

Persistence and dynamics within the urban neighbourhood

Strategies for the future of urban mobility

Background

For urban travel practices, the neighbourhood is an important factor. However, efforts of local authorities to increase non-car use in neighbourhoods are frequently limited. Changing car-oriented layouts and transport infrastructures which developed over decades is difficult. Thus, the persistence of the built environment and the path dependence of urban developments and policies impede any fundamental changes of existing neighbourhoods. Frequently, the private car is still the dominating transport mode and factor for the layout of new areas. Key objective of this research is to contribute to (i) an improved understanding of processes in urban mobility and neighbourhood development and (ii) to develop tools and recommendations for fostering more sustainable travel in urban areas. The transdisciplinary project teams up municipal decision makers, providers of mobility services, civil society and scientific research. Together these actors will design strategies for the future of urban mobility, which reconcile mobility services and infrastructure on the one hand with mobility needs of civil society and sustainability on the other hand.

Objective of research

From a research perspective, the project will contribute a detailed analysis of the transformation potential of urban neighbourhoods towards a more sustainable one by analysing four dimensions: (i) the demand side from a social sciences perspective including the population's travel patterns, attitudes towards urban neighbourhood solutions and towards new sharing services, (ii) the supply side with transport infrastructures, built environments and new mobility services from an applied urban/transport planning perspective, (iii) the governance perspective on the social and political processes, which are underlying the changes of the urban neighbourhood, from a political scientist's perspective, and (iv) an integrative, transdisciplinary approach.

Methods

"Reality labs" of urban mobility in Frankfurt a.M. (Bornheim) and Darmstadt (Lincoln-Siedlung) serve as method for analysing the research questions. In the

reality labs municipal decision makers, providers of mobility services, civil society and research meet for developing common and both efficient and acceptable concepts for the neighbourhood's design, which facilitate sustainable mobility for the inhabitants, help to reduce socio-ecological inequalities and at the same time increase the quality of life. The two participating cities will set their own priorities in these reality labs. The researchers support the process and aim to provide impulses. The reality labs consist of three phases: (1) mobility needs and requirements from the inhabitants' perspectives are gathered and interests and conflicts of different stakeholders are pointed out, (2) action development using a participative approach (3) development of implementation concepts for sustainable mobility strategies in the neighbourhoods.

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