

2 BELGIUM

2.1 Introduction

The present report covers the state of the art of past, present and future travel awareness and travel behaviour campaigns in Belgium. An introduction in the policy setting is followed by a review of the most eye-catching campaigns, which have a demonstrative value in the European context. Their characteristics and, wherever applicable, lessons learnt and future developments are outlined.

2.2 Transport strategy and “soft” measures

Travel awareness and travel behaviour campaigns in Belgium have strongly been influenced by the open communication culture and debate of the federal and the Flemish government. The incoming ‘purple’ coalition (liberal, socialist, green political parties) established from 1999 on an open (some say chaotic) culture of debate in the media that also covered issues on public transport, traffic safety and cycling. Incited by a vivid interaction between the political partners within and even between the regional and federal coalitions, these topics became all - present in the media and aroused indirectly the public response on travel awareness and travel (safety) behaviour. In the case of traffic safety and the first installations of speed cameras in Flanders for instance, the media coverage is assumed to have had awareness-raising effects on the public that even surpassed the impact of a traditional campaign consisting of posters and television ads.

The Belgian federal level has responsibility for traffic legislation, jurisdiction, police enforcement, and national railways, whereas the regions (Flanders, Wallonia, Brussels) have their own responsibility for regional transport planning and infrastructure matters and on the regional public transport agencies (bussen, trams). This split in responsibilities has lately demonstrated the barriers (and opportunities) for an integrated sustainable transport and traffic safety policy. As an overall federal Masterplan in Transport is lacking, the regions and the municipalities take the lead in their regional sustainable transport policies. Flanders implemented from 1996 on its innovative mobility covenant programme for sustainable transport in co-operation with municipalities and presented in 2001 a draft Mobility Plan Vlaanderen to the Flemish Parliament. Brussels had already developed its IRIS transport plan in the nineties and Wallonia is initiating local mobility plans (‘plan communaux de mobilité’). This dynamism explains why the best practices in travel awareness and travel behaviour campaigns in Belgium are dominantly regional and local initiatives; whereas traffic safety campaigns have dominantly been led by the federal level.

Most striking, however, is that the sustainable transport discourse (modal shift by traffic calming, public transport, cycle networks, mode shift in goods transport, liveable cities and towns, etc) tends to incorporate the traffic safety issue and, consequently, surpasses the ‘stand alone’ debate on traffic safety.

As far as traffic safety is concerned a Staten – General of Traffic Safety was called together in February 2002, an initiative taken by the Belgian government and the transport minister, but it also involved all political stakeholders from the regions. As a follow up for its Mobility Plan Vlaanderen, Flanders commissioned in 2001 a traffic safety advice report by the “Vlaams Overleg Forum Verkeersveiligheid” and the Flemish minister of transport took the initiative in introducing the first speed cameras and announced another three hundreds more in 2003.

Within this political setting, the agenda shifted from overall goals on sustainable transport and traffic safety – to implementation of priority measures such as enhanced public transport, speed cameras, enforcement, safety for cyclists and pedestrians, modal shift in transport of goods, etc. Information, travel awareness and travel (safety) behaviour campaigns are generally recognised as indispensable tools in the interaction between policies and public (acceptance). Hence, campaigns do play a vital role within each of these federal, regional, provincial and local settings, but have to be positioned within the specific goals and needs of their commissioner regarding each stage of their specific policy and plan.

The following table draws a general overview of the major awareness-related initiatives in Belgium. The initiatives in the third box are then described in more detail in the following sections or are demonstrations within the TAPESTRY project.

Table B1: Overview of Major Awareness-Related Initiatives in Belgium

Level	Topic	Cases described in Tapestry Report
National	Traffic safety campaigns by the Belgian Institute for Traffic Safety Car Free Day / Mobility Weeks campaigns	The changing traffic safety scene in Belgium The BOB campaign, BIVV
Regional	Brussels: Car Free Day Flanders: - Campaign weeks by Komimo platform - Incentives for local travel awareness initiatives within the mobility covenant programme - Safer Routes to School- campaign in Flanders (LV, VSV) - Provincial campaign to promote the bicycle Wallonia: Car Free Day	Brussels Car Free Day 2002 Campaign Weeks by Komimo platform (Tapestry demonstration) The ‘Vlaams-Brabant’ campaign to promote bicycle
Local	Brussels Iris plan and ‘Brussels leeft / Brussel beweegt’ action plan related campaigns Mobility covenant related campaigns in municipalities (Flanders) Safer Routes to School - campaign in Flanders (LV, VSV) ‘Plans communaux de mobilité’ - related campaigns (Wallonia) Car Free Day initiatives	City of Hasselt City of Gent Cities of Mol and Geel (TAPESTRY demonstration)

2.3 Review of campaign initiatives

2.3.1 Hasselt, “*Samen Anders Mobiel*” (Together Towards a new Mobility culture)

Promoted topic and priority issues

Synthesis Hasselt – “Samen Anders Mobiel” (SAM or ‘Together Towards a New Mobility Culture’) ¹

The city of Hasselt is the commercial and services centre of the province of Limburg (B). Hasselt commercial area has a hinterland of 310,000 people and as such ranks third in Flanders.

The aim of the Hasselt “SAMEN ANDERS MOBIEL” (SAM) CAMPAIGN is to include the Hasselt citizens and visitors in promoting environmental modes of transport with a vast set of goal-oriented actions.

