Session Report

Date: 19/04/2022
Authors of these conclusions:

FORESIGHT SESSION RF 1 PLANNING FOR MORE RESILIENT URBAN MOBILITY MONDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2022. 9:00-10:30 AM (CALGARY TIME)

1. PROGRAMME OF THE SESSION

Session Chair: Ivo Cré, POLIS Network
Session Organiser: Laura Babío Somoza, POLIS Network

The '**Planning for more resilient urban mobility**' Conference took place on 7 February, where speakers had the opportunity to discuss the above-mentioned topic and to strike up interesting conversations on how to create an urban mobility system able to adapt and endure different kind of scenarios, such as covid 19 pandemic.

A resilient transport system is one that promotes safe, equitable and inclusive accessibility by providing sustainable, integrated, flexible and robust mobility options - in normal times and in times of crisis. Indeed, the climate crisis and the pandemic have caused a huge variety of impacts on the urban mobility system and individual's behaviour. This is the reason why local authorities and other private actors are interested in making resilience a key principle in the urban mobility sector by acting on different fields of action. This goal involves the reduction of risk exposure to natural or man-made disasters, the recovery from shocks in emergency situations and the involvement of almost all urban actors in risk reduction through a process of co-creation.

The resilience principle has become central in the 2030 Agenda, looking at the crisis societies have experienced the last two years with the pandemic, but also today with the consequences that the crisis in Ukraine is bringing about. Moreover, the climate crisis is causing huge variation of impacts on urban mobility system and behaviours.

After the introduction of the moderator Ivo Cré, the first speakers Morgan Juliat and Susanne Baedeker presented the concept of Sump, a milestone in the European culture of urban mobility planning. An integrated, strategic, long-term transport plan with clear objectives and monitoring that aims to improve accessibility and quality of life for the functional urban area. The new European Framework for Urban Mobility of 2021 strongly suggests that all major European cities should have such a plan by 2025. The SUMP should be able to deal with an immediate crisis and manage fundamental change processes, a key challenge for urban mobility professionals to integrate into their plans. The guidelines should strengthen urban mobility systems in order to take into account the vulnerabilities of cities.

First of all, for the planning process the risk assessment has to be considered. It allows the identification of adaptation measures, vulnerable areas and populations, where action is needed first. In order to create efficient guidelines, short-term measures should be adapted in the long-term, as some crises may reoccur. This process is identified in the selection of temporary measures tested on a small scale; with low-cost infrastructure and no obstacles. Citizens and stakeholders should also be involved in the evaluation with their different opinions. The purpose of co-creating short-term measures is to find the right long-term measure.

Following this, Laura Babio expanded on the concept of resilience as the ability to cope with disruption over time, while sustainability is the ability to preserve the system in the long term. They are both related, so promoting measures that increase sustainability will also increase the resilience of the city.

Typically, short-term measures are designed to address a specific type of problem. These measures can be converted into long-term solutions, aiming to develop the so-called resilient cities, which have a collaborative and interdisciplinary planning approach to city logistics. With so many private actors, coordination becomes essential. Although the cost of planning long-term measures will be higher, the benefits will be noticed in the future, as a French saying goes 'reculer pour mieux sauter' (move back for better jumping).

Then, the coordinator of the MOMENTUM project, Javier Burieza, showed the progress of the project in terms of how it can increase the resilience of our mobility systems through the use of big data technologies. The motivation for the project came from the emergence of adapting new mobility services to both existing and new technologies at the same time. The challenges also relate to the technology and tools that transport planners use. Data analysis and modelling techniques need major adaptation and integration with tools that can be used by policy makers. It is not only a question of how advanced these techniques are, but also of how well we are able to integrate them into decisions for tools that will then be used by policy makers them-selves.

As a final speaker, Francesco Ripa talked about how the MORE project deals with the creation of more resilient road spaces through the use of new tools. The demand on busy urban roads is increasing due to the emergence of new modal options, the growth of mobility related sectors, the increased interest in place-based activities and population desegregation. The MORE project has developed tools to address these challenges by considering the needs of all users. There is a strong participatory approach and a public involvement component.

Road design processes should be future-proofed and take into account future pressures. In addition, extensive stakeholder involvement should be incorporated into the road design process, from the problem definition to option assessment and decision making. Citizens can comment on specific issues on many topics such as air pollution, road safety at intersections, quality of public space, pedestrian accessibility and so on. People can provide opinions on how what could be addressed and improved in a given road context. The final part consists of a tool able to assess the proposed options taking into account technical and political requirements, as some solutions would need to be approved by public authorities before being implemented.

In conclusion, spatial planning should also be based on scenarios that could occur in emergency cases. They are a powerful tool for preparing a city to make decisions about the future, but also for assessing what can or cannot be planned in an urban area. The concept is that there is specifically no such thing as one scenario, but our actions or natural factors can cause several and society needs to be ready to deal with them quickly. For this reason, road redesign processes should take into account not only current but also future pressures of different types (economic, demographic, technological).

In addition to emergency scenarios, it is necessary to be inclusive and take into consideration the different urban actors and their needs in order to try to build a transport system that suits all people. Broad stakeholder involvement can help address the needs of all road users by asking them what should be improved in their urban environment.