EUROPEAN

POLICYBRIEF

SOCIAL INNOVATION IN MOBILITY AND TRANSPORT

This policy brief reflects first results of the SI-DRIVE working package on mobility and transport. Based upon the grand challenges of overcoming the negative effects of mobility and transport and increasing accessibility to achieve a more inclusive society, two main goals have been discussed. These are fostering sustainable and inclusive transportation. It was argued that social innovation can contribute a lot to implementing the goals. The main areas in which social innovation takes place are centred on slow, green and inclusive mobility and transport

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January 2016

INTRODUCTION

This policy brief on social innovation in mobility and transport of the SI-DRIVE project has the aim to inform political actors and decision makers on i) societal challenges related to transport and mobility and on how social innovations respond to these challenges, ii) on a foresight exercise on social innovation in mobility and transport carried out as part of the SI-Drive project, iii) and on first policy options and recommendations discussed within the project consortium.

The **societal challenges** that are related to transport and mobility are in two different problem areas with global reach:

- Inhabitants of metropolitan areas and larger cities are affected by air pollution, congestion and high noise levels caused by large volumes of motorised transport. The consequence is massively reduced quality of life and fewer options to use other, more environmentally friendly transport modes. Still, the transport system cannot be considered as sustainable. Besides congestion and high noise levels, transport still shows significant oil dependency and causes high CO2 emissions.
- Mobility is a key characteristic of a modern society and deeply interwoven with its achievements, e.g. mobility is crucial for accessing health, cultural and education infrastructures, and for getting access to jobs. In many parts of the world, also including Europe, weak or lacking transport infrastructure are among the reasons why people lack getting access to (parts of) societal life. Reasons are manifold and reach from “non-profitable”

remote areas, lack of transport modes for people with reduced mobility, unsafe or unaffordable transport, etc.

