

## 3 FRANCE

### 3.1 Transport strategy and “soft” measures

#### **An increasing political awareness in favour of sustainable mobility**

Since the 1990's the idea of sustainable development has become a priority in public policies. With the Rio Conference, followed by that in Kyoto, targeting greenhouse gas emissions, reducing car use has become a primordial challenge, not only for environmental reasons, but also for social and economic reasons.

First of all, developing alternative modes of transport is necessary to limit polluting gas emissions and to reduce environmental impacts (in terms of land use, noise or effects on wildlife). In social terms, it is also a way to guarantee the “right to travel” for everyone by limiting the inequalities between car owners and the other people. Last but not least, there are also economic interests, through the question of territorial accessibility, congestion and time lost.

In France, the question of reducing car traffic was first tackled in 1982 in the “Law Directing Domestic Transport” (*Loi d’Orientation des Transports Intérieurs - LOTI*), but it was not until 1996 and the “Law Concerning the Air Quality and the Rational Use of Energy” (*Loi sur l’Air et l’Utilisation Rationnelle de l’Energie - LAURE*) that it became a priority in transport policy. By reviving the initiatives for drawing up Urban Mobility Master Plan (*Plans de Déplacements Urbains -PDU*), this law aroused a real desire to improve the organisation of travel and to reduce the detrimental effects of car traffic.

This dawning political awareness concerning the problems of increasing car use was confirmed in 2000, with the promulgation of the “Law relating to Urban Solidarity and Renewal” (*Loi Solidarité et Renouveau Urbains -SRU*), which places a new priority on sustainable mobility. It revives urban planning policies and grants an essential place to interaction between urban development and transport policies. It extends the scope of Urban Mobility Master Plans (*Plan de Déplacements Urbains - PDU*) and takes into account all of the levers for reducing car use: parking, intermodality and freight transport measures. It reinforces co-ordination between urban and interurban transport, encouraging the creation of “Transport joint management board” (*Syndicat mixte de transport*). To meet citizens’ expectations more closely, it transfers the organisation and financing of regional railways to the regions, a task that had, until then, been under the aegis of National Authorities.

In compliance with this new institutional framework proposed by national Authorities, the dawning of political awareness concerning the problems linked to increasing car use has been relayed throughout the territory: Regions, Departments, Agglomerations and Communes.

To accompany these local initiatives, Government grants have been reinforced. This funding encourages the development of public transport in both the urban and peri-urban zones, the improvement of intermodality and the setting up of cycle networks.

**Public opinion: the French still prefer using the car even if they are more and more sensitive to its detrimental effects<sup>5</sup>**

Generally speaking, the French favour the private car. It is perceived as the mode of choice and freedom and it is judged to be indispensable - 83%<sup>6</sup> of the French feel that they could not be without it.

If we see the transport sector as a market and the different modes as competitors, then it is clear that communication about the car has dominated the market over the last few decades. This has had a major influence on people's perception of different modes. Car remains a symbol of wealth, power and success.

On the other side of the coin, the image of alternative modes of transport is valued lowly: public transport is considered to be a restricting mode: it is more suffered than chosen - cycling has a more positive image but it is more perceived as a leisure activity rather than a mode of transport - walking is appreciated, but remains marginal in the modes used by the French.

Despite this predominance of motor cars, both in terms of use and image, there is a noticeable increase in French awareness to the problems they cause, especially in an urban environment.

For the majority of them, the car in the town is a problem, both in its use, (congestion, time lost, parking etc.) and in its consequences (pollution, noise etc.).

The environmental questions take on a very specific importance: three out of every four French people claim to be concerned about air pollution, and recognise that this problem is directly related to car traffic.

At the same time, public transport has exceeded its role of a simple mode of transport to be used as a vector of urban re-qualification and renovation. For this reason it tends more and more to convey an image of modernity and innovation to city dwellers.

We can therefore note a rift between the inner city dwellers and those who live in the suburbs or peri-urban areas. The first are distinctly more sensitive to the detrimental effects of car traffic and have a more positive image of public transport.

**A rift between public awareness and behaviour**

Generally speaking, public opinion is increasingly sensitive to environmental questions, and is gradually becoming aware of the potential risks of increasing car use. However, the rift between the transport behaviour of the French, mainly concentrated on the motor car, and their opinion increasingly in favour of alternative modes of transport, is deep and persistent.

The way in which the French tackle this problem underlines these contradictions: they agree on the principle of reducing car use, but they are reticent on the concrete measures that might bring this about.

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<sup>5</sup> see *Mobiscopie* – GART editor - 2000

<sup>6</sup> FFAC/SOFRES 2000 Survey

Their perception of this issue stops at an ‘intellectual’ awareness, and does not result in any changes in everyday behaviour or habits.

### **A gap between political willingness and public opinion**

To sum up, though the institutional and political situation is heading towards sustainable mobility, a large majority of people continues to use their car, even if the people are more aware of the problems the car causes. However, the commitment of populations to the political willingness to reduce car use is essential if this ambition is to become a reality: on one hand, because the actions undertaken by the political leaders cannot be efficient unless the perceptions and behaviour of the French population evolve, and on the other, because the elected representatives cannot implement their projects without the support of their constituents.

However, despite this rift between political willingness and public opinion, France still only grants a very small part of its transport policies to public awareness raising and communication measures.

### **Communication is still a very restricted area in French transport policies**

Whilst communication could be an essential lever in changing transport attitudes and behaviour, there is still very little place granted to it. One of the main reasons for this situation is the highly technical culture that predominates in the transport field. In fact, this area is largely composed of engineers and technicians, who, because of their background and culture, place more emphasis on “hard” approaches than to “soft” measures: they feel more concerned about the technical performance of a project than on the soft measures that might improve its efficiency.

Consequently, our transport policy to restrict car use is mainly based on material actions (reinforcing cycling and transport public networks, restricting parking, improving services) or technological innovations that improve the performance of rolling stock (guided bus, tramway, tram-train...). ‘Soft measures’, whether they consist of communication or fiscal or financial measures, are still relatively neglected.

The question of funding is another reason for the limited place of communication in transport policies. Whilst communication campaigns cost much less than the cost of infrastructure projects, it still seems to be ‘improper’ to spend public funds on ‘impalpable’ areas such as communication and marketing. Therefore, the question of evaluation has become more important. Expenditure laid out for such actions cannot be justified unless their efficiency is proved. But, such actions are rarely evaluated, thus minimising their legitimacy and relevance.

### **A large fragmentation of actors**

One of the things hampering the development of communication tools is the multitude of actors taking part in the transport field. Firstly, institutional actors relay a political discourse at a national level, at a regional and then local one. These discourses will be different depending on the level of spread to the lower administrative tiers.

In fact the greater or lesser proximity of the population to the campaign initiator has a bearing on the content of messages: the national authorities discourse will be less concrete and therefore more easily acceptable than that of the local elected representatives, in close contact with the everyday concerns of the inhabitants. Moreover, at the national level, the messages are spread by different ministries (Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Housing, Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development) in which several Directorates are involved (transport, urban planing, environment, road safety, economy etc.). The discourses will be different depending on whether the argument runs along environmental, social or economic lines.

Looking further than the institutional actors, public transport companies also play a considerable role in terms of communication. However, their messages are different from the political message put forward by the local authorities: it is more commercial and more aimed at the customer rather than the citizen.

Lastly, the associations, the professionals and certain lobbies also implement communication campaigns at the local level in favour of sustainable modes. Consequently, the multiplicity of actors and levels of communication obscure the message, thus making it difficult for the population to absorb. The lack of a global communication strategy, which should be defined at a national level, reinforces this situation.

### **3.2 Review of Campaign Initiatives**

Despite the restricted place dedicated to communication in our transport policies, and the absence of a global strategy, campaign initiatives, be they great or small, are on the upturn. Two major operations, on an European level the “In town without my car!” day and on a national level Public Transport Week, demonstrate a willingness to develop an awareness raising policy towards sustainable mobility.

#### **Transport companies communication campaigns**

Over and above this week, the public transport companies represent an essential advertising actor in favour of sustainable mobility. Even though their logic may be more commercial than instructional, the advertising campaigns of transport companies enable the broadcasting of a continuous argument in favour of public transport throughout the territory.

#### **Travel plans**

The travel plans (company and school travel plans), prescribed by the SRU law, are also an interesting lever towards modifying travel habits through communication tools. These initiatives actually enable the reconciliation of hard measures implemented in the field with soft measures and awareness raising within a co-ordinated strategy.

#### **Sporadic initiatives**

Lastly, other, more sporadic and less formal initiatives are also set up in a variety of forms, revealing the increasing awareness of the problem of car use at different levels of our society.

### 3.2.1 *“In town without my car!” campaign*

In 1997, the French city of La Rochelle organised a car-free day and then, in 1998, the French Minister of Land Planning and Environment, Dominique Voynet, decided to propose to French towns to organise a similar car-free day. 34 French cities took part in this national campaign called “In town without my car!” on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September 1998: during a day, they defined a car-free area in their centre, open only to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. In 1999, the operation was extended to Italy: 99 Italian cities and 66 French ones organised the event. In 2000, the event “In town without my car!” was really a Europe-wide day with more than 750 towns participating all over Europe and even outside the European Union, in countries like Romania and Slovakia.

