons over the entire project lifespan of 30 years (Riedel et al., 2013). But this reduction over a 30-year period was more than cancelled out by the CO₂ emissions caused by the trips of the Project Evaluation Team based at Technische Universität Berlin,¹ which amounted during the MIMOSA project to at least 30 tons in just four years.

It has often been argued that new information and communication technologies (ICTs) have the potential to reduce the amount of travelling because essential meetings can be held via Skype, Facetime or other conference software. In addition, information on almost anything can be found on the Internet—including information on how to manage and conduct an evaluation. But fragmentation and information overload are endemic to this online culture, making the social component ever more relevant. ICTs might be able to support and even strengthen personnel relationships, but they can never replace them (Lovink, 2012). As a result, face to face contacts are undeniably necessary for high-quality communication, which in turn is a precondition for success in the implementation of individual measures. But with regards to sustainability, new ways of meeting have to be established, which are not dependent on the increasing traffic volume, with its negative side effects. In order to further the creation of durable institutions on the local level to provide support for political integration and to strengthen commitment, a system of longer-term relocation could be established. The EU should provide support for those involved to live abroad for several years, instead of financing a system of insufficient knowledge transfer which involves enormous travel costs. As part of a largely neglected sustainability strategy, encouraging a change in mobility behavior, with people living and working together, this would constitute a further step in the direction of European integration, and would also constitute a major contribution to the development of a sustainable transport system.

5. Conclusion

Turning to the question posed by Campel et al., namely whether there is space for better planning in a neo-liberal world—it is possible to answer in the affirmative, provided the process of European Integration is successfully politicized.

This article began by pointing to the troublingly wide gap

¹ Only plane travel included. Calculations are based on myclimate.org, for a roundtrip flight in economy class from Berlin-Tegel.

between the programmatic claims of EU transport policy and planning and real transport development. Even though the EU has been pursuing a sustainable transport policy for at least twenty years, transport development is still far from sustainable. We explained this observation within the theoretical framework of European Integration and new Economic Sociology, and saw it as the result of a one-sided economic conception of negative market integration and a lack of positive political integration. We identified shortcomings on the institutional level, which hinder the implementation of an integrated transport policy and planning and thus the development of a sustainable transport system.

In line with the EC's *Report on the implementation of the 2011 White Paper on Transport*, which states that the European Union still has no planning strategy and does not use its power to shape a sustainable transport policy, we discussed one of the most prominent transport initiatives of the EC, namely CIVITAS. Since being set up in 2002, the initiative has been designed to assist European cities to achieve a more sustainable, cleaner and more energy-efficient urban transport system, by implementing and evaluating an integrated set of technology and policy-based measures. Taking the MIMOSA project as an example, we identified three structural problems of European R&D projects: (1) the legitimacy trap, (2) the fluctuation trap and (3) the communication trap. These were identified by describing the contradiction between market competition and political cooperation, which is currently inscribed in European transport policy and planning. As a consequence, we proposed the establishment of institutions on the local level, which would not only encourage political integration but would also be suited to ensuring a continuous knowledge transfer.

In summary, (1) the current short-term, project-based European R&D initiatives should be pursued, but developed into a coherent and durable strategy. (2) This means that institutions on the local level supporting political integration are required, which will improve the affiliation between the EU-level and the cities as well as the knowledge transfer from city to city. (3) This will make it possible to change the current unidirectional, top-down EU regime into a collaborative form of governance.

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