The incoming new political coalition, formed in 1995, put in their manifesto “Hasselt for the people”, a strong focus on various aspects of a citizen oriented transport policy. As a result a “sustainable three-track transport policy” was born. The three tracks are based on urban traffic safety, liveability and transport comfort concerns and goals. These three tracks are seen as equally important.

Track 1: “THE LARGER TRANSPORT POLICY”

Policy on framework conditions such as the overall mobility plan, plan for bike policy, plan for parking policy, by pass programme, urban and transport improvements in the railway station surroundings, Groene Boulevard (Green Boulevard), public transport enhancement (including the famous and popular ‘city buses for free’ programme), changes to the outer ring road, etc.

Track 2: “THE SMALLER TRANSPORT POLICY”

Quick solutions for residents’ problems such as a parking signposting scheme, traffic calming measures, improved crossings, marked gateways to the city, residential areas with speed restrictions, 30 km/h zone, cycle network improvements including, among others, good and safe infrastructure, and free, supervised cycle parking, etc.

Track 3: “SAMEN ANDERS MOBIEL”, THE ONGOING CAMPAIGN

As a multi targeted action campaign it supported the overall municipal transport policy with specific actions as mentioned below. The very nature of these actions aimed at visibility on the streets and encouragement of residents to participate.

The SAM-action(s) are meant:

- to fit into Hasselt’s long-term policy of sustainable development;
- to avoid the dangers of a once-only event,
- to be a chain of goal-oriented, often small-scale actions;
- to prioritise the active involvement of target groups (based on ‘good citizenship’),
- to be visible in the city,

¹ Based on the presentation by Daniël Lambrechts, SAM campaign Co-ordinator and Gert Zuallaert, Langzaam Verkeer at ECOMM 2002, Gent.

- to be spread over time,
- to co-ordinate actions and services in synergy and across the city departments,
- to benefit from ongoing media coverage (from different angles and for different target groups).

The “**Anders Mobiel**” (A New Mobility Culture) part of the project mainly covered the promotion of travelling by bike and bus.

The “**Samen Mobiel**” (Together) covers the collaborative part of this project, based on the concept that there is a greater potential to change habitual travel behaviour if the players involved participate in the actions themselves.

At the start-up of the project in 1997 – 1998, twenty-nine actions were identified and defined. In 2002 some twenty initiatives were covered.

- Eight partner actions “Residents”
- Four partner actions “Schools”
- Five partner actions “City staff and services”
- Three partner actions “Companies”
- One partner actions “Tourism”

Eight actions are in preparation or postponed.

Target groups

The city wanted to guarantee public involvement in a lasting form of collaborative campaign that has the potential to be structurally included in a long-term sustainable development policy for the city. Using these various targeted actions as hallmarks, SAM is characterised as an ongoing city based campaign with different partners. By its nature, SAM forms a valuable alternative for a single or isolated campaign.

Due to the particular nature of these actions they encourage participation of various groups like residents, shopkeepers, schools, companies, visitors and tourists.

Main actors

The campaign is co-ordinated by the city based SAM secretariat.

A steering group co-ordinates the actions and creates a synergy in efforts, resources etc. The public transport agency, De Lijn, is a partner in the steering group. As a starting point it was intended that all heads of the city departments should be members of the steering group so that the projects would be given the back up of their authority.

A working group with representatives of the departments involved is responsible for the operational work. Langzaam Verkeer vzw acted as consultant to support the campaign.

Level of implementation and qualitative assessment

A qualitative assessment of the actions that were implemented was carried out by the campaign secretariat. The results listed below are split up according to target group and with ratings qualified as “very interesting action (++)”, interesting action (+), and actions

which are assessed as not interesting (-)”: An action is assessed on two criteria: the number of people reached and the investment costs (budget and staff cost).

Partner actions “Residents”

More accommodation for bikes ++
 Guard service “heavy shopping bags” +
 “Shop by Bike and Ring Your Bell” ++
 Treasure hunt –
 SAM banners in the city +
 Award for the most environment-friendly person “Mobifolie-trophy” +
 White bikes for free ++
 Information package “Samen Anders Mobiel” ++
 Gifts day for cyclists +

Partner actions “Schools”

Bike pools ++
 Car-free day ++
 Award for the most environment-friendly school “Mobifolie-trophy”+
 Car-free school surroundings ++

Partner actions “City staff and services”

Service bikes for civil servants ++
 Bike compensation action ++
 Courier bikes +
 Bike repair atelier ++
 Car-free day +

Partner actions “Companies”

Sam lottery -
 Award for most environment-friendly company “Mobifolie trophy” +
 Garage owners: Cars in, bikes out +

Partner actions “Tourism”

Guided tours by bike for tourists +

Five years after the start of the campaign, SAM has become a well-known concept in and around Hasselt. The SAM philosophy and attitude has become some ‘cultural’ standard in Hasselt. There is no political entity that still supports travelling by car in the city as a priority. Public transport, cycling and walking is encouraged as much as possible in Hasselt.

The Transport Plan for Hasselt is called: “Hasselt Samen Anders Mobiel”. The partners participate in the initiatives and discuss them. The SAM concept was dominantly present in the ongoing political debate and at the latest local elections. The city’s transport policy gained interest from regional, national and international parties.

Funding and participation in EU projects or other initiatives

The local authority funds the campaign within their regular internal budgets from different departments. Partners do their bit and finance their own activities. The campaign received co-

funding from the EU Life programme for the development and implementation phase 1998 – 2000.