#### *Promoted topics and Priority issues*

##### Main objectives

The “in town without my car!” event is aimed at raising collective awareness of the need to reduce environmental impacts caused by the increase of traffic in urban areas. It concerns not only reducing air and noise pollution but it is also aimed at improving the quality of life in town and cities. This event focuses on three types of action :

- Encouraging the use of alternative modes of transport to the single occupancy private car
- Making residents aware of different approaches to mobility in urban areas and realise the environmental impacts of their modal choice
- Presenting the town in a different light for a day by helping citizens claim back their urban environment and feel more comfortable in their own city.

This event provided all the participating towns with the opportunity to show how matters related to the environment concern them. This helped to demonstrate the interest, and support for, measures aimed at improving the quality of life in urban areas. Furthermore, this event can be also an opportunity for local authorities to pilot more permanent measures for sustainable mobility.

##### Technical organisation

One or several car-free areas must be defined within the city. The area is closed to motorised traffic for a period covering at least normal working and commuting hours (in France from 7.00 am to 9.00 pm). Most frequently, the car-free area is in the centre; sometimes, a second area is defined in a suburb. Only buses, cyclists and pedestrians have freedom of movement in the area. Several cities provide more buses or a higher frequency of services, with cheaper or even free tickets or promotional offers (daily or weekly pass), cycle rental, cleaner- vehicles for the delivery of goods, park and ride facilities etc. Some cities choose to define a small car-free area (just a little bit larger than the usual pedestrian zone) and some others define a very large area (105 ha in Lille, 240 ha in Montreuil). Residents are invited to move their cars on the day before so as to clear the streets in the car-free area. Special car-parks may need to be provided and contracts may be signed with parking operators. The information campaign must be very large: national and local media, local letters for residents of the car-free area, special leaflets, free information number etc.

##### Frequency of the event

The frequency of the event is yearly, always on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September. The date doesn't change: everyone can have this date in mind, and, in addition the day in the week changes each year: in 1998, it was a Tuesday, then, a Wednesday, in 2000 a Friday, a Saturday in 2001

etc. It's interesting to test each kind of day, because each has these characteristics (more customers, more scholars, etc).

In 1998, it was nationwide in France with 34 towns; in 1999 it was extended to Italy with 93 Italian towns and in 2000, the event was Europe-wide, with near than 800 towns and cities participating in 26 European countries. In addition, more than 400 other cities organised a similar event without meeting all the requirements of the European Charter. All sizes of towns or cities are represented: in France the smallest town has got less than 8000 inhabitants and the biggest cities have got more than 100000 inhabitants. In France, in 2000, 71 towns took part, with 16 newcomers. In Italy and in Spain, the event attracted a considerable level of participation, with 171 Italian and 215 Spanish towns involved.

The European commission decided to repeat the event in 2001, and to extend it as widely as possible. The Netherlands officially joined the 2001 initiative; (in 2000, they had organised a similar event on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> September, independently from the European date). This event, aimed at increasing awareness of the nuisances created by use of car in urban areas, concerns both the developed and the developing world. So the Commission has decided to launch a call to countries and cities from outside Europe, even in other continents, North and South America, and also Asia. The city of Bogotá, in Columbia, has twice organised a car-free day in February 2000 and 2001.

In the 2001 edition, the European Charter was stronger:

- the car-free area would be defined in proportion to the number of inhabitants in the town: at least, one hectare for every 1000 inhabitants
- each city must provide permanent measures: on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, every local authority had to implement some sustainable action (new shuttle service, new cycle lanes, new air quality measurement points, etc)

#### *Target groups*

This campaign targets the general public, even if local specific initiatives can concern targeted groups.

#### *Main Campaign Actors*

At a European level, with the political and financial support of the European Commission, several public partners have gathered to form the current LIFE project team and contribute to the national initiatives providing methodological guidelines, communication tools, advice etc. Public sector bodies such as national agencies in charge of the protection of the environment (e.g. DEPA in Denmark) or in charge of energy issues (e.g. EVA in Austria or IDAE in Spain) as well as NGOs (e.g. Environmental Transport Association in the United Kingdom) have already joined the project in order to help spread the project.

*At a national level*, the organisations differ between Member States. A government ministry, or other public body, or even an independent agency may take charge of the general organisation of the event. Sometimes, a group of agencies work together to manage the event. This involves ensuring compatibility with conditions of participation defined at a European level, adapting these to the national situation, launching the event, and helping towns and cities with the implementation and evaluation. In France, the ministry of Land Planning and the Environment is the leader of the event, and its main partners are the French Agency for the Environment and Energy management (ADEME), which is in charge of the co-ordination

with the European commission and the centre for studies in land planning, transport, utilities and public constructions (CERTU), which is in charge of the evaluation of the operation.

*At a regional level*, in federalised countries, a regional authority may take over and co-ordinate the event. In other countries, this varies: in France, the regional departments of the ministry of the Environment (one in each of the 22 French regions) are the regional coordinators: they are responsible for organising regular meetings to assess preparations and planning progress, to provide feedback to the national level, for receiving propositions of the towns interested in participating and for giving a “label” to the town respecting the conditions of the car-free day. They answer the questions of cities organising the event.

*At a local level*, each town or city respecting the conditions of the European or national level is free to organise an event that corresponds to its own particular objectives: the size of the area which is forbidden to private cars; the measures to increase the transport public capacity, to favour cycling and walking, to organise special means of delivery of goods, to organise exhibitions, debates, programs for scholars, activities, air and noise measurements, etc. The success of the event depends largely on the commitment of town and city residents. Therefore a key factor in the success is the consultation and involvement of local people. It is important to consult early in the planning phases certain stakeholders like shopkeepers, tradesmen, local businesses, hospital staff, public services staff, taxi drivers, residents of the car-free area, etc.

Two structures can be set up to prepare the event

- A steering committee made up of local councillors, technicians and representatives from different groups involved (partners, council officers, public transport representatives, etc) to define the strategy;
- A technical committee made of specialist council officers (traffic engineers...) as well as representatives of the different groups involved (transport company, local partners...) to work detailed planning and organisational aspects of the day.

Meetings with key stakeholders also have to be held (shopkeepers, etc) in order to achieve success.

### *Level of implementation*

The operation “in town without my car!” takes place at European, national and a local level. Europe proposes to governments to drive the operation in their own country, then the governments propose the campaign to cities that decide to organise it at local level.

### *Funding*

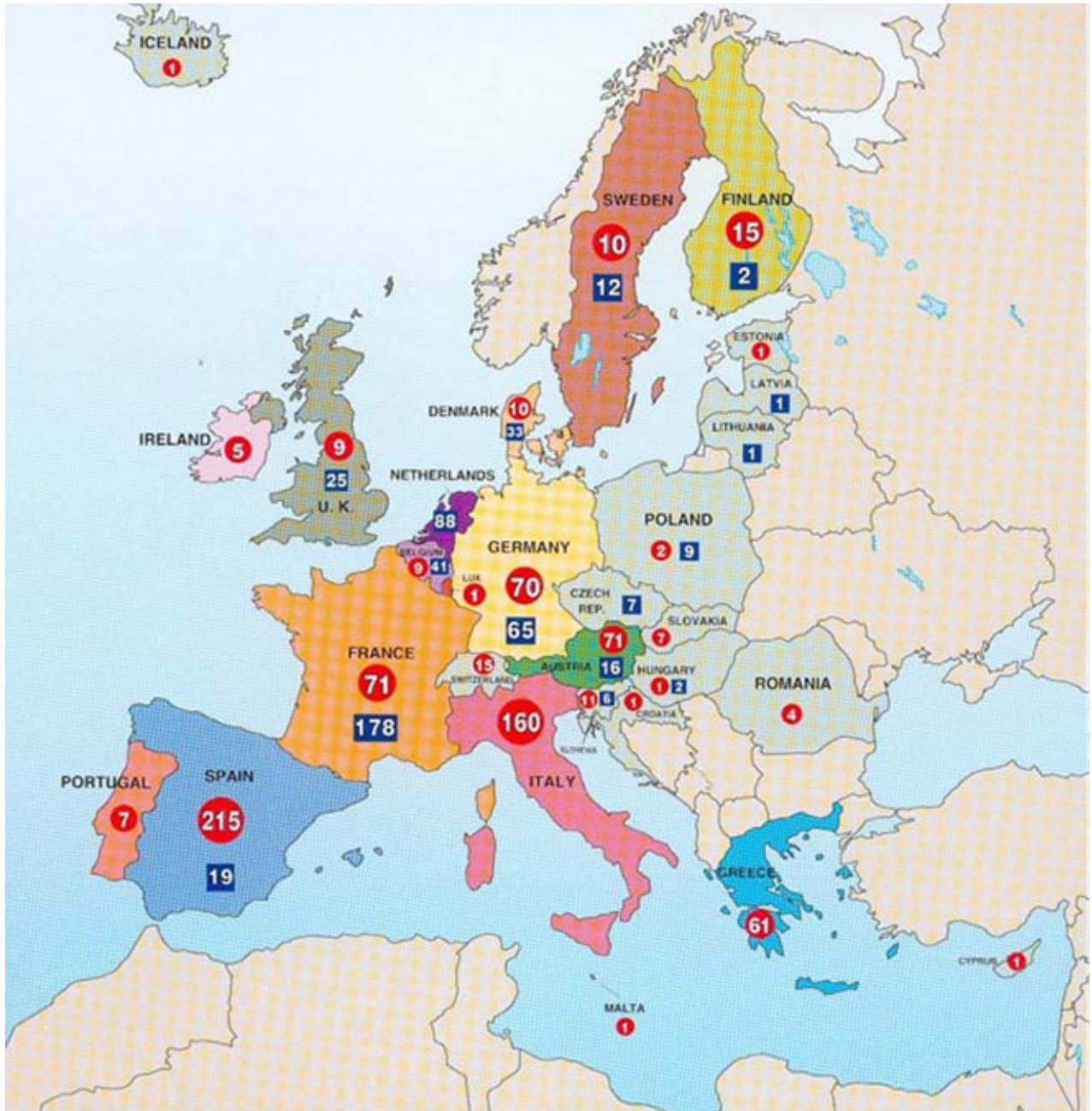
The State ministries involved in the event pay for the ‘national communication tools’. For instance, in France the Ministry of Land Planning and Environment pays for all the posters, leaflets, post cards, European logo on floppy disc, Tee-shirts with the logo of the operation, documents for schoolchildren which are distributed in each school situated in the forbidden area. The ministry develops contacts with big private or public partners: e.g. France Telecom (the French public phone company) to implement a free phone number especially for this event, some car builders to provide information on clean vehicles and some big sports firms to lend cycles for the day, etc.

