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Press Release

IS URBAN TRANSPORT DISRUPTION GOOD OR BAD? CITIES WILL DECIDE

The public sector used to be the primary provider and contractor of local and regional transport services and data, but third parties - vehicle manufacturers, telecom companies, app developers - have entered this domain. This brought Polis to stage a debate on the question what should be the role of local authorities in the transport system of tomorrow. The session *Who'll take the chair? - The changing role of the local authority* closed the Polis Annual Conference 2017.

In her introduction to the session, Polis Secretary General Karen Vancluysen referred to Mobility as a Service (MaaS) as the latest manifestation of this paradigm shift in transport service provision. The recently published Polis paper reflects on the role that cities and regions could and should play in the development of MaaS. It is available [here](#).

Seleta Reynolds, General Manager of the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) and President of the US National Association of City Transport Officials (NACTO) said:

'Shared mobility can co-exist with public transport. It can be an extension of public transport. But this shouldn't come at the expense of basic policy goals such as equity and inclusion. Studies say that shared mobility users are primarily affluent and highly educated, whereas urban transport should connect all citizens, including disadvantaged communities.'

About working with private companies, she said: 'Mobility companies are primarily data companies. Your digital life has a value, and we see a gold rush for this data. Cities should carefully consider how they want to use their own data. They should establish a clear framework for collaboration with private companies.'

Philippe Crist, Corporate Partnership Board Programme Manager of the International Transport Forum said: 'We should not think of public transport and shared mobility services as two separate things. Local and regional authorities should ask themselves: where can shared mobility services serve public outcomes?'

About current developments, Crist said: 'Disruption is like the weather, it is happening anyway. And whether the impact of disruption is positive, negative or neutral, depends on the policy outfit you wear! Cities should ask themselves what the future will look like, they should have a clear vision that guides choices.'

Rafael Cuesta, Head of Innovation of Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) spoke about the introduction of bike hire in the Greater Manchester region: 'We could never afford a bike hire scheme and were jealous of other cities. Until we were approached by a bike sharing company. They came out of nowhere and we asked ourselves: is it true what they are offering?'

Currently, 2000 bicycles each make up to nine rides per day on average in the Greater Manchester Region. 'It is working for us. And the company approached us with the respect that suits a city. We have a memorandum of understanding on issues such as data sharing and service requirements, which we have shared with cities through Polis. Now we are planning a study into the wider impact of the project, on which we will base our decisions for the future.'

Erdem Ocavik, CEO and founder of Donkey Republic, said: 'Dockless bicycle sharing can sure be a positive outcome for cities. It needs thoughtful regulation of public space and the use of data.'



Thinking Cities Award

Also during the closing plenary, **Île-de-France Mobilités** received the **Thinking Cities Award** for its project **Vianavigo**, a travel planner that not only includes public transport information but also aggregates the offers of 17 carpooling companies in the region. It offers Itineraries, timetables and traffic info. Project manager Vincent Szaleniec said: 'The fact that this is a single, first-entry point for different carpooling services makes it truly innovative. It is a good example of collaboration between the public and private sector.'

The Thinking Cities award is handed out each year to a city or region that presented an innovative mobility solution at the Polis conference, which is also transferable to others and contributes to solving a particular local mobility challenge. <end>

More information

More information including the conference programme: www.polisnetwork.eu/2017conference

Twitter hashtag: [#polis17](https://twitter.com/polis17)

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Notes to editors:

Polis is the network of cities and regions working together to achieve more sustainable urban mobility. Currently, 68 cities and regions are members of the network. In Polis, decision makers are provided with the necessary information and tools for making sustainable mobility a reality. Within the Political Group of Polis, they formulate recommendations to the European institutions.

The Annual Polis Conference represents an important annual highlight for urban mobility professionals and provides an opportunity for cities and regions to showcase their transport achievements to an international audience, and for the wider transport community to engage with representatives of local and regional authorities on innovative transport solutions.

Polis members meet regularly in working groups organised around four thematic pillars:

- Environment and Health in Transport
- Mobility and Traffic Efficiency
- Transport Safety and Security
- Social and Economic Aspects of Transport

Polis has a permanent secretariat located in Brussels.

www.polisnetwork.eu