Barriers, opportunities and critical success factors

Internal partnership:

- Developing and implementing an effective joint package of campaign activities and services with various departments is always pioneering work. The process of co-operation between departments is always seeking a balance between win-win situations on the one hand and keeping a firm hold on its own particular programme on the other hand.
- With “overlapping service” projects there is always the problem of budget allocation.
- Fear for extra workload and innovation are other threats to the process.
- Cross - over thinking and acting is apparently a difficult step to take!

External partnership:

- Residents warmly welcomed the initiatives, partly due to the appealing prizes involved. The city scored especially well with the free, supervised cycle parking.
- The shop owners were easily willing to participate in the “Shop by Bike and Ring Your Bell” action. The fact that they brought all the retail associations together under one umbrella last year facilitated the action. It is also much easier to work with one spokesperson.
- Half of the 23 secondary schools in Hasselt participated in various ways. It requires, however, constant effort to keep the schools involved.
- The actions involving the city services and personnel have been reasonably successful. It has been relatively easy to convince them to participate.
- The involvement of private companies in the “SAM” project meets with occasional success with individual companies. To attract companies as a group requires a much longer period of preparation with time-consuming personal contact needed.
- The tourism service offers a “SAM” guided bike tour through Hasselt. This action needs to build up the necessary promotion and familiarity, but scored an increasing interest
- A broader forum? In retrospect it would have perhaps been better if the steering group had set up a broader forum. The city administration kept a tight hold on SAM as a global action within the boundaries of their own services. It would probably have been better to create a broader social basis of public support by involving residents groups via their socio-cultural associations directly and to allot them responsibilities for sustainable transport for instance.

As far as the effectiveness in co-operation of external partners in SAM is concerned, the SAM team was unable to draw any one single conclusion. For some actions, the target group took over the initiative (e.g. bike pools); in other cases the city itself had to set an example (service bikes).

A few examples:

- Having a bike repair centre available creates a whole range of possibilities for setting up other bike projects such as lending bikes to tourists and maintenance of company bikes, recycling old bikes into “white bikes”, maintenance of all city bikes (including tourist bikes, “white bikes”, courier bikes and company bikes).

- The concept “Shop by Bike and Ring Your Bell” can very easily be carried over into other districts and towns. A manual is currently being written on the concept. During the “Soft Road User Week” 2002, the “Shop by Bike and Ring Your Bell” campaign has been spread to a number of different Flemish councils and towns.
- The bike pool is an environment-friendly and safe means of transport for children who live within cycling distance of their elementary school. The bike pool concept is currently being promoted and started up in the Flemish, Brussels and Walloon regions.

The SAM co-ordinator believes that these targeted and continual actions are more important than a “Car Free Day” for instance. Closing a district or street to traffic for one day just to have cars racing through the next day doesn’t strike him as very efficient.

2.3.2 GENT, campaigning for a liveable city ²



Promoted topic and priority issues

Gent, as the second largest city of Flanders and the third centre in Belgium, is the core city of a metropolitan area of about 500 000 inhabitants. The city itself has 226 000 inhabitants (excluding non residential students). Every day, about 35 000 people commute to Gent.

All these elements make Gent an attractive city and generate considerable levels of traffic to and from the city. Major highways that link Gent with all other important cities in Belgium surround the city. Some of these highways lead directly into the centre of Gent, making it very attractive to reach the city centre by car, and leading to excessive private vehicle use.

The present modal split (excluding non permanent residential students) is: car 60%, walking 17%, bike 14%, public transport 8%, moped 1%.

Whereas former attempts to pedestrianise the inner city failed, in 1997 the steering policy of the City Council succeeded to introduce the new ‘Mobility Plan for the Inner city’.

² Based on the presentations by Peter Vansevenant at ECOMM 2002, Gent and by Yves De Baets, IKZ seminar, Brussels, March 2003.

In order to counter the traffic problems, a number of plans were established. The main features of these plans were:

- no through-traffic allowed in the city centre of Gent (by creating a large pedestrian area and by traffic flow measures);
- pedestrians, cyclists and public transport are given more space, since only few cars are allowed in the city centre;
- traffic calming: apart from the pedestrian area, a speed limit of 30 km/h. has been established between the pedestrian area and the parking route;
- re-designing streets and squares aims at making the city centre more attractive to citizens and visitors;

Target groups and main actors

Within its integrated traffic policy, the city targeted and still targets the city residents, retail and catering sector, visitors and all travel mode users (cyclists in particular) with tailor made information and campaigns both with general information and specific campaign material.

The councillor of transport, backed up by the city council and a strong internal planning and traffic team, and the public and media debate itself on the plans and referenda formed the main actors in the process.

Level of implementation

Part of the city centre has been pedestrianised - an area of some 35 hectares (86 acres) and as such the largest car-free centre in Belgium - and in other parts traffic-calming measures were introduced with the creation of a 30 km/h area.

A “parking route” around the city centre ensures an optimal accessibility and especially to the (underground) parking garages. The city did not support additional parking; all extra parking in parking buildings was compensated for by the reduction of on street parking.

By far, the most important measure was to keep through-traffic out of the city centre. This traffic must now make use of the city's ring road and the P-route (parking route). Signs along the ring road indicate which car parks are nearby and how many spaces are still available in them. When you follow these signs you automatically end up on the P-route.