At a local level, each participating town or city pays all other expenditure: specific leaflets, information letters, exhibitions, animations, etc.

*Participation in EU Projects or other initiatives*

The European commission provides political and financial support for the event through the EU LIFE-Environment project. The European Car Free day Co-ordinators Committee comprises representatives of the government ministries involved and the various European partners. This group oversees the whole event from defining the overall conditions of participation to selecting the visual identity of project materials. The LIFE project also pays for part the assessment of the operation at the European level.

**Figure B1: Participation in “Car free day” all over Europe**



Participating cities

**5** Cities having organised a similar event without meeting all the requirements of the European Charter

### *Evaluation and statistical data*

To measure the effects of the one-day event, CERTU led several surveys with the help of the Ministry of Regional Planning and the Environment, ADEME, and some funding from the European LIFE programme and with some of the concerned cities. These surveys covered mobility and commercial activity issues, environmental measurements, opinion polls etc. The following data and findings referred to the year 2000. For the first type of survey, we observed some cities on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September and on the day after the event, to get comparable weather conditions. The example opinion polls was carried out in 6 European cities: Lille (France), Hamburg (Germany), Barcelona (Spain), Turin (Italy), Helsinki (Finland) and Copenhagen (Denmark).

#### Getting around town without my car

Firstly the surveys showed a noticeable decrease of traffic around the car-free areas in most of the cities, less 15 % on average. There was also an increase in the number of pedestrians:

- 5% in Aix-en-Provence;
- 17 % in Chambéry;
- 23 % in Lille;

caused both by people who used no other forms of transport on their journey and by people who parked their private car around the car-free zone and then walked. There was also a significant increase in cyclists: more three times in Lille and seven times in Chambéry (for example, from 300 to 2200 cyclists counted in a same area on a usual day and the D-day). Around 66% of cyclists in Lille, Chambéry and Aix-en-Provence were habitual cyclists. The remainder were mostly car drivers, followed by public transport users and finally pedestrians. Concerning public transport, the results depended on the city: 5 to 15 % increase and as high as + 50% when buses were free. Nationally, we can say that when people didn't use their private car, they preferred to walk, to cycle and then to use public transport, in that order.

#### Not many differences in the uses of car-free-streets

Other surveys were carried out to see if people used car-free public spaces in new ways. What was observed was that people were roller skating, walking, cycling for pleasure, but you can't say they "took over" or "claimed back" the car-free streets. However, we noticed some differences in the type of people who were in town on the one-day event. There were more groups, more young people, children and teenagers, more disabled or elderly people, more women especially with children (in France, young people don't go to school on Wednesday afternoon). People were also more considerate and tolerant towards each other, especially between pedestrians and cyclists or skaters. Mostly, there was a cool atmosphere, and, according to what people said, the feeling was less stressed and less busy than a usual day.

#### Worried shopkeepers and happy customers!

Shopkeepers worried that they would have fewer customers and reduced sales. Our surveys in 1998 showed that the number of customers in shops didn't decrease compared with a usual day. In 2000, customers said they made or wanted to make the same purchases as on a normal day; 11 % even said they had come especially because of the event. Other surveys showed that the experiment in the centre had no impact on the suburban commercial centres: customers in these centres are the same as on a usual day and do not usually shop in the city centre shops, despite the shopkeepers worries. Most of the customers thought that the experiment was a good idea and so did 49 % of the shopkeepers.

An improved urban environment

Air pollution is very high for urban dwellers. In summer, air pollution levels are unacceptable in several cities. With a car free area, surveys show there is a significant decrease in the level of air pollution, but only in the car-free zone (depending on the pollutants) and not over the whole urban area. Also, there is no effect on ozone levels. Of course, results vary from city to city, depending on weather conditions.

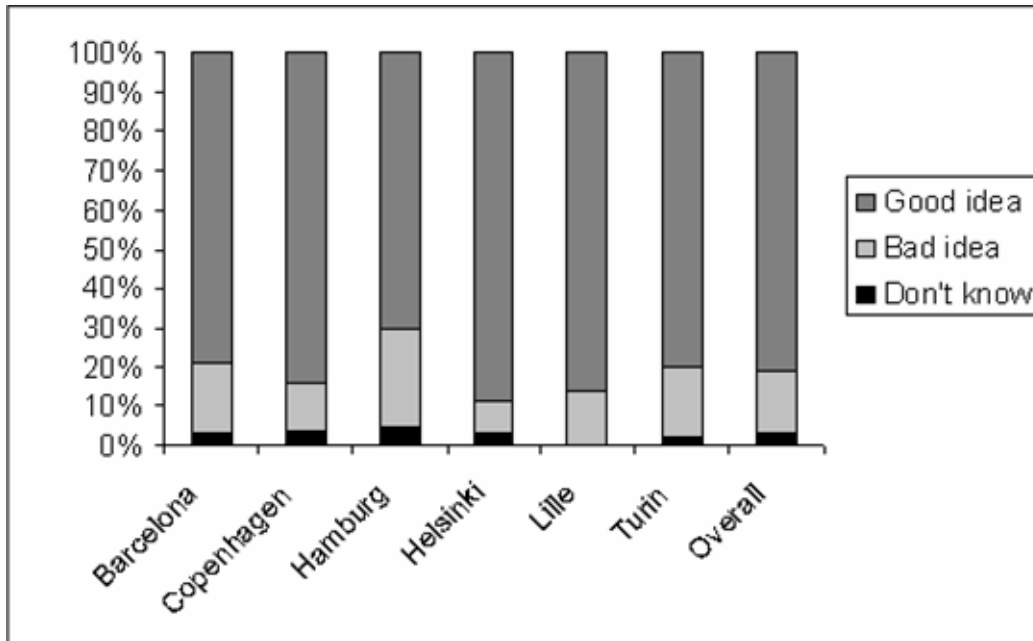
Concerning noise, measurements showed a reduction of 4 to 10 dB in the car-free zone, with an average of 5 dB. Even though this is quite a big reduction, a “noiseless” city was not achieved. But what was more noticeable was that all the inhabitants observed a significant difference in the background noise: sounds normally drowned out by traffic like birdsong, running water, conversation and so on, came within the threshold of hearing. It was a new and pleasant experience for many people. Though many people did not feel any difference as far as air pollution goes, many appreciated the fact there was less noise.

Favourable public opinion

An telephone opinion poll was conducted in the evening of the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September in six major European cities of similar size. The main results show a high degree of acceptance for the event.

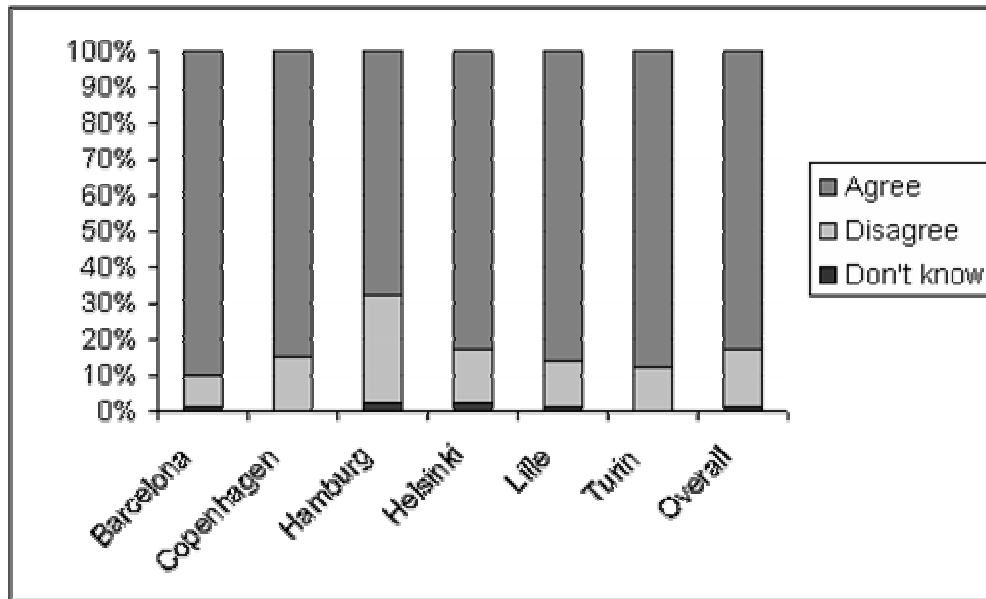
A large majority of the urban dwellers surveyed thought that this event was a good idea, more than 80% on average, 70% in Hamburg and 89% in Helsinki. In France, we have data from opinion polls in 1998 and 1999, and we can see that the interest for the event is always the same: every year around 85% citizens of French cities taking part in the car-free day campaign are pleased with the event.

