

PLUME-Workshop
in the Vienna City Hall
on 21. Juni 2005
in collaboration with
the Association of Austrian Cities and Towns
(ÖSTERREICHISCHER STÄDTEBUND)
and the
Institute for Transport Planning and Traffic Engineering of the University
of Technology, Vienna.

The PLUME-Workshop highlights mutual need of universities and cities for transfer of experience and knowledge. Cooperation – also cross national and in the framework of EU projects – to be reinforced in the future.

The most important results were:

- Research work and results should also be translated into the native languages
- The participation on EU research should also be possible for small cities (5.000 – 20.000 inhabitants).
- There should be a central EU server for LUTR research with a special search engine for being able to find the required documents in an easy way.
- The EU should approach the national organisations and association to link up their websites.
- The project results should be summarised and contain results with actual numbers.

The PLUME workshop on June 21 in Vienna, which was jointly organised by the Institute for Transport Planning and Traffic Engineering (TU Vienna) and the Association of Austrian Cities and Towns showed up a new way for the participants who did not know this kind of EU research. Representatives of Austria's larger cities and towns used this opportunity to engage in a lively exchange of ideas with assistant and full professors from this institute. Fruitful discussions, promoted by the workshop

character of the event, revealed a clear interest on either side for a more profound knowledge transfer. That way, new partnerships will be established, creating win-win situations in which cities will take advantage of the latest know-how available and which provide universities with the opportunity to test and prove theoretical knowledge.

What is PLUME actually?

The EU project PLUME ((PLanning Urban Mobility in Europe) deals in cooperation with 41 European partners with the topic integrated land-use planning with an emphasis on transport planning. The aim of this project is to bundle and process research results and “best practises” on the subject “city and mobility planning” acquired in the 5th framework research programme of the EU. Potential end users will be provided with the results. One project group engaged in compiling the results and derived policy recommendations for cities out of them. This group was composed of the city network POLIS and three city planning and transport research institutes. The results of the project group were evaluated and revised by an expert group consisting of local authority representatives.

Their work was paralleled by an end user group, also consisting of local authority representatives, which defined the end users' requirements. The results and “best practises” should be disseminated and implemented by an implementation group.

Dissemination and implementation of study results appears to be a general EU problem! Better communication even within EU institution is to be called for!

In the course of the presentation of contents and aims of PLUME a series of other EU projects dealing with urban planning issues were mentioned. It was symptomatic that these EU funded studies were widely unknown amongst the city representatives. On the other hand, the presenters had to admit that the EU commission itself seems not to incorporate results of such projects or “best practise” examples in its activities – or at least not sufficiently. Improved communication and more extensive knowledge transfer is therefore desirable in all respects.

Complexity of EU structures is reflected in the research promotion system as well! The Austrian Research Promotion Corporation (Forschungsförderungsgesellschaft/FFG) provides support!

In addition to the presentation of various EU urban projects in the range of land use and transport planning by Dr. Philine GAFFRON (TU Hamburg) EU cooperation and funding opportunities on city and town level were introduced by Mr. Hans ROHOWETZ of the Austrian Research Promotion Corporation. Once again, the low level of recognition of these funding opportunities showed up, which is in part due to the complicated design of the web site provided by the responsible EU organisation Cordis. Support is delivered at www.cordis.lu/fp6/ncp.htm and www.europa.eu.int/comm/transport/index_en.html. Help is just as well offered by the FFG when it comes to finding the right path in the jungle of promotion offers and guidelines (www.ffg.at).

Find more detailed information on EU projects and promotions with urban and transport planning background in the presentation documents. Furthermore, the FFG will provide the Association of Austrian Cities and Towns with a list of completed promotion projects on the subject within the following weeks. This will permit direct knowledge transfer amongst the cities concerning their experiences.

Bulletin “Equal opportunities for all modes”

This bulletin, developed in the framework of the Austrian Transport Science Association in cooperation with the Association of Austrian Cities and Towns, is to highlight ways which help to counter-balance the current unequal treatment of MIT and PT. Accompanying measures, as the promotion of private car traffic by the means of preferential fiscal treatment (tax-deductible amount for car, fuel prices decreasing for years) were consciously disregarded, as – according to Prof. Knoflacher – sustained changes are only made possible by interventions in the physical structures of MIT.

The backbone of this physical structure is – besides the roadways – the parking place. The very occupies to an unacceptable extent public space and storage, commercial and living space in buildings. This waste of space is further promoted by the obligation to build parking space in the course of construction projects which still stems from the “Reichsgaragenordnung” of the criminal Nazi dictatorship. Needless to say that the latter did not pursue a transport but an economic policy, i.e. the promotion of the arms and heavy industries by stimulating the MIT.

Parking space, provided either by the public authorities free of charge – or at least almost – or privately in the immediate vicinity of the dwellings, and behaviour patterns which are due to the most profound, primal needs will prevent motorists from renouncing the car which is readily available in front of the flat door in favour of a lengthy walk to the nearest PT stop.

The aim of this bulletin is, therefore, to establish equal distances – and thus equal opportunities – to the parking space for the private cars and PT stops by means of policy measures. Find enclosed the draft of the leaflet which is currently under consideration.