The decision process anticipating the new traffic policy (1997) was characterised by steering and firm standpoints of the City Council and the councillor of transport in particular. The City heavily leaned on political commitment and on policy communication and campaign techniques to get the support of the public in general and of the retail sector in particular. Also two referenda were organised: one on the role of public transport and one on a new underground parking (which was rejected).

Once the Council had taken the decisions, a campaign was commissioned to facilitate the implementation (from 1997 on). The campaign targeted the various issues and groups involved by means of a broad set of communication techniques:

- Brochure and full colour map with the new circulation scheme, including P routes;
- Website;

- Targeted and specific information initiatives in various local media and at crossroads,
- One extra campaign targeting shopping “Gent koopstad” or “Gent, city for buying”;
- The Mobiliteitsgids, an informative and handsome booklet for every citizen;
- Public transport promotion and materials: map, leaflets, special actions with PT for free children under the age of 15, free new years eve busses, and recently free night busses.
- Cycling promotion and materials: cycle network map, cycle theft prevention, “Gent fietst”- leaflet, “the cycling student”- leaflet, other (a set of about 30 initiatives from 1998 to 2002);
- Leaflets about the new pedestrianised zone;
- Creative participation in Car free Day initiative;
- Demonstrations with intelligent speed adaptation devices

The traffic plans have been the framework for a large number of completing mobility management actions, which focus on increasing awareness about travel behaviour and sustainable modes.

Bicycle

A first series of mobility management measures concern the bicycle. The city promotes actively the use of the bicycle. One of the key ideas is to remind inhabitants of the ‘existence’ of the bicycle at crucial life stages. Young people and their parents are here the prime target groups.

- from 2002 on each 3 years old receives a bicycle helmet. At this stage children start to go to kindergarten and the city wants to remind parents this does not automatically mean a car trip.
- At the age of 12, the youngsters receive a ‘reflecting’ jacket and a bracelet together with some bicycle tips.

The city organises each year a number of events for cyclists. Some examples during recent years include:

- evening bicycle tour that attracted 500 to 600 cyclists and focused on the importance of good bicycle lightning;
- breakfast for cyclist, where more than 500 cyclists were offered a coffee and pastries;
- a “search” cyclist tour, where we wanted cyclists to discover the possibilities of recreational touring around the city;
- a second bicycle market, focusing on children’s bikes.

One of the disadvantages of a successful cycling policy is that you get complaints about nuisances and hindrances caused by bicycles. Some of these complaints concern the abandoning of bicycle ‘wrecks’ on the pavement, obstruction by bikes, bicycle theft, etc. Therefore a bicycle guard was created (at present 5 people, rising to 10 people in the near future), whose job it is to combat these nuisances.

- Bicycles in bad repair are labelled and if they are still on the pavement after 14 days they are removed to the storage facility. During the last year 2625 bicycles were handled, 1364 of which were effectively removed.
- Victims of bicycle theft can visit this storage facility in order to identify their bike. 98 bicycles were restored to their owner in this way.
- In order to prevent theft, bicycles are also ‘engraved’ with a personal number that is unique to every individual. Gent started this initiative in 1995 and about 32 000 bicycles have now been treated, an estimated 22% of all bicycles in Gent.

Public transport

The city promotes the use of public transport, especially at peak times, e.g. during events and peak shopping periods.

- Gent had for a number of years a free ‘shopping bus’ that linked an outside P&R area with the city centre. This free shuttle ran on Saturdays every 10 minutes from noon to 7 p.m. Still it was only really successful on the extremely busy days (Christmas Period, Sales etc.). Moreover it was criticised for being free, while ‘regular’ public transport users had to pay on the ‘normal’ buses and trams. Therefore it was replaced by free public transport for all during all Saturdays and shopping Sundays of the month of December. The public transport company estimated this caused a doubling in the use of public transport on the days concerned. Roughly 15 to 20% of the extra passengers were former car users.
- Moreover on the first Saturday of each month public transport is also free, as well as public transport on special days, like the Car Free Day.
- Another initiative is targeted to young people. Since 1999 children aged 6-11 travel for free on regional and urban public transport. The present city councillor has extended this free public transport to the 12 to 14 years old. The city pays about 600 000 Euro to the public transport company in order to obtain this free public transport for its youngsters. This measure resulted in approx. a 30% increase in public transport use in this target group.

The city’s personnel

The city itself has to set the example. Therefore the city took a number of initiatives to promote the use of the sustainable modes amongst its employees. The most important measures are:

- a bicycle bonus of 0.15 Euro/km. with a maximum of 10 km. a day.
- the same amount is given to people that walk to their job or people that use public transport and cannot benefit of other advantageous fares.
- good bicycle facilities at the work places (e.g. underground storage facility with electronic access in the main administrative building).
- the possibility to get a ‘company bike’ for commuting. These bicycles are assembled from older bicycles or are even newly purchased. In 2002 about 400 employees had such a bike. They do not get the financial bicycle bonus, since they have a bike from the city. Over 350 employees have such a ‘company bike’.
- for ‘business’ journeys, the city has a number of bikes that can be used by the employees;
- finally, employees wanting a parking place in the underground parking lot of the administrative centre, have to pay a symbolic fee of 0.75 Euro/day.

Building partnerships

The city has established a number of partnerships in order to initiate some mobility management initiatives.