**Figure B2: Acceptance of the event - Do you personally find this operation to be ...**



Most of the European surveyed citizens agree with the need to limit the use of car in urban centres.

**Figure B3: Acceptance of the event - To improve town traffic, there is a need to limit the use of car. Do you personally...?**



**Table B2: Do you think that this event should be repeated?**

	Barcelona	Copenhagen	Hamburg	Helsinki	Lille	Turin	Overall
<b>every day</b>	21 %	23 %	4 %	7 %	10 %	11 %	11 %
<b>every week</b>	34 %	25 %	19 %	19 %	47 %	65 %	35 %
<b>every quarter</b>	29 %	18 %	39 %	39 %	19 %	7 %	25 %
<b>every year</b>	11 %	7 %	14 %	24 %	8 %	3 %	11 %
<b>no renew</b>	10 %	19 %	20 %	8 %	15 %	12 %	14 %

Most of the urban dwellers approached, particularly in Italy, wanted the operation to take place over a whole week and every three months in the other countries. Less than 15 % don't want the event to be renewed.

In France, the success of the “In town without my car!” day, which has been repeated every year since 1998, highlights the efforts made by the government in this direction. Even if the impact of this operation on daily travel patterns remains limited, it does have the advantage of encouraging debate, both locally and nationally, on the position of the private car in daily life. Even if it has not led to a deep seated change in travel behaviours, this day can still be considered as a teaching medium and a stepping stone towards getting the implementation of more sustained actions accepted.

Can a one-day event have a bright future? Should it have one? And for how long? It's not easy to answer all these questions. What we can say today is that the car-free day is a positive operation; it has launched a broad debate and a social experiment about how acceptable car use restraining policies are, and is more than an experiment in changing in behaviour. The operation has increased urban dwellers' awareness, but, when dwellers become aware of these questions, they expect sustainable measures, and authorities to create policies in order to limit the use of private cars. This one-day event can prepare new practical solutions and help to implement new stronger policies to improve the quality of life in our cities.

### 3.2.2 *Public Transport Week*

Since 1994, Public Transport Week also offers a national framework for communication campaigns that echo down to a local level. Less popular than “In town without my car!” day, it mobilises the public transport networks for a more targeted action on promoting public transport. Public Transport Week is a major national campaign held every year during September and aimed at encouraging the use of public transport.

#### *Promoted topics and priority issues*

The purpose of this campaign is to inform, encourage and raise public awareness to the advantages offered by the use of public transport.

The campaign is centred around two lines of communication:

- enhancing the image of public transport, giving details concerning the ways in which it can be used, the services it offers the user and the advantages these entail, etc.
- making the general public aware of the problems involved in travelling and especially the contribution made by public transport in sustainable development, urban development, social policy, job creation and the quality of life, etc.

#### *Target groups*

The campaign is directed mainly towards the general public: activities that are organised within the towns are usually open to everyone (information booths, interviews with elected representatives, games and competitions, discovery of new types of equipment and methods of transport, etc.) or target certain sectors of the population, such as young people, school children, companies, etc. They are also aimed at encouraging local elected representatives to take public transport into account within the various policies they put forward. They also have the effect of enabling the economic sectors and local associations to meet and get to know each other.

#### *Main actors*

Public Transport Week is organised by the Public Transport Promotion Committee, which groups together the Public Transport Authorities Association (GART), the Union of Public Transport Companies (UTP), the authority in charge of public transport in the Ile-de-France Region (STIF) and the National Federation Of Passenger Transport (FNTV). It is supported by the Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Housing, and the Environment and Energy Management Agency (ADEME). It also works in association with the communes (local administrative districts), Departmental authorities, the Associations and the public and privately owned companies in the public transport sector.

#### *Level of implementation*

The campaign is implemented by the Public Transport Promotion Committee on a national scale and taken over on a local level by the transport networks. The Committee supervises national communication and defines the campaign's main directions. It provides “key in hand” operations to the networks, as well as the advertising tools required. It ensures that the campaign retains a degree of consistency by proposing operations to be held on a national scale.

An unifying emblem, the “Papillon Public” (Public Butterfly) has been created for 2003, and a cartoon strip has been distributed throughout France and the national “In town without my car!” campaign will be integrated into Public Transport Week. On a local level, more than 300 transport networks have been mobilised to set up specific types of operations.

#### *Participation in EU projects and other initiatives*

Public Transport Week is organised in such a way as to integrate the “In town without my car!” day initiative. However, the steering of these two campaigns is not the subject of a formal partnership between the Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development, and the Public Transport Promotion Committee.

#### *Statistical data*

Up to now, the campaigns have not been assessed in any way whatsoever. No statistical data is available to date.

### **3.2.3 Walking to School**

The 4<sup>th</sup> of October 2000 saw the holding of the first International “I walk to school” day. The experiment was extended so that 2002 by a 24 communes in France participated. ADEME and the Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur region then decided to launch an information campaign in order to encourage this type of initiative.

#### *Promoted topics and priority issues*

The general objective of the campaign was to develop the idea of walking the journey between home and school. It aims to promote the creation of mobility management initiatives by local authorities. This especially means encouraging them to take part in the “I walk to school” day and to implement plans for getting people to school.

#### *Target groups*

In the first instance, the campaign is targeting local authorities, in order to direct their thinking towards approaching the subject of travel from the angle of mobility management, and to help them in local operations that they could set up to encourage schoolchildren to try walking to school. Indirectly, the targets are the school structures (teachers, pupils, parents) in which these operations will be implemented.

#### *Main Actors*

This operation is steered by ADEME (Environment and Energy Management Agency) and the Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur Region, in close co-operation with the local authorities.

#### *Level of implementation*

In 2002, this campaign was arranged on a regional scale, then taken up at a local level by the local authorities.

#### *Participation in EU projects or other initiatives*

This operation comes within the framework of the International “I walk to school” day.

### *Statistical data*

In 2002, 22 communes took part in the “I walk to school” day. The first results in terms of numbers show, depending on the commune, a rate of participation from between 30, to close on 92%. More exact data is not available at this time.

### **3.2.4 *Transpole Network Talks with Lille High School Students***

From the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> of November 2001, “Transpole”, the Lille Urban Community Public Transport Network organised and held a dozen meetings and events (rock, rap, sketches) at its Head Office for senior high school students in order to answer their questions in a convivial atmosphere.

#### *Promoted topics and priority issues*

The objective pursued was to present the “Transpole” network in an amusing manner and discover, by means of various debates with drivers, inspectors, mediators, and public transport escorts, aspects in the life of public transport, and to confront the problems linked to fare dodging, maintaining a friendly atmosphere in the bus, incivility, etc. On returning to their schools, with the help of a “Transpole” kit which they are given at the end of the meetings, the students talked about their experiences and provided their fellow students with useful information that was designed to enable them to get the most possible benefit out of using public transport.

#### *Target groups*

These meetings were held for 800 high school students acting as class delegates for each of the first, second and final high school years, as well as for the high school lifestyle counsellors from the twenty-two schools of this type within the City of Lille.

#### *Main Actors*

“Transpole” transport network, National Education Authority, SNCF (French Railways).

### **3.2.5 *Transport and Housing: An original Partnership in the Val de Sambre***

Within the framework of a programme baptised “Transport and habitat”, the SEMITIB Company, which operates the “STIBUS” network for the Val de Sambre (North), and “Promocil”, the number one Public Housing company in the sector, concluded, in April 2002, a partnership agreement aimed at encouraging the use of public transport for urban mobility.

#### *Promoted topics and priority issues*

To propose various services aimed at encouraging the use of public transport by improving both accessibility and ease of usage.

- **Information right at the heart of the neighbourhood in order to make tickets and other information relative to the STIBUS network easier to obtain.**

In agreement with its partner, SEMITIB has had offices placed at its disposal within the Promocil Agency premises in order that it can provide tickets and information in closer proximity to its customers. Furthermore, SEMITIB can arrange for a constant presence during return to school periods or other specific events for the distribution of travel

warrants. This constant commercial representation can be organised on a ½ time basis for mornings and in accordance with a pre-defined schedule. Only SEMITIB sales staff are authorised to sell STIBUS tickets. Finally, a STIBUS sign, with an appropriate display stand, is installed within the agencies to provide a constant supply of information leaflets on “how to use” the STIBUS network.

- **Offering an initial journey accompanied by a network representative in order to learn about the STIBUS network and get the most out of using public transport for the first time through an emphasis on ease of access and usage.**

For this purpose, SEMITIB offers any person who is interested a return journey between home and work, school or leisure, etc. SEMITIB's customer relations department arranges to meet the customer to make a journey that has been selected by them. A transport company escort assigned to the operation will personally accompany the customer. This journey should enable an on-the-spot presentation of the network and give details on its operating methods in various situations. A personalised route plan is given to the customer with a timetable for the nearest bus stop to their home. A special telephone number is passed to customers wishing to take advantage of this service.

