



BSI Chair: Companies and Sustainable Mobility: The Company Car Debate and Beyond

Vision Text and Call for Proposals

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1. Introduction

On December 4th, 2015, an official kick-off ceremony was held for the BSI Chair "Sustainable Mobility: The Company Car Debate and Beyond. The ceremony was accompanied by a half-day workshop gathering more than 30 experts in the field of (company) mobility, from academia, industry, civil society and policy. The main aim of the workshop was to prioritize research ideas in order to bring the Chair resources into action as efficient as possible over the 3-year period of research and dissemination (closure of the Chair is foreseen spring 2019).

Building upon the starting memorandum of the Chair and the first steering committees suggestions, and integrating the ideas of the December 4th workshop as well as comments on an earlier draft, this document presents the main research themes to be developed within the scope of the Chair. The research themes will be presented to the academic research community through a number of "Calls for Proposals", with the aim to form interdisciplinary teams creating new knowledge on the topic.

2. Main research themes

The workshop program of December 4th started off with presentations from a number of stakeholders/experts to fuel the debate (see <http://www.bsi-brussels.be/en/bsi/recherches/research-chair-companies-a-sustainable-mobility/> for these presentations):

- Industry stakeholders: Renta, Febiac and Traxio
- Societal and Environmental Interest Groups: Bond Beter Leefmilieu
- Academia: MOBI & COSMOPOLIS research groups VUB

These stakeholders/experts were asked to reflect on three questions:

- What are the main current issues in the debate on company mobility?
- What are the main knowledge gaps in the debate?
- What is your future vision?

Following these presentations, 5 parallel groups discussed two main topics upon an individual written preparatory exercise:

- What are the main knowledge gaps?
- What are the main research questions the Chair should treat?

Based on the inputs collected, we propose to organize the research around 4 Work Packages (3 broader themes and 1 dissemination package)¹. Within every theme, we provide (1) the reason why the Work Package seems relevant and (2) the topics, issues and questions where new knowledge is expected to be generated. As an aide in drawing up the proposal, we shortly will provide a document on the webpage mentioned earlier, containing an overview of the answers that were given in the written exercise to the question ‘Which knowledge, data and/or other resources can you contribute yourself?’, as well as some additional information provided by stakeholders not able to attend the workshop.

2.1. Research Theme - Work Package 1: Current status: concepts, stakeholders, statistics, relevant info on company mobility

Relevance: Different stakeholders and interest groups are currently not aligned on key definitions and parameters (cf. hefty media debates), e.g. the exact number of company cars, user profiles, behavioral aspects, etc. A joint fact finding exercise, leading to a validated set of concepts, parameters, statistics and other relevant information to be used for further research in the context of this Chair, as well as a commonly shared inventory of missing data and knowledge, is a crucial starting point. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches are needed.

During the EOI phase, interested research centers and researchers can **either** submit a research proposal addressing **several topics/expertise domains or one specific topic/domain** of expertise (in the latter case, BSI will function as a match maker composing a research consortium based upon the submitted proposals).

¹ On top of the three broad packages, we distinguish a transversal theme, namely attention for a territorial, urban approach (spatial/environmental planning of work and housing; the division of the territory). Furthermore, the political-administrative context should also be taken into account (levers and barriers).

Research teams are invited to address the following elements and issues in the approach of the WP:

Conceptual framework, definitions and ecosystem

- Definition of concepts like “company car”, “salary car”, “professional use”, “fuel card”, “peer-to-peer/decentralized/free-floating car sharing”, “car rental”, “ride sharing”, “carpooling”, etc.
- Description of the “ecosystem” of the company car and company mobility in general (stakeholders and their activities/interests/objectives), including the dynamic nature of this system
- Description of the link between (1) company location/accessibility/availability of (free) car parks (2) economic situation (e.g. recruitment area, customers) and (3) car/company mobility policy in general
- Description of the business models/value chains through which company mobility is delivered (including public transport and other collective systems, as well as bikes), the share of these various models and the added value generated
- Current state of the social, labor, fiscal and policy treatment of the different transport modes and their use (may include benchmarking); level of wage subsidies for company cars versus public transport
- Fiscal and policy treatment related to housing/choice of residence in relation to home-work connectivity
- Description of the dominant models of mobility management within large companies, SMEs and government (may include benchmarking)
- Description of the dominant architectural and implantation schemes linked to mobility (zones for public transport, cars, bikes, pedestrians) and impact of building regulations on it (e.g. obligation to build car parks when building offices, RRU, PDI, etc.)