- The most important one is the establishment of a non-profit association to hire bicycles to students. This association is established by the city, the university and two polytechnics. The aim is to hire bicycles to students. In 2002 about 200 bicycles were rented out. In 2003 about 500 bicycles should be operational and in the end the association should be able to hire out about 2000 bicycles.
- Secondly the city promotes Green Travel Plans for schools. A consultant firm was hired, to draw up such a plan, in close collaboration with each school. In return, the city, or the region (if regional roads are involved) commits itself to put in some infrastructure measures, such as speed humps or similar devices.

Funding and participation in EU projects or other initiatives

The funds Gent spent for its promotional and communication initiatives for its transport policy are estimated to range between €231 000 (1997), €281 000 (2000) and €169 000 (2003). The budget is decreasing due to the fact that some of the materials can be updated.

The earlier pedestrianisation and infrastructural works were part-funded through the JUPITER and JUPITER-2 projects, but there are currently no European funds involved in the marketing initiatives.

Barriers, opportunities and critical success factors

The political challenge was characterised by the delicate balance between the traditional needs of the retail and catering sector in the city centre and the needs of the inhabitants and by convincing personal commitment and efforts. The firm line of the councillor of transport, backed up by the City Council and a strong internal administrative team, and the public and media debate itself resulting from the plans and referenda formed the main actors in the process. Leadership and commitment, however, were the keywords in Gent.

Gent has definitely established a campaigning culture for sustainable mobility, which is totally integrated within the steering framework of the mobility planning and public works administration, consequently integrated in the internal organisation and budgeting.

Statistical data

Three surveys were carried out with the following results:

- Increase of 26% visitors of the city centre in 1998 compared with 1995 (Independent survey in Belgian cities).
- Increase of 33% usage of off street parking in 1998 compared with 1997
- Significant increased usage of the Winkelbus (shopping bus), which links the surrounding municipalities with the city centre.

2.3.3 Brussels, a break through event ³

Promoted topic and priority issues

Brussels, Belgium's capital city, has a tradition of transport planning initiatives; amongst others the Iris Plan 1991 and updated in 2003 and the "Brussels leeft – Brussel beweegt" action plan). However, due to various reasons, the steering capacity for implementation was lacking.

³ Based on the presentation mr. Robert De Lathouwer, Secretary of State for Mobility of the Brussels Region, at the European Mobility Week Conference 'Sustainable Mobility for all', Brussels 11 March 2003.



In 2002 the Brussels Regional Government surprised Belgium by its both provocative and endearing car free day initiative with the nineteen Brussels municipalities covering an area of 160 square km.

With this awareness raising Car Free Day of 22 September 2002, the Brussels Region was seeking public support for its overall policy for a liveable city with special focus on urban traffic calming.

Target groups and main actors

The Brussels Region, in close co-ordination with the 19 municipalities, are the main actors of the 2002 campaign. NGO's such as Inter-Environment Brussels, Brusselse Raad voor Leefmilieu and various local organisations.

The target groups are the Brussels citizen at large and associative organisations, neighbourhood committees, shopkeepers, sports clubs, companies etc.

Level of implementation

The Car Free Day initiative of the Brussels Region started in 2000 with 7 municipalities (3 with EU CFD label), was enlarged to 18 municipalities (7 with EU CDF label) in 2001 and to 19 municipalities in 2002. Most eye-catching fact was the closure of an area of 160 square km on a Sunday. Brussels enjoyed a cosy atmosphere (in spite of sporadic showers) with lots of on-street local initiatives. Cyclists and pedestrians stormed the city. People forgot about the highway code but no serious accidents were reported.

The police supervised the event. Some 12 000 to 15 000 exemptions to use the private car for professional or personal reasons within the CFD area were issued.

Due to the positive reaction (see statistical data below), the Brussels Region decided to participate in the European Mobility Week campaign September 2003.

Funding and participation in EU projects or other initiatives

The Brussels Region, the municipalities and Police Areas fund the initiative. No European funds are involved.

Barriers, opportunities and critical success factors

In 2002 the Brussels Region overcame the barrier of inclusion of all Brussels municipalities and the risk for failure. This being achieved, the initiator aims at organisational harmonisation, improvements in co-operation. Better timing for consultation and targeted distribution of the materials and posters, and extra communicative efforts towards the media are the challenges. They will also launch an invitation for projects and issue subsidies.

An opportunity for 2003 is the linkage between the Mobility Week and the Heritage Day in Brussels.

Statistical data

An impact study of the Car Free Sunday 2002 was carried out with a positive political evaluation and public approval. Some of results of the telephone opinion poll on a sample of 1000 Brussels residents were:

- General satisfaction with the initiative of over 75%;
- In all, 78% of those questioned would like the initiative repeated;
- 65% prefer a CFD on Sunday or on a public holiday;
- On the question “do you think that the initiative can lead to a change of habits?” the results varied from 39% to 54% yes – responses vary according to age group;
- Reasons for satisfaction: sizeable drop in air and noise pollution, conviviality regained;
- Reasons for dissatisfaction: insufficient public transport, late or incomplete information, problems encountered by shopkeepers, the hotel and catering sector

Future plans

Due to the positive reaction, the Brussels Region decided to participate in the European Mobility Week campaign September 2003, both on Sunday 21 September and on Monday 22 September. The action programme will be twofold: on Sunday the closure of a large part of the region to motorised traffic with an increase of transit car parks and on Monday a partial closure of Brussels combined with a package of local pilot projects or projects with companies. The Region will strengthen the regional and local co-ordination and implementation by the creation of local committees.