- **Home visit to give personalised advice concerning travel opportunities by presenting STIBUS services and the various other facilities serving Val de Sambre.**

Upon simple request by any interested person, a member of the customer relations department, or a transport company escort assigned to the operation, will make a home visit in order to give full details about how the network operates and how to use it. They will also take the opportunity to offer a free ticket (for one or more members of the same family) enabling them to travel on STIBUS network routes for a set time period, as well as giving them a personalised route plan and a timetable for the nearest bus stop to their home

- **Sending a timetable for the nearest bus stop along with a personalised route plan:**

STIBUS will, on simple request, send the customer the timetable for the customer's preferred bus stop, whether this be a regular bus route, a special school service or a Sunday only service. This request can be made by telephone (using a Freephone No.) or by filling in the reply coupon found in the leaflet available from Promocil agencies and posting it to SEMITIB (“Customer relations” Department) or by handing it in at a Promocil agency.

- **Launch of the “Welcome kit” for new arrivals to the area containing useful practical information issued by the Val de Sambre municipal authorities, the transport companies and the social partners.**

Several of these partners offer their services by means of such a kit or information pack: Promocil, SEMITIB, and also the Town Halls. Using this kit the following can be contacted:

- The Post Office,
- France Télécom,
- The 27 communes in the Val de Sambre,
- EDF-GDF (Electricity and Gas Boards)
- SMVS,
- SNCF, (French Railways), etc.

For SEMITIB, information concerning the network can be augmented by a promotional initiative that enables potential users to have the advantage of a 'service discovery' offer (free daily or weekly tickets, etc.).

#### *Target groups*

New arrivals (new Promocil tenants or established tenants that are changing domicile).  
Promocil tenants who do not use public transport (STIBUS network).

#### *Main Actors*

“SEMITIB”, the “STIBUS” network operator in the Val de Sambre (North) and the Public Housing company “Promocil”.

#### *Level of implementation*

Local

#### *Funding*

Signatory partners to the agreement

### **3.2.6 Promoting Car Sharing in Rennes**

The Rennes “Covoiturage+” (Car Sharing) Association was formed in April 2002, and had a double objective: to group several people in the same car for a given journey, and provide access to employment for people without any means of transport. The originality of the project lies in its targeted approach, where the possible car sharing candidates were “recruited” at their journey's destination (workplace).

#### *Promoted topics and priority issues*

The essential objective in a car sharing scheme is to reduce traffic congestion in the town and reduce detrimental effects (pollution, noise, etc.), alongside a social aspect aimed at helping transport people who are looking for work and have no personal means of transport. The idea being to associate one person who wishes to go to a specific place of work to seek possible employment or attend an interview to each “crew”.

#### *Target groups*

All of the Rennes employment basin, although in the first instance it was the Industrial zones to the West of the Rennes urban area where the employees who are likely to have recourse to this alternative method of travel, perform daily journeys of between 30 and 120 km. The Association approached the management of the various companies with its initiative. It then met employees on site and held interviews during working hours in order to both present the project and train the crews.

#### *Main Actors*

The “Covoiturage+” Association, “Rennes-Métropole” the transport organisation, Mission locale (local youth support agency), the Local Employment Initiative, the Departmental Directorate for Work and Employment, the Help Fund Scheme for Young people, ADEME, Vivendi.

### *Level of implementation*

Implemented on a local level. The Association has three full time employees and is developing a software package to help them manage their activity.

### *Funding*

The partners. The Association hopes to receive part funding from European Community funds.

### *Statistical data*

The operation is less than one year old and is still only in its set up phase. An initial report nonetheless shows the number of interested companies, among which we find the Préfecture and the administrative departments it controls, the Citroën Company, Crédit Agricole bank, the University Hospital, etc. To date, there are 350 vehicles subscribed to the scheme and ten crews have been trained.

### **3.2.7 “Léovélo”, or How to Use the Bicycle (VELO) as a supplement to public transport**

This is an initiative by the Joint Union of Public Transport for the Clermont-Ferrand urban area to help facilitate intermodality.

### *Promoted topics and priority issues*

Within a framework of intermodality, the idea is to make bicycles available free of charge to TCU (Urban Public Transport) travel card holders, or on payment of a small rental charge for others.

As the ups and downs of the Clermont-Ferrand urban area show a fairly high record of accidents, a pool of fifty “mountain bikes” and fifty “electric bicycles” have been provided for users. Two bicycle bays, one located in the town centre close to the Préfecture and another opposite the Railway Station, supplement the existing “Vélobus” bay located in the Place de Jaude (Clermont-Ferrand's main square), which has the capacity to hold thirty bicycles.

### *Target groups*

Users of the Clermont-Ferrand urban network.

### *Main Actors*

Joint Union of Public Transport for the Clermont-Ferrand urban area (SMTC), SARL Léovélo (Limited Liability Company), made up of professionals in the passenger transport sector, and an Employment Association.

### *Level of implementation*

Local.

### *Funding*

Financial of 10,700€ from ADEME for the purchase of electric bicycles. Financing in terms of reception staff positions on back-to-work schemes by the Department Employment

Directorate for a sum of 8,918€ per year and per position (labour cost premium) and financing from the local back-to-work scheme for an amount of 1,800€ per year and per position.

*Participation in EU projects or other initiatives*

PREDIT, due to Léovélo being part of Léo 2000, CIVITAS (in progress).

*Statistical data*

The year 2002, the first complete year of business, resulted in a total of 3,352 bicycles being rented or placed at the disposal of a travel cardholder.

The Léovélo business can be divided up into two separate periods, the first, January to April, recording a low level of activity with a total 244 operations (7% of the overall total), the second, May to December recording a high level of activity with a total of 3,108 operations (93% of the overall total).

The high activity period experienced a sharp, and easily explainable drop in August holiday month as the Léovélo customer base is mainly made up of inhabitants of the Clermont-Ferrand urban area and students. Bicycle rentals in September include the 297 bicycles provided to travel card holders in Clermont-Ferrand and in Riom during the “Around town without my car!” day on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September.

A comparison of the results for June to December 2001 with those for the same period in 2002 shows an increase in activity of 348%, moving from 814 rentals and bicycles provided to travel card holders in 2001 to 2,835 in 2002.

This large increase can be explained by the progressive opening of the Renoux (town centre) and Railway Station bays and by the conduct of advertising campaigns to promote the use of this service. Combined, they have enabled us to gain both the conviction and loyalty of a large section of the local population.

84% of the bicycles used are electric, 16% are standard bicycles. We note a slight balancing out in usage between the 2 types of bicycle, explained by the fact that in high activity periods customers will take a standard bicycle if no electric one is available.

**Léovélo has conquered the local market:**

59% of customers are from the Clermont-Ferrand area and 22% live in the town itself. This constitutes a large customer base from which the business activity can be expanded. There is also a large, 14%, participation by tourist customers (both French and Foreigners).

Léovélo users are still mainly men (68%). More than half of customers are in the 18-35 age bracket (59%), and 34% in the 36-55 age bracket.

**Léovélo is a service offered to the users of urban public transport, coming within the chain of journeys taken using public transport:**

In effect, this service is mainly used by customers of the urban network who have the advantage of free access to the service: 90% of Léovélo customers hold a T2C or Tandem travel card. Profit margins are therefore low. They reached 892.50€ in 2002. Distribution over the year is consistent with the service's level of activity, consequently up quite considerably between 2001 and 2002.

### 3.2.8 “Pédibus” and “Vélobus”: Methods of Escorting Pupils to School

In October 2002, the municipality of Tremblay-en-France set up the “Pédibus” and “Vélobus” schemes, which are methods of escorting children walking or cycling to school, and are based on a programme already in place in Lausanne in Switzerland.

#### *Promoted topics and priority issues*

The purpose of setting up these escort schemes is above all to reduce the number of cars used for taking children to school. The principle lies in a spirit of sharing and solidarity: authorised parents escort children on a rota basis on the route to and from the school. The schoolchildren wait at the “Pédibus” assembly points located on the various routes that have been previously arranged with parents. The scheme works thanks to the willing and voluntary involvement of parents and a lot of co-operational effort. Approximately 40 to 50 Tremblay schoolchildren regularly use Pédibus. In all, the number of parent escorts thus required should be in the region of 15. Participation is relatively low during this winter period. However, from spring onwards, the Pédibus service is reinvigorated in several ways:

- printing of a Pédibus magazine,
- creation of a membership card,
- offer of anoraks to children taking part,
- the setting up of instructional actions.

These instructional actions relating to travelling methods and road safety should take place from this March to the end of May 2003. The fruits of the children's work should act as a basis for discussions between parents and the teaching teams on the subject of road improvements on the school routes.

- Spring with Pédibus: an invitation to all of the families to come and discover Pédibus along with their children. Breakfast taken together in the school canteen on arriving in the morning,
- “Vélobus day” a Saturday morning in Spring. Operation to be repeated if it proves successful,
- Neighbourhood dinner (in June, to celebrate the end of the first year of Pédibus).

#### *Target groups*

The pupils of the two schools in Tremblay-en-France: Victor Hugo and André Malraux.

#### *Main Actors*

The town of Tremblay-en-France, the French Academic Inspectorate, the Managerial staff of the schools concerned, parent group representatives and the County National Education Authority.

#### *Level of implementation*

Local.

#### *Funding*

ADEME help to a ceiling of 50% of the cost of feasibility studies, advertising costs and educational activities. Equipment provided by ARENE: reflective waistcoats for parents and children, flags, awareness raising brochures and posters, educational kit for the managerial

and teaching staff of the schools concerned, provided on the occasion of the International "I walk to school" day held in October 2002.

#### *Statistical data*

Approximately 40 to 50 Tremblay schoolchildren regularly use Pédibus. But this number should increase during Spring.