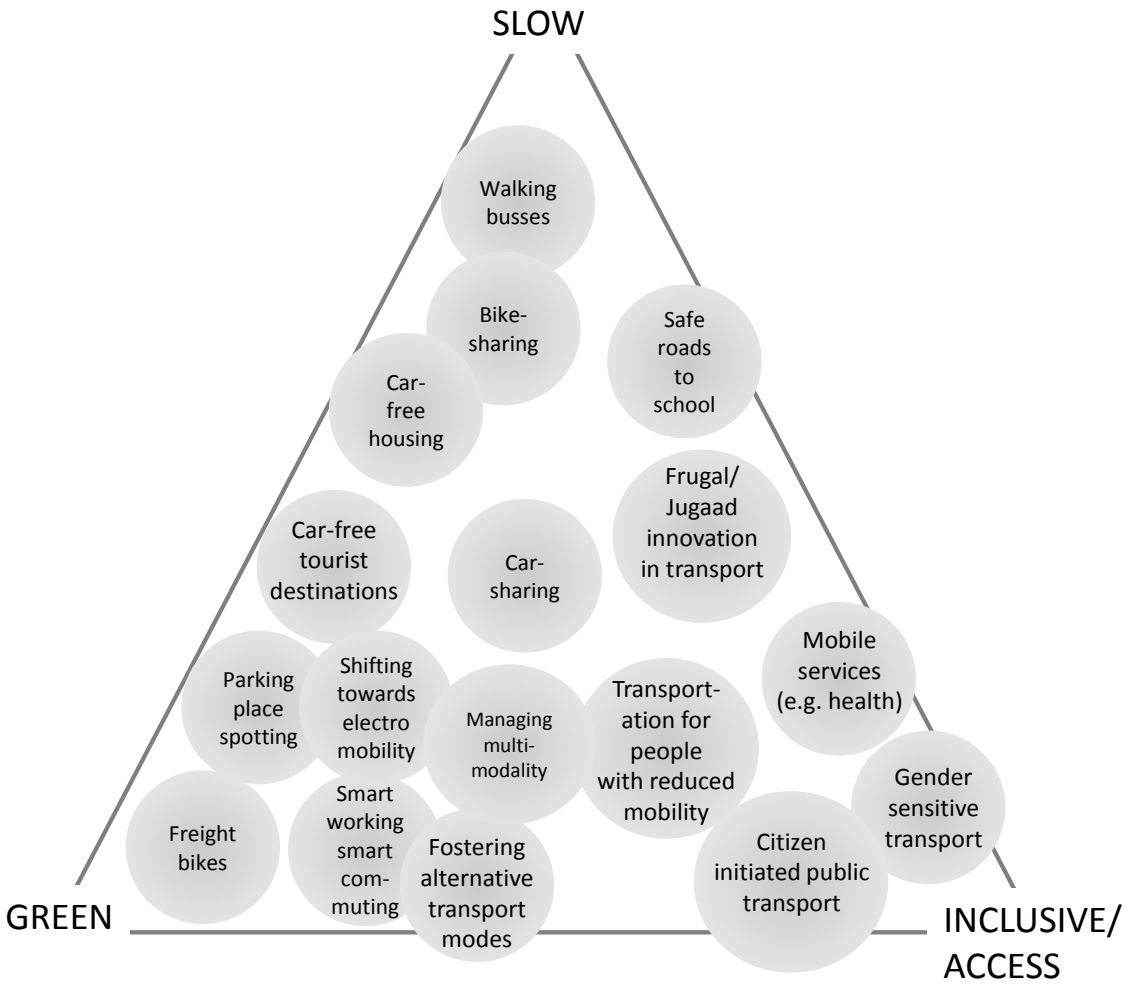
Evidence and Analysis

Two **political ambitions** or goals have been formulated in order to tackle the challenges; both are important contexts for social innovations:

- The first is the promotion of sustainable transport systems characterized by low energy consumption and improved mobility for users through better transport times and routes. If possible, transport should be avoided, shifted towards non-motorised or public transport modes or improved through technological advancements in order to be more energy efficient
- The second is the promotion of inclusive mobility and transport. In order to fulfil this objective, mobility has to be accessible, affordable, available and acceptable for all groups of society. In order to be fully used, a transport mode has to be easy enough for all society groups to reach to; it should be financially affordable for all, supported by easy reachable information and the society has to be willing to use it without fear and concerns.

Social innovation in mobility and transport is becoming a more important topic, as for example underlined by recent calls of the Horizon 2020 working programme 2016-17.
Within SI-DRIVE analyses of the topic have been conducted. To approach the field, a first step was to define so-called “practice-fields”, i.e. fused small scale social innovation initiatives that gained impact on broader level and changed existing social practices. Prominent examples are car-sharing, walking school busses or citizen initiated public transport.
Altogether, 17 global practice fields of social innovations in mobility and transport have been defined in SI- DRIVE through both, a deductive (expert discussions) and inductive approach (generated from data about more than 120 cases of small scale social innovation initiatives).
All practice fields have in common a very local perspective. They concentrate on neighbourhoods, cities or regions. Long distance transport seems to be not an area of action for social innovations.
The defined practice fields of social innovations can be grouped into three clusters that describe commonalities. These clusters also show high consistency with the transportation related policy goals to tackle the societal challenges.
There is a considerable *inclusiveness/access dimension* assigned to social innovation in mobility and transport in order to establish or increase access to basic needs and societal life. Practice fields address people with reduced mobility, new transport possibilities realised by citizen initiated public transport, gender sensitive transportation, etc.
Greening mobility and transport includes social innovation in fostering co-modality, e.g. through sharing initiatives implementing new practices related to usership rather than ownership. It furthermore includes social innovation facilitating usage of electric mobility and multi-modality, i.e. the usage of different transport modes on the same trip.
Many social innovation projects and practice fields are based on *slow transportation*. There is no case striving for high speed transport or long-distance trips. Instead, projects have walking or cycling as their starting point and strive to integrate walking/cycling in daily activities and make it more comfortable (e.g. in terms of safety). In consequence, slow mobility has a strong local emphasis.
Figure 1 is an attempt to structure the practice fields according to the clusters while showing the influence of the other clusters at the same time (according to the position of the practice field within the triangle).

Figure 1: Social Innovation practice fields in Mobility and Transport



Source: own compilation

Based upon the findings elaborated above, the aim of the SI-DRIVE foresight workshop was to explore future developments with relevance for social innovation in mobility and transport. The discussion was structured according to 1) drivers that will gain influence in the future, 2) future thematic goals, and 3) barriers to the realisation of the goals.