In general the initiator aims at the creation of 30 kmh areas on 70% of the Brussels roads and to push for the Regional Express Rail network to and around Brussels. The establishing of a social pact for a new mobility policy with companies and administrations adds up to these aims.

2.3.4 The changing scene of Traffic Safety campaigns in Belgium ⁴

Promoted topic and priority issues

In 2000 – 2002 traffic safety has become a hot political topic in Belgium both on the federal and the regional, dominantly Flemish, level. Due to the open debate between the political partners within the federal coalition and even between the federal government and the Flemish minister of transport, who took a strong standpoint in speed camera matters, traffic safety became an ever-present topic in the media. The priority issues are speed management and enforcement (speed cameras, police enforcement, higher arrest ratios, higher penalties, fast administrative processing of penalties etc). Speed management is considered to have the largest impact on traffic safety. Its implementation by an enhanced and innovative enforcement programme, completing the traffic calming and black points and trajectories policy, has become the priority and object of debate. This approach surpasses the driving under influence topic, reflected in the popular Belgian ‘Bob campaign’.

⁴ Saten – General proceeding, Brussels February 2002; report of the Vlaams Overlegforum Verkeersveiligheid, 2002; documents on the BOB safety campaign.

Target groups and main actors

The Belgian institute for road safety (BIVV), founded in 1986, is commissioned to carry out the national road safety campaigns. Their main campaign-themes are: speeding, alcohol / drugs & driving, wearing of safety belts, safety of cyclists and pedestrians, courtesy, youth (speed & alcohol), children (safe to school) and trucks (keep distance), mobile phone and driving (except “hands free”).

The ‘Bob’ campaign (see description below) targets drunken driving. Driving under influence is reported to play a role in 5.1% of all traffic accidents on weekdays and in 23% during weekends (BIVV, 2000). A Belgian toxicology and trauma study estimates these figures as high as 28% and 50%, due to weak statistic monitoring.

The regional governments used to move along these federal BIVV campaigns, because they didn’t have any tradition in campaigning for neither traffic safety nor any established transport policy in the past. There is a tendency, however, toward more regional and local based traffic safety campaigns, reflecting the bottom up approach in sustainable transport policy. Speeding and enforcement, traffic calming schemes and infrastructure re-engineering are the priorities set in Flanders.

Level of implementation

The Flemish government in particular is heading for a fast track traffic safety implementation action programme targeting a 50% decrease in fatalities and serious injured in accidents by 2010. It is assumed that regional communication needs may differ from the needs on the federal level. A first series of speed cameras have been installed, 300 cameras are announced to be installed and operational in Flanders in 2003.



In 1995, “Bob” was introduced. “BOB” is he (or she) who doesn’t drink when he has to drive. Bob was an immediate success and comes back every year. The campaign is backed up with large-scale police enforcement actions. The coupling of the social marketed BOB figure (“who will be the ‘Bob’?”, a conversation topic at home, in cafés or restaurants) with visible police enforcement (and in the future also with speed cameras) is known as the basis of the success of the campaign. From 1996 on, Bob was also active

during summertime.

In the 1999-2000 end of the year campaign, Bob was shown in the everyday life. The emphasis was on his sympathetic, human and, above all, social character. The positive aspects of being “Bob” were stressed as well: he’s someone who is successful because of his or her positive social role, the reliability and the responsibility that are associated with being Bob. The slogan was “it’s party time when Bob’s driving”. Bob was present on the roadside posters at the side of the main roads. Besides that, 69 000 small posters were distributed with the co-operation of the provinces.

The Bob-campaigns are more than just a poster campaign. They include supporting radio, television and cinema spots as well. There are gadgets available such as Bob key rings, Bob beer mats and Bob T-shirts. Bob has a funny website (www.bob.be) with a Bob game and a

party agenda. During the campaign, a Bob-bus, where people can have their alcohol level tested, tours the country. During the campaign there is enhanced police control on alcohol abuse. The people that are tested with a negative result receive a Bob key ring. A below-the-line ‘hotel-restaurant-pub’-action, activating the social responsibility of the café proprietors, was set up. In 1999-2000, about 11000 pubs participated. At New Years Eve extra buses and trams have been laid on to take the partygoers home.

In 2003 Flanders’ minister of environment launched a counterpart campaign called ROB - a television celebrity. The campaign aimed at lower speeds, traffic safety and lower exhaust emissions.

Funding and participation in EU projects or other initiatives

The BIVV, chaired by the federal Minister of Traffic and Infrastructure, carries out a large part of the road safety policy of the federal government. The federal government finances the road safety campaigns, with some private sector support especially for the peripheral events (e.g. the Arnoldus beer group provides logistic and financial support during the Bob campaigns, especially for the ‘hotel-restaurant-pub’-actions in the Bob-campaign and filling stations contributed by giving Bob key rings to their clients).

The EU has been funding the European wide transfer of the “Bob” campaign from 2000 onwards.

The regions have the boards of the BIVV at the disposal during 6 months a year, the other 6 months they’re used by the regions. In Flanders sustainable transport campaigns prevail, annually funded by the Flemish government. These campaigns have just started to integrate the traffic safety issue within their programmes. It is also expected that the new speed management policy will explore new types of campaigns in the forthcoming years.

Barriers, opportunities and critical success factors

Recent debate on speed management and enforcement takes different standpoints and assumes that safety politics should focus on unpopular enforcement measures, higher risks of arrests, higher penalties, fast administrative processing of penalties, infrastructure re-engineering and, consequently, adapted information and campaigns.