### ***3.2.9 A Scheme Targeting House Buyers in order to Assess the Advantages and Disadvantages of their Place of Residence***

A fifteen page information booklet, reiterating the objectives of the Ile-de-France Urban Mobility Master Plan and the Ile-de-France master plan for urban planning (SDRIF), the selection parameters, data on financial and other costs and a guide to using a software program will be sent to professionals in the real estate sector. This software program, which has been perfected by the Public Works Administration in the Ile-de-France Region (DREIF), will estimate the travelling expenses of a house buyer in accordance with a certain set of parameters. In this way it will enable the advisory bodies, including the Local Housing Information Board (ADIL), to carry out cost simulations.

#### *Promoted topics and priority issues*

The campaign aims to show both the respective advantages and disadvantages of a "central" or "peripheral" residential location, by drawing specific attention to travelling costs, especially those relating to car usage.

The origin of this initiative is the work carried out by the National Institute for Transport and Safety Research (INRETS). In effect, it shows that although the low cost of housing in the "peripheral" zones offsets the higher cost of travel related expenses, there comes a point where savings on the lower cost of accommodation are, due to scarcity of services by public transport structures, cancelled out by the expenses involved in using a car. A survey carried out with the banks reveals that this source of expenditure is not, or only just, taken into account when assessing the creditworthiness of borrowers.

#### *Target groups*

Direct targets are estate agents, ADIL, notaries (solicitors), and bank officials. Indirect targets are the home buyer households.

#### *Main Actors*

The direct targets.

#### *Level of implementation*

This scheme is implemented on both regional and local levels. As distribution may not extend to all the region's estate agencies, undoubtedly "priority" targets must be selected in order to attain a section of professional groups or federations which choose whether or not to actively support this scheme.

#### *Funding*

The DREIF has taken responsibility for the designing, publishing and reproducing of a limited number of copies of the information booklet and software program.

### *Participation in EU projects or other initiatives*

This project is an initiative linked to the Ile-de-France Urban Mobility Master Plan, and is not part of any European project.

### **3.2.10 An individualised marketing experiment in the Île-de-France Region**

An Urban Mobility Master Plan experiment held in the Ile-de-France, which consists of using individualised marketing techniques with the inhabitants of certain neighbourhoods in order to promote alternative modes of transport.

#### *Promoted topics and priority issues*

To examine with individual inhabitants of a neighbourhood whether it is possible to use another method of transport to do the journeys they usually do in their own private car.

#### *Target groups*

The inhabitants of certain neighbourhoods in the Ile-de-France.

#### *Main Actors*

STIF (Authority in charge of public transport in the Ile-de-France region)

RATP (Public Transport operator in the Ile-de-France)

DREIF (Public Works Administration in the Ile-de-France Region)

Local bus Company Athis-Car

Cities

#### *Level of implementation*

Local implementation within the framework of the Ile-de-France Urban Mobility Master Plan.

#### *Funding*

This campaign is funded by mainly by RATP, DREIF and STIF with participation of a sum by the cities and Athis-Car.

### *Participation in EU projects or other initiatives*

This project is an initiative linked to the Ile-de-France Urban Mobility Master Plan, and is not part of any European project.

### **3.2.11 ST Microelectronics in Grenoble: a dynamic travel plan for commuters and business trips in a private company**

#### *Promoted topics and priority issues*

Through this travel plan, the objective is to increase the part of the employees who use alternative forms of transport from 20% to 50%, from 2000 to 2005.

This travel plan implements hard and soft measures in the same time:

- A new bus line from the site to the station, consequence of a partnership with the public transport operator and authority; the use of this line is free for the employees of ST Microelectronics;
- 80% participation of the cost to employees of season tickets for urban and suburban transport;

- Protected bicycle tracks and pavements around the site (in progress);
- bicycle parking spaces, showers and cyclist safety kits;
- Payment of taxi or bus for cyclists in case of unexpected need;
- 80% participation of the additional cost of a new “clean” vehicle (electric or natural gas) or the cost of conversion to LPG;
- Mail service, administrative access to Internet, urban public transport ticketing system on the site;
- Snack service;
- Free anti-pollution inspections;
- Bicycle repairs on the site;
- Increase of fleet of “clean” service vehicles;
- Co-ordination of professional trips with encouragement of car-pooling.

### *Target group*

The employees (around 2000)

### *Main Actors*

- The public transport operator and authority for the implementation of the new bus line, the 80% reduction of the cost of season public transport tickets and the urban public transport ticketing system on the site;
- The municipality for the implementation of bicycle tracks and the improvement of pavements around the site;
- The electricity and gas operator and the environment and energy agency for the 80% participation of the additional cost of a new "clean" vehicle;
- A taxi company for the return home travel for cyclists in case of unexpected need;
- A garage owner for the free anti-pollution inspections;
- An operator for the snack service;
- A mechanic for bicycle repairs.

### *Level of implementation*

Local level

### *Funding*

Costs of the travel plan: 100 000 € per year, one equivalent man-year for its analysis and communication; but the chief executive officer for ST Microelectronics in Europe said that “ecology is free” (when a company acts for the environment, it generates profits which balances the costs).

### *Link with other initiatives*

This initiative may be implemented in other sites of ST Microelectronics in France.

### *Statistical data*

Two years after its implementation (October 2002), 40% of the employees use an alternative form of transport for their home-work and business trips. The objective of 50% by 2005 may be achieved. The 20% modal split is comprised of 11% public transport use and 9% bicycle use. The choice of the measures by a project group managed by employees is an important

factor for take up of the travel plan. The large panel of measures is a good indicator of success. ST Microelectronics is actually the most dynamic travel plan in France.

### **3.3 Barriers, opportunities and critical success factors**

#### **Strong local mobilisation**

The last five years have seen a multiplication in the communication campaigns promoting sustainable mobility. This mobilisation illustrates a growing awareness of this problem across a wide range of actors (local authorities, public transport companies, associations, public services, schools, etc.) and with a high level of local participation.

This dissemination of communication actions through widely diversifying territories and with widely varying scope, offers the advantage of involving citizens in a targeted manner. These local initiatives enable much closer contact with citizens' concerns and expectations. However it does have the disadvantage of multiplying the actors and the arguments, and therefore contributes to obscuring the main and essential points. Incidentally, dispersion of actions also leads to a lack of optimisation in managing the funding. This naturally brings up the necessity of relaying local initiatives through national actions, in order to have greater consistency in the messages but also to reinforce the resources available.

#### **Necessity of a consistent argument on a national scale**

Transport policy in favour of sustainable mobility is still suffering from the lack of an overall and consistent argument upheld by national authorities. Even if recent laws have confirmed the government's willingness to reduce car use, its communication on this theme is still very restrained, when compared to other themes that benefit from huge campaigns (road safety, anti-smoking, etc.). However, by federating populations around collective values and a shared argument, the implementation of a national communication strategy would enable the reinforcement of both the consistency and the scope of messages.

By communicating at the national level, the argument would bear on values and principles, whereas at a local level communication would be aimed more at promoting concrete projects or actions. And a change in French behaviour in terms of mobility would require them to be convinced, not only by the projects and actions implemented on a local level, but also by the principles that underpin them.

Moreover, at a national level, communication could bear on the planetary aspects of increasing car use, such as the greenhouse effect or the rational use of energy. Local argumentation would bear more on short-term concerns: noise, local pollution, traffic problems, etc. Even if these local concerns must be taken into account to convince the inhabitants, the aim of developing our territory in a sustainable manner means that awareness must also be raised to the less immediate and less localised potential risks.

From here, while relaying these messages at a local level, it seems necessary to base this communication policy on a consistent argument on a national scale, aimed more at sharing values than convincing about projects. Moreover, this co-ordination between national scale and local scale would also optimise the finance deployed for this type of action.

However, as things stand, the major fragmentation of the decision-making levels, coupled with the dispersion of responsibilities in terms of transport within the various institutions, does nothing to facilitate national steering and a common working framework.

### **The rising of national campaigns**

Even though we don't have a national communication strategy yet, the rise of European and national campaigns, such as the "In town without my car!" day and Public Transport Week, is heading in the direction of a more consistent communication action on a national or European scale. In fact, the strength of these campaigns resides in the implementation of local operations around a common message, shared on a national scale. Communicating in favour of sustainable transport modes requires both local actions, so as to touch the populations and take their particularities into account and also the sharing of collective if not universal values. Therefore, the co-ordination of operations carried out locally around a label and objectives defined at a national or even European level, would be an ideal answer to this challenge. For the "In town without my car!" campaign, the involvement of the Ministry of the Ecology and Sustainable Development and the ADEME ( Environment and Energy Management Agency) was fundamental in "giving a meaning" to the campaigns carried out locally, and federating them around common objectives. For the Public Transport Week, the setting up of the Public Transport Promotion Committee, bringing together all of the public transport companies at a national level, is also an essential step towards harmonising the local communication strategies.

At the same time as reinforcing the consistency of messages, the national scope of campaigns has also increased their efficiency in marketing terms: greater financial resources and the spreading of messages throughout France have given these campaigns far greater visibility and have increased their popularity and the impact on populations.

### **The lack of continuous and sustained messages**

However, it is to be regretted that these campaigns are sporadic events that are not picked up by continuously broadcast messages: attracting attention once a year is not sufficient to modify popular thinking in depth. It would be necessary to combine large-scale sporadic events, which are essential in drawing popular attention, with more modest national campaigns, with a long-term and sustained implementation.