Driving forces of Social Innovation (SI) in mobility and transport will be:

1) Sharing economy, already present in many aspects today. Car-sharing and bike-sharing practices will increase, also in terms of diversity and variation, due to the shift from ownership to user-ship as the general principle of the sharing economy. Other sharing options, such as ticket sharing within the public transport, will evolve, too. However, trust and safety can be obstacles to the sharing economy.
2) Technological progress, ICT development and implementation, social media development, big data, critical issue: privacy
3) Environment: Environmental protection, Energy innovations, Clean environment, Oil price/peak oil, Energy shortage
4) Business models: Protest, Public shaming (reporting misbehaviour), Quality of infrastructure, Possibility for business models, Need for a better connectivity between different modes of transport
5) Local context: Social justice (bringing services to people), Demographic change, Different modes of transport, Regulations, Local deficiency, Sense of community, Quality of infrastructure, Peripheral regions

Future thematic goals were

1) Inclusive future: Create jobs for all, refugees inclusion, accessible remote areas
2) No restrictions future: Inclusive and sustainable mobility, Fast, cheap, and good transport, Environmentally friendly transport, Seamless transport, alternatively
3) Future with restrictions: Supporting local and slow transportation; Slow mobility culture, Car-free living areas, Making public transport dominant mode of transport
4) Means: Technology: development and inclusion into the existing transport system; Links between private and public sectors (initiatives start well, but stop because they are not adopted by the public authorities); Integration/Linking of the different parts of the system; Lack of clarity on the SI theoretical approach; New programmes for funding and researching SI
5) Business: New kinds of services, Strong regional/national economy sectors, Strong relations between communities and business sectors are important, e.g., tourism, (social) business opportunities

Identified **barriers** to achieving the goals in mobility and transport are

1) Regulation: Political priority setting hinders other initiatives; regulations support the established regime (cf. the case of UberApp).
2) Culture and communication: Lack of formalisation of SI-initiatives, public sector lacks the experience to work with SI-initiatives since authorities are not used to communicate with local initiatives, established actors in transport and mobility (car manufactures) are not involved in developing SI; there is a gap between front-runners/initiators and followers.
3) Access to mobility system: Lack of knowledge/literacy about mobility (knowledge about availability of transport modes), people with disabilities are confronted with badly developed infrastructure; the digital divide also affects mobility behaviour.
4) Political context and will: Unstable local governments (funding, changing laws, changing of governors, etc.), lack of transparency and massive corruption in some countries/failed states; by setting political priorities, other possibilities are hindered (e-cars vs car-sharing).

Policy Implications and Recommendations

As a result of the foresight workshop, some first policy recommendations have been formulated. These are:

A focus on “mobilities” rather than “mobility” would provide scope for different kinds of initiatives and the mobility demand and behaviour of different societal groups. This would also minimise the dominance of car-usage and in effect lower greenhouse gas emissions.

Related to this issue is support of slow mobility as an area where many social innovations seem to flourish. Focusing on local trips has broader implications, for example regarding urban planning since it would implicate establishing decentralised structures of everyday products and services (food, health, education, etc.).

Focussing on the mobility needs of diverse groups also means to support the empowerment of new actors, so they would become partners in mobility projects. This would also include some experimenting and training about how to implement social innovation in light of new actor constellations.

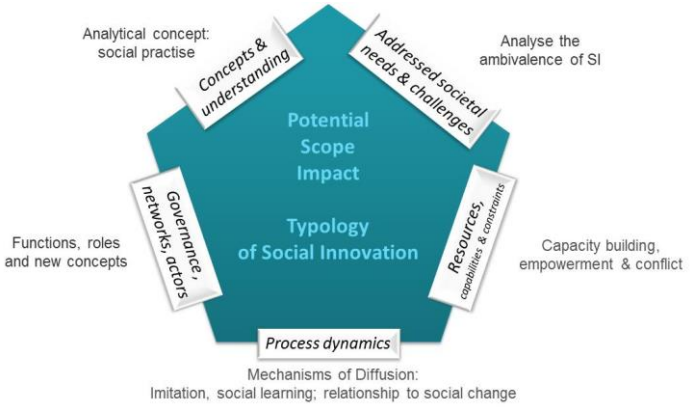
An important policy instrument is funding. Therefore funding should be implemented with priority proposals for social innovation, funding and research should be based on social impact, not only on costs.