The Belgian barrier for such an integrated approach lies in the split of responsibilities over federal authorities (ministry of transport, ministry of justice, ministry of internal affairs) on the one hand, and the regional authorities, which have planning and infrastructure responsibilities on the other.

Two solutions to overcome these barriers are obvious: better co-ordination at the top political and administrative levels and a further step in the process of decentralisation towards the regions.

Statistical data

The open debate and media wide communication on the speed camera, its awareness raising effects on the public and the few installed cameras by 2002 even surpassed the impact of a traditional poster and television ad campaign. Some Flemish cities reported in February 2002

a very significant decrease (20 – 25%) in fatalities and injuries by traffic accidents in 2002 compared to 2001, anticipating the national statistics. They attribute these results to the introduction of speed cameras, higher penalty rates, the awareness raising in media and their combined efforts in traffic calming schemes.

The BIVV evaluates systematically the effects of every campaign. The post-test of the Bob-campaign in 2000 showed that 9 out of 10 drivers are convinced not to drive when they have been drinking and that 8 out of 10 passengers urge the driver not to drink. 96% of the general public knows who the Bob figure is and what it stands for. Moreover, one out of three Belgians has already been “Bob” and 97% think that it is a good campaign. The road safety effects of the campaign are estimated as a 1% decrease in driving under the influence of alcohol (BIVV, 1998-1999).

2.3.5 *Flanders sustainable transport campaign weeks by*

For seven years, Komimo has organised in the spring of every year “the Week of the Soft Road User” (‘de Week van de Zachte Weggebruiker’) and in the fall “The Public Transport Week” (‘De Week van de Vervoering’). The objective of these weeks is large: to draw attention to the problems caused by mobility, and to stimulate the large public to think differently about car use. The weeks also try to raise awareness for a sustainable mobility policy at all policy levels. Co-operation between the different relevant actors – schools, firms, self-employed, events, etc. - during the campaign weeks is encouraged. The campaigns are repeated on a regular basis to obtain lasting effects.

The campaign weeks contain demonstration projects for specific target groups, as well as campaigns targeted at the general public, and the social and political debate is stimulated by conferences where innovative propositions can be made.

The overall objective of **the Week of the Soft Road User** is to obtain a more positive climate for the bicycle and for walking. In 2000, the Week of the Soft Road User took place from 10 until 21 May. The central campaign theme was ‘liveability’ in the cities and communities: feelings of insecurity because of the traffic, poor-quality environment, aggressive behaviour in traffic and enhanced inaccessibility. Because local elections took place in October 2000, it was considered the right moment to focus attention on these problems.

Throughout the whole week, people could try out different ways of cycling and walking in all kinds of settings. Target group actions were a car-free/bike home-to-work-day, home-shopping projects, a round table conference and some large recreational crowd pullers. The local representatives of the federation of cyclists organised several local bike manifestations. The biggest eye-catcher last year was probably the opening of the Kennedy tunnel in Antwerp exclusively to cyclists. The communication on the activities was assured by means of two newsletters, a campaign paper, roadside posters and a radio commercial.

The Public Transport Week is a promotion and discussion week on the possibilities of collective transport. In 2000, “the week” took place between the 22nd and the 30th of September and the central campaign theme was “Local mobility: How can local mobility become more sustainable?” The theme was chosen because of the local elections in October.

In full electoral battle, members of the federation of cyclists cycled past the local government offices to present them with their list of demands for a better policy for cyclists. The public transport week opened with the European Car Free Day, but only two (Flemish) communities participated. For the fourth time there was an open street day in 10 communities, with the emphasis on pedestrian zones, play streets and zone 30. One of the actions organised in 2000 was ‘a week without a car’. To show that it is possible to travel in a comfortable and convenient way by train, bus, tram, bike or on foot. Some families who use the car for most of their activities accepted not to use the car for one week. In exchange for their effort, they received two Thalys train tickets to Paris. The initiative was created in co-operation with a newspaper and a regional radio station. The week ended as every year with the train, tram, bus day – people can cross the country with public transport for a very low price - which was, as always, a success.

Actors & funding

The week of the soft road user and the week of the public transport are organised and co-ordinated by Komimo (committee for environment and mobility). Komimo was founded in 1987 by some organisations active in the sector of environment and/or mobility to co-ordinate their efforts in the fields of mobility and environment. The organisations that form Komimo mostly are lobby groups: the federation of train, tram and bus users (Bond van trein- tram en busgebruikers), the federation of cyclists (de fietsersbond), a centre for mobility management (‘Langzaam Verkeer’), a carpool centre (taxistop), the pedestrian movement (de voetgangersbeweging) and the federation for a better environment (Bond Beter Leefmilieu).

The campaigns are financed by the Flemish Ministry for Mobility and Public Works, the Flemish transport administration, both Flemish and national public transport companies, provinces, communities, socio-cultural organisations and local groups of inhabitants. The Ministry provides for a financial basis for the public activities (fixed campaign staff and communication budget), for starting up the target group activities (a global cost for every target group) and for the promotion of innovative propositions. Larger campaigns demand for co-operation of federations, local governments, media partners and sponsoring to ensure a large impact. The Flemish Ministry for Mobility and Public Works ensures the supporting campaign in Flemish newspapers and magazines as part of the Flemish support to the media.

The local manifestations were initiated by traffic organisations and groups of inhabitants, and by the practical, logistic and financial support of the local policy.