To sum up, communication in favour of sustainable mobility is still suffering from a pigeon-holed approach, with no global strategy at a national level. It remains fixed on local and sporadic initiatives, without seeking any consistency in the messages put across. Nevertheless, the popularity of large scale European campaigns, like the "In town without my car!" day, has at least brought out a common and consistent argument throughout the territory, and has opened national debate on the place of motor cars in our towns and cities.

### **Strong involvement of the public transport operators**

Although communication in favour of sustainable mobility is barely supported by national policies, local initiatives are multiplying, mainly implemented by urban public transport companies. The public transport companies and the local authorities on which they depend permit the promotion of public transport in over 2,000 communes (smallest size of administrative area), representing more than 50% of the French population.

### **Public transport operators grant an important place to communication plans**

Other than the fact that they reach a large part of the population, the efficiency of the operations carried out by public transport companies resides in the fact that they respond to a true communication strategy. For them, communication is a tool serving business. It is tackled in a professional manner, from a marketing viewpoint. The messages are addressed to potential customers, with mainly commercial objectives, in compliance with a clearly defined marketing strategy and with a specific budget. This enables both the creation of an image for public transport, and also the reinforcing of this image over time: the actions are not implemented on a sporadic basis but continuously, and are consistent with the image that the company and local authority wish to portray of their transport network.

But, how effective they may be, these communication campaigns, are linked with the marketing strategy of the company: it responds mainly to commercial logic and could not replace a national communication policy in favour of sustainable means of transport. In fact, every transport company has its own communication strategy, and its own messages, that do not come within the global strategy on a national scale.

### **Public transport operators communication is too finely targeted**

The communication actions deployed by the public transport companies remain restricted to their specific field of application: this means promoting public transport, but not necessarily all the sustainable forms of mobility (cycling, walking, car sharing, etc.). Moreover, these campaigns only reach the populations of the urban communes, while the whole country is concerned by more sustainable mobility. In fact, even if some areas do not have public transport networks, communication in favour of other travelling methods would still be necessary: for example to raise parents' awareness so that they allow their children to walk to school or to promote cycling or to communicate in favour of car sharing. This kind of action should be promoted in those areas that are not served by public transport. However, these areas are not concerned by transport company communication campaigns and are barely affected by national campaigns like "In town without my car!" day.

### **A more commercial than political approach**

The messages disseminated by the public transport operators cannot replace a more politically orientated communication campaign on sustainable mobility. In fact, the public transport operators work in compliance with a commercial logic, and therefore address the population more as potential customers than as citizens. They communicate about public transport as a service rendered to the population, rather than for the values that underpin it. But, it is the way of thinking of populations and the values that they hold dear (their idea of liberty, their image of the motor car, etc.) that we have to change if car use is to be reduced. A purely commercial message is therefore inadequate to change people values: a citizenship orientated communication campaign needs to be established to go along with commercial operations, but this is still lacking.

Nevertheless, we can notice that the strictly commercial approach of the public transport companies is gradually developing towards a more political grounding. In fact, through their transport networks, local authorities aim at promoting a certain image for their town, along with a certain lifestyle. Public transport is becoming a symbol of modernity and dynamism,

and can equally promote an agreeable living environment and environmentally friendly lifestyles. The commercial message is leaving more and more space for the political message, and can thus have an influence on changing popular perceptions. Nevertheless, this does not provide a substitute for political arguments in favour of sustainable mobility.

### **A message targeted at certain sectors of the population**

The commercial approach of the public transport operators also involves another stumbling block. The commercial approach implies that communication campaigns are targeting potential public transport users. This approach enables priority targeting of certain sectors of the population, especially the young. This has the advantage of raising awareness from the youngest age, at the moment when people are most likely to modify their everyday practices. But, these targeted messages barely reach non-public transport users, these people that have a car and remain impervious to the use of public transport; and these people are exactly the ones we need to convince to change their travelling habits. Moreover, this approach targeted on certain population sectors, has another perverse effect: it tends to present public transport more as something to be suffered than chosen and thus devalues its image.

To sum up, if the transport companies play an essential role in communicating in favour of public transport, public awareness raising to sustainable mobility cannot be based on their initiatives alone, but must also be accompanied by a more all-encompassing communication strategy.

### **Assessment still fails to be a strong point**

The question of assessment is also a recurring problem in terms of communication on sustainable mobility. Even if the assessment of public policies is now being increasingly taken into account, assessment culture is still a long way from being established in France. For this reason, the vast majority of the campaigns carried out so far have not been assessed, or at least only partly so. “In town without my car!” day set up an assessment process when it was launched, but the same did not apply to the other campaigns that we have found. Public Transport Week still does not have an assessment process, and the campaigns implemented by the transport companies are mainly assessed in terms of public transport ticket sales, but rarely subjected to specific evaluation. Assessment of the other communication campaigns identified is either lacking or inadequate.

However, when we are talking about the expenditure of public money, the question of assessment is essential in justifying the expense laid out. This is even more so the case for “soft” measures, where the result is not immediately palpable. In fact, in the case of “hard” projects, even if no assessment has been implemented, we can nevertheless see concrete results: an objective has been reached and is operating correctly. In a certain way, the implementation of the project is sufficient unto itself. In the eyes of the people, and therefore in those of their elected representatives, it seems less necessary to justify the relevance of a project through a process of correctly directed assessment. But, in the case of “soft” measures, the results are not directly visible. In this case, if assessment fails to demonstrate their relevance, these measures can easily be dismissed as useless or inefficient. It is proving difficult to spend public money on measures that are not visible or tangible. That is why we are encountering a certain wariness on the part of political representatives about investing in “soft” measures: the share granted to communication remains very small, whilst the “hard” measures, that are far more expensive, are still given priority.

### 3.4 Ongoing Initiatives and priority areas

#### Involving citizens in projects

##### The emergence of a participative democracy

Despite the still limited place granted to communication campaigns, public awareness is developing, but in a different way: the emergence of a participative democracy, enabling the instigation of a true public debate, is now becoming the strategic method of raising people's awareness to sustainable mobility practices.

By placing sustainable development at the heart of new urban development policies, the legislator has introduced the need for widespread public involvement before any decision that makes a commitment for the people and their future can be taken. To mobilise all of the actors concerned, to de-mystify know-how, to organise exchanges and debate, are all becoming key factors in the decision making process, whilst our habits up to now have been anchored in the front-on relationship between decision makers and citizens.

##### **Public involvement in the Urban Mobility Master Plans: an opportunity for discussion with the citizens<sup>7</sup>**

Through the implementation of Urban Mobility Master Plans, a real dynamic has taken life in our urban areas, in order to promote sustainable transport. These increasingly numerous and increasingly ambitious initiatives have been accompanied by a procedure of public involvement laid down by SRU law. Today, the opening up of the concept of Urban Mobility Master Plans to the public is a strategic method of raising public awareness to the problem of increasing car use. Beyond the mutual drawing up of a project, this public involvement process enable to raise public awareness and to launch a debate between authorities, associations, companies and all the citizens about the place granted to car in our cities. These different groups, due to the limits of their field of action, could have compartmentalised assessments. Public involvement process enables confrontation with the points of view of automobile and cyclist associations, environment defenders and professional federations (traders, taxis, logisticians, etc.) to bring out a common culture. It also enables communication with the general public, not only to get them to support the projects put forward in the Urban Mobility Master Plan, but also to raise their awareness to the need to reduce car traffic. Public involvement bases on communication actions could take several forms: exhibition, meetings/debates, surveys, etc. For example, in Lille, the “mobility forum” as well as the “Urban Mobility Master Plan Tuesdays” provided high points of public debate for all of the associations in the city and suburbs. The “Urban Mobility Master Plan newsletter” in Caen, the “3 scenarios for debate” exhibition in Lyon, and the debate held in Grenoble all enabled the general public to come to grips with the question of mobility.

To sum up, this discussion held within the framework of Urban Mobility Master Plans, has enabled a true public debate to emerge on the place of the motor car in our cities. It is however, regrettable that this debate remains restricted to the territories that have a Urban Mobility Master Plan, i.e. mainly the large French urban areas.

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<sup>7</sup> see *Public involvement in transport planning in France, the example of the PDU* – CERTU Editor - 2003

## **New tools for participative democracy**

Over and above the discussion and public debate procedures, the Urban Solidarity and Renewal law offers new tools for participative democracy. By decentralising the organisation of railway transport to the regional level, the elected representatives have a chance to act in compliance with the expectations of their constituents. To better satisfy the user's expectation to be involved, the law also foresees the setting up of "line committees", a body within which the users could express their wishes and claims. Incidentally, for quite a few years the transport networks have been multiplying their methods of listening to their customers (satisfaction barometers, mediation set-ups, etc.) The "Neighbourhood Democracy" law voted in February 2002 has reinforced these participative initiatives, especially through the setting up of "neighbourhood councils", which have been made mandatory in administrative areas (communes), with more than 80,000 residents.

Even if these various measures are not true communication campaigns, by reinforcing citizen involvement in the decision making process, they enable their expectations to be taken into account and also improved information and awareness raising in favour of sustainable mobility.

## **Urban Mobility Master Plans start tackling communication policies <sup>8</sup>**

The implementation of the Urban Mobility Master Plans comes up with a global approach to reduce car use: it aims at taking into account all of the levers that might act upon an increase in car traffic. This means that actions should bear on all methods (car, public transport, cycling, walking), on every type of trip (passenger travel and freight transport), and on all of the parameters that have an influence on mobility practices (parking, safety, charges, etc.). This also means that actions concerning both hard projects (creation of bus lines, cycling networks, park and bus relays, etc.) and soft measures. Thanks to this global approach, integrating both material projects and soft measures, Urban Mobility Master Plans have enabled a place to be granted to communication campaigns. Conscious that the efficiency of projects requires a change in people's perceptions and behaviour, the Urban Mobility Master Plans start talking about communication tools to accompany hard actions.