Research Parameters

Social Innovation – Driving Force of Social Change", in short **SI-DRIVE**, is a research project aimed at extending knowledge about social innovation (SI) in three major directions:

- Integrating theories and research methodologies to advance understanding of social innovation leading to a comprehensive new paradigm of innovation.
- Undertaking European and global mapping of social innovation, thereby addressing different social, economic, cultural, historical and religious contexts in eight major world regions.
- Ensuring relevance for policy makers and practitioners through in-depth analyses and case studies in seven policy fields, with cross European and world region comparisons, foresight and policy round tables.

SI-DRIVE involves 15 partners from 12 EU Member States and 10 partners from all continents, accompanied by 13 advisory board members, all in all covering 30 countries all over the world.
Research is dedicated to seven major policy fields: (1) Education (2) Employment (3) Environment and climate change (4) Energy (5) Transport and mobility (6) Health and social care (7) Poverty reduction and sustainable development.
The approach adopted ensures cyclical iteration between theory development, methodological improvements, and policy recommendations. Two mapping exercises at the European and the global level are carried out in the frame of SI-DRIVE: Initial mapping captures basic information of about 1000+ actual social innovations from a wide variety of sources worldwide, leading to a typology of social innovation. Subsequent mapping will use the typology to focus on well documented social innovation, leading to the selection of 70 cases for in-depth analysis in the seven SI-DRIVE policy areas. These case studies will be further analysed, used in stakeholder dialogues in seven policy field platforms and in analysis of cross-cutting dimensions (e.g. gender, diversity, ICT), carefully taking into account cross-sector relevance (private, public, civil sectors), and future impact.
Up to now five key dimensions (summarised in the following figure) are mainly structuring the theoretical and empirical work:
The outcomes of SI-DRIVE will cover a broad range of research dimensions, impacting particularly in terms of changing society and empowerment, and contributing to the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy.



Project Identity

Project Name SI-DRIVE - Social Innovation: Driving Force of Social Change.

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Consortium Technische Universität Dortmund – Sozialforschungsstelle (Social Research Centre) - TUDO -, Dortmund, Germany (Coordinator)
Applied Research and Communications Fund – ARCF -, Sofia, Bulgaria
Australian Centre for Innovation - ACIIC -, Sydney, Australia
Austrian Institute of Technology – AIT -, Vienna, Austria

Bertha Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship, University of Cape Town – UCT-, Rondebosch Cape Town, South Africa
Brunel University – UBRUN -, London, United Kingdom
Centre de recherche sur l'innovation sociale, Center for research on social innovation University of Quebec - CRISES -, Montreal, Canada
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Universidad de la Iglesia de Deusto / University of Deusto - UDEUSTO –, Bilbao, Spain
University Danubius Galati - UDG -, Galati, Romania
Zentrum für Soziale Innovation / Centre for Social Innovation Vienna – ZSI -, Vienna, Austria
Zhejiang University Hangzhou - ZJU -, Hangzhou, China (People's Republic of)

FUNDING SCHEME

FP7 Programme for Research of the European Union – Collaborative project Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities SSH.2013.3.2-1 Social Innovation – empowering people, changing societies?

DURATION

January 2014 – December 2017 (48 months).

BUDGET

EU contribution: 4 888 551.20 €.

WEBSITE

www.si-drive.eu.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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FURTHER READING

SI-DRIVE Policy Briefs on Social Innovation in Employment, Environment, Energy Supply, Transport and Mobility, Health and Social Care, and Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development http://www.si-drive.eu/?p=1934
Scoppetta, Anette: Compilation of State of the Art Reports on Policy Fields, SI-DRIVE Deliverable 3.4 (http://www.si-drive.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/D3.4_Compilation-report_policy-fields_30062015.pdf)
SI-DRIVE Newsletter (http://www.si-drive.eu/?page_id=333)