Effectiveness and lessons learnt from past efforts

This originally Flemish initiative was adopted by the Walloon and Brussels region: in 2000 the Week of the Public Transport became a nationwide campaign. This happened under leadership of the federal Minister of Transport.

“The weeks” received lots of media attention and the number of activities is still increasing every year. Nevertheless, until now there was no objective, formal measurement of the results and the effectiveness of ‘the weeks’; i.e. a structured evaluation of ‘the weeks’ didn’t take place.

The most recent of these campaigns are not presented thoroughly as they are largely covered in the TAPESTRY project (as TAPESTRY demonstration cases). A series of eight

campaigns were carried out up till 2003. The campaign has proven to be a dynamic and experimental platform for local, regional and even nationwide travel awareness initiatives. Some of them became milestones within the travel awareness raising history in Flanders and Belgium.

2.3.6 Partnerships with Schools - the Tapestry cases of Geel and Mol

Within the framework of the mobility covenant programme, the two small-scale cities of Geel and Mol entered a partnership with the schools, their 4500 pupils, parents, teachers and headmasters. In Mol 13 of the 16 schools and in Geel 12 of the 25 schools joined the programme.

Both cases can be characterised as strongly embedded in a local mobility planning process, which evoked a vibrant interaction with local partners. The project resulted in an average of 10% mode shift amongst the pupils towards walking, cycling and bus.

2.3.7 Provincial campaign to promote the bicycle

The province of ‘Vlaams-Brabant’ organised a large awareness and information campaign to improve the image of the cyclist and to encourage the use of the bike for short distances. The campaign ran from September 1998 until June 1999.

The campaign was a mix of activities addressed to the general public on the one hand and company and school targeted activities on the other. A flyer to arouse interest for the campaign was mailed to 2500 companies, schools and institutions. Brochures and posters with the slogan ‘trap rond, fiets je gezond’ (something like “pedal around, bike until you’re healthy”) were distributed to schools and companies and to institutions such as libraries, communities, post offices, cultural centres etc. to reach the general public. People could express their commitment by using a saving trip card or short trips contract included in the brochure. An informative brochure with practical information to stimulate the use of the bicycle was distributed in the schools that previously showed interest in the campaign. A website and a radio spot were part of the campaign as well. The regional television paid some attention to the campaign and the newspaper ‘Het Volk’ followed the campaign activities. Finally, a brochure and poster announced the final bike happening, the closure of the campaign during the Week of the Soft Road User.

The second part of the campaign consisted of a personal counselling of companies and schools to help them to promote the bicycle for their employees or pupils on their way to and from work or school. Ten schools and companies with a good practice on mobility matters were chosen and advised on how to improve the use of the bicycle after they carried out a Mobility Quick Scan.

Actors & funding

The campaign was entirely financed by the province, although there was sponsoring in kind for the incentives. BECO Environmental Management implemented the campaign.

Effectiveness and lessons learnt from past efforts

BECO Environmental Management made a detailed evaluation report on the campaign. In general the conclusion is that the targeted actions towards schools and enterprises were a success, although the province regretted not having been able to provide follow up to keep the attention going. The impact of the general public campaign was rather disappointing (e.g. only a very small number of people used the trip saving card). The initiators think that the scale of the province might be too large to affect the individual. The individual community level might be a more appropriate scale for this kind of campaigning.

2.4 Barriers, Opportunities and Critical Success Factors

The main barriers, opportunities and critical success factors for each initiative have been presented above. However, this section provides a summary of the most common factors that enhance or impede the effectiveness of the campaigns.

To start with, a lot of initiatives are based on partnerships both internal and external. Despite the fact that the general commitment advances the effectiveness of the combined initiatives, the involvement of many partners leads to difficulties in seeking a balance between win-win situations and allocating the budget. Furthermore, building partnerships can be considered as a demanding and time-consuming process. On the other hand, the implementation of combined targeted and continuous activities results in more sustainable outcomes compared to one-off events.

One further critical success factor is the political commitment, willingness and leadership that characterise the local authorities.

When it comes to national initiatives, the barrier lies in the split of responsibilities scattered over federal authorities and the regional authorities.

2.5 Suggestions and future plans

There is a clear tendency to complement the national and regional campaigns and to decentralise campaigns within the framework of their local transport policies and campaign needs. The city - based campaigns in particular (see the Hasselt, Gent and Brussels cases) are being consolidated and / or their scope is even included as an integrated part of the ongoing sustainable city programme. New initiatives take these successful cases as a reference and built on their experiences; the regional and national campaigns integrate the most valuable local approaches and projects into their promotional and action programme.

Due to the open debate between the political partners within the federal coalition and even between the federal government and the Flemish minister of transport, traffic safety has become a high profile political topic in Belgium. The priority issues are speed management and enforcement (speed cameras, police enforcement, higher arrest ratios, higher penalties, fast administrative processing of penalties etc).

Although the new and changing traffic safety policy in Belgium is still too young and not yet fully established, it becomes obvious that it will alter the ‘art of traffic safety awareness campaigns’ of the future in Belgium. Campaigns will probably be carried out in a more decentralised way, in closer relationship with stakeholders (‘responsible partners in traffic

safety'), closer to the target public and imbedded in provincial and local traffic (safety) policies targeting black spots and patterns that add up to national campaigns.

It is not yet clear how the travel awareness raising campaigns will establish an interaction with traditional traffic safety campaigns.