The style of communication may differ depending on the Urban Mobility Master Plan. Some of them use positive communication: in Strasbourg, the Urban Mobility Master Plan proposes the highlighting of good practices and the lauding of calm driving. Others are opting for the negative approach: in Bordeaux, the Urban Mobility Master Plan opts to highlight bad habits and the negative effects of motor car mobility. The envisaged communication media are diversified. Hardcopy seems to be predominant (plans, guides, newspapers, etc.). Event communication is sometimes brought up (exhibition, free bus day and car-free days) as well as the use of telephony and new information technology. Lastly, some Urban Mobility Master Plans are thinking of turning to relay people. For example; The Ile-de-France Urban Mobility Master Plan suggests a co-operation with property developers to diffuse information on the accommodation cost/ transport cost ratio for people who wish to move into the suburbs.

The themes tackled in the communication campaigns proposed by the Urban Mobility Master Plan are also varied. Above all, the Urban Mobility Master Plans affirm the necessity of

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<sup>8</sup> see *Urban Mobility Master Plan Synopsis 1996 to 2001* – CERTU Editor - 2002

informing the public on how to use alternative modes of transport. Sometimes the intentions are precise, in the form of creating usage plans and guides. Information on intermodality is especially developed, mainly through the setting up of a mobility agency, designed to promulgate the transport offer, provide the times and lengths of journeys, as well as to give out information on car sharing or cycling. Such projects can be found in the Urban Mobility Master Plans of numerous urban areas (Bordeaux, Caen, Grenoble, Mulhouse, Nantes, Nîmes and Valenciennes). Projects are also underway to create intermodal plans and guides on a joint basis by several transport authorities in Metz, Montbéliard and St Etienne.

The targets may be different too. Most of the actions promoted in the Urban Mobility Master Plans are targeted at general public. Some of them have specific target, like companies or schools. For example, the Bordeaux Urban Mobility Master Plan foresees a communication program on reduced pollution delivery methods, whilst Lille is planning the distribution of technical mobility sheets to companies. Other Urban Mobility Master Plans are aiming more at the youth sector, through events in schools.

These are just some of the actions that demonstrate the willingness to develop communication tools through Urban Mobility Master Plans. However, even if this willingness to communicate is clearly stated, the methods are all too rarely discussed: the communication section seems to be more of a declaration of intent rather than a schedule of actions. The reason is that the skills linked to the communication sector are rarely represented in the bodies that draw up the Urban Mobility Master Plans, mainly made up of technicians and engineers.

Despite these difficulties, the Urban Mobility Master Plans still have the merit of highlighting the need to raise public awareness and suggest guidelines for communication campaigns.

### **Mobility management: a way to develop soft measures<sup>9</sup>**

#### **A concept that has only recently reached France**

Originating in the United States and imported into several European countries such as Germany, Holland and Great Britain, mobility management is a concept that has only recently appeared in France. It is mainly due to the SRU law that this concept has been introduced, through travel plans and mobility consulting services.

This still new approach gives rise to the implementation of management, organisation and optimisation measures being applied to what already exists, rather than the creation of heavyweight infrastructures. Based on "soft" marketing techniques, mobility management represents an essential medium to communicate with the general public.

The main interest in this method of communication resides in the fact that it works on a individualised approach that directly involves the target. Through solutions such as car sharing, transport-on-demand and travel plans, mobility management aims to reduce car use by proposing a diversified, tailor-made and flexible solution appropriate to each one and every situation. Actions are often aimed at limited, but well-defined targets, in accordance with the individualised approach.

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<sup>9</sup> See *Mobility consulting: how to encourage travel plans to reduce car traffic* – CERTU Editor - 2003

## **Changing practices through travel plans**

SRU law has introduced the concept of management of mobility by encouraging the implementation of travel plans in sites which generate a lot of traffic (public establishment, major private companies, schools etc.)

These initiatives consist of implementing a series of consistent actions designed to encourage individuals within this type of establishment (employees, visitors, students, customers) to personally reduce their use of a car in favour of alternative modes of transport. In order to have a clearer insight into peoples' practices and also their expectations, travel plans rely on strong communication and co-operation with people to reach a number of objectives:

- awareness raising and giving information on travel related problems (like safety, environment, health etc.)
- understanding the expectations of users and analysing their current habits
- stimulating experimentation with other modes of transport
- defining a communal and shared action plan.

Because they directly involve people, travel plans implementation can increase personal concern and make people aware that they can improve the situation through their own actions. The advantage of this type of initiative is that public awareness raising is not an end in itself, but must result in a real change in practices. That means that communication must go hand in hand with an action plan that enables concrete modifications in behavioural patterns.

For a few years, these initiatives have been multiplying within the major companies, for which the questions of employee travelling and freight transport are an ever increasing problem. School travel plans have also appeared and should be developed because schools offer wide opportunities for changing over to soft travel modes, due to their nearness to the home. Moreover, by communicating with pupils, you can raise school children's awareness from a very young age, and at time when their travel habits have not yet become entrenched, and you can also raise parent awareness to environmental problems and road safety. Recently, school travel plans have multiplied in France, for example, numerous experiments have taken place in the Ile-de-France, as well as in Rhône-Alpes, Provence-Côte d'azur or Normandie.

## **The mobility consulting service: a new service dedicated to information and communication**

In the field of mobility management, SRU law also requires the setting up of a mobility consulting service by the urban public transport authorities. This enables the implementation of a more wide scale communication operation, exceeding those targeted operations carried out within the framework of travel plans. This service, which is aimed at employers and the managers of activities that generate high traffic flow, has several objectives:

- raising awareness to the negative effects created by car use
- transmitting information concerning other alternative transport solutions
- encouraging them to undertake travel plan and assisting them in implementing such initiatives
- highlighting transport solutions
- uniting the actors around the actions to be implemented
- assessing the measures that have been set up.

Therefore, its role comes within a global approach that enables to go beyond raising public awareness and make deep-rooted changes in their travel habits. It also enables all of the locally implemented initiatives to be co-ordinated and a global communication strategy to be defined.

To sum up, mobility management appears to be an essential lever in developing soft measures in favour of sustainable mobility, and especially communication and public awareness raising actions. There is nevertheless a major stumbling block: the multiplicity of actors involved and actions implemented without any real scope for co-ordination on a national scale.

### **3.5 Suggestions and Future Plans**

#### **Keeping up the Urban Mobility Master Plan dynamic commitment**

Even if the place granted to communication is still very limited within our transport policies, other approaches different from classical communication campaigns have enabled the appearance of public awareness raising initiatives. Most especially, the drawing up of the Urban Mobility Plans has enabled a commitment to a sustainable mobility dynamic and the beginning of serious public debate on this subject: public involvement process within the Urban Mobility Master Plan have given rise to much stronger public awareness. The PDU are also suggesting ways in which communication actions encouraging new travel habits can be developed. Finally, they have also brought out travel plan experiments which are especially suitable for changing behaviour.

#### **Developing mobility management actions**

Whilst France has remained firmly anchored in the "hard" approach to the transport issue up to now, the introduction by the SRU law of the concept of mobility management has opened up new approaches in terms of communication and raising public awareness. These measures are more and more implemented and appear to be having results. Therefore it is not only important to encourage this type of approaches but also to better co-ordinate such initiatives, which are still irregular and not linked to other travel-related actions that are being implemented.

#### **Placing greater emphasis on the major national campaigns and improving the assessment procedure**

Due to their deployment on a European or national scale, campaigns such as "In town without my car!" and Public Transport Week are essential levers needed to instigate in-depth debate concerning French travel habits. However it is preferable that these sporadic events are accompanied by some form of sustained action enabling the message to be continued beyond the symbolic impact of the day or the week dedicated to these events. It appears just as vital to strengthen, or rather create, as they are non-existent, process for assessing campaigns in order to check of the effectiveness of actions and, if necessary, redefine methods.

#### **Continuing to use the support of the public transport operators**

The transport network represents an effective medium in terms of communicating in favour of sustainable mobility. Their marketing approach automatically integrates communication skills plus their deployment in every town and city and close contact with the public make them a

strong communication vector. Nonetheless, they cannot be the only medium supporting a global communication policy in favour of sustainable mobility, and must be reinforced by messages on a national level and with political objectives.

### **A national debate concerning sustainable mobility?**

The detrimental effects of increasing car use are both local and planetary. It has impacts on the environment of our towns and cities, on the way our territory will develop and, in the final analysis, on the future of our planet. If national authorities take note of the scale of these potential risks, it is often left up to the local elected representatives to pass these policies on to their constituents. Therefore, the deeper questions concerning values, behavioural patterns, choices in life are often reduced to arguments over projects and actions to be implemented. However, a change in terms of behaviour cannot take place without a deep-rooted change in mentality.

If grass roots awareness raising actions are indispensable in involving the citizen and taking their expectations into account, a much more profound debate on the system of values we wish to defend and the ways we want to be able to offer future generations would prove to be essential. Perhaps it would be a good idea if the political representatives got together on a national level over this subject, to discuss it with all of the citizens as one of the essential issues for the decades to come?