User behavioral aspects (including trends)

- Profile of company car and company bike users (which worker categories use which transport mode(s) for which purpose/trajectories/distances)
- Impact of the mix of mobility motives (leisure, professional, other use)
- Are there differences between employees with and without a company car (given comparable profiles) in terms of their car usage? Are there differences in accident rates?
- Assessment of the link between location, type of activity, and share of employees travelling to work by company car / public transport / bike / walking / car sharing / private car
- Behavioral and valuation aspects
 - Relation between fuel prices and transport use/demand (modal preferences, elasticities, drivers)
 - With respect to (w.r.t.) transport modes (accessibility, need for flexibility, value/cost assessment)
 - w.r.t. impact of taxes and incentives (e.g. congestion tax, willingness-to-pay, fuel (cards), subsidies)

- Mobility solutions in relation to recruitment and retention policies of companies
- w.r.t. (company) car ownership and use (e.g. personal image, pleasure of driving, individuality, aesthetic fascination)
- Sustainability as an argument in company mobility policy and mobility choices of individual employees
- What do employees and companies think about shared mobility; which barriers/stimuli do they experience in making more sustainable choices (like car sharing)
- General: which are the drivers that most influence mobility behavior

Development of statistics and inventory of existing (impact) parameters

- Mapping of data available at stakeholders and interest groups (social secretariat services, industry federations, research centers ...), or managed by semi-public / public government administrations (e.g. FOD Financiën/SPF Finances), including development of relations with these actors to obtain research data. Attention should be paid to bottlenecks in terms of data acquisition/availability and potential solutions to the lack of data (availability) should be proposed.
- Existing demand, supply and impact parameters:
 - Geography of the transport demand
 - Availability of (free and paid) car parks + parking cost for employers and employees
 - Fleet composition and evolution of company cars, salary cars, professional use
 - Ratio car use of employees with/without company car
 - Energy use and (environmental, health, etc.) externalities per transport mode/use
 - Most impacted industries of current congestion
 - ...

Dissemination

- Organization of a public event on which a) results are proposed (like definition of concepts, available data, description of the ecosystem), b) gaps in the knowledge base are described and c) stakeholders are asked if they can provide the research teams with data/knowledge that address these gaps.

2.2. Research Theme – Work Package 2: Future scenarios in light of global trends

Work Package 2A: External tendencies and global trends influencing the demand for (and implementation of) sustainable company mobility: towards the ‘paradigm of the future’.

Relevance: Many external factors may influence the demand for (and impact of) company mobility and the use of transport modes both in the short-term and the long-term. Before elaborating possible scenarios for a more sustainable company mobility, it is crucial to identify/ discuss how the different economic, social/sociological, demographic, technological, ... evolutions could influence the demand and current business models, including the anticipated impact on broader stakeholder and sustainability goals (in an explorative way). The level of uncertainty of potential future evolutions should be discussed as well.

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Research teams are invited to address the following elements and issues in the approach of the WP:

- Projected company car fleet evolution (under stable policy conditions)
- Identification of the global trends that can change commuting behavior in the short and long term for individuals and companies
- The (potential/expected) impact of technology (like connected vehicles, driverless cars, electric vehicles (EVs, including e-bikes), telework, big data / internet of things / smart apps, developments in public transport, open innovation / living labs) and technology providers (Uber/Google/Oracle/IBM/...) on mobility and infrastructure demand, mobility business models (including new service development) and congestion, environment, etc.
- Renewed appreciation of inner city locations and the prevalence of urban revitalization strategies aimed at strengthening activities and interaction next to main public transport hubs
- Mainstreaming of local transport plans focusing on improving urban livability through discouraging incoming car traffic in inner city neighborhoods and making cities again attractive as a residential environment
- Sustainable development (e.g. lower/renewable energy use) of different transport modes
- Changed attitude towards car ownership amongst generation Z
- Increased infrastructure connectivity and its impact on demand/supply/capacity of modes
- HR strategies of companies and the role of company car policies (including the vision of unions)
- General economic, social and demographic evolutions and their impact
 - Aging population
 - Reduction of the active workforce
 - Changes in social composition of the workforce (e.g. as a result of migration)
 - Oil/energy price evolution

- Availability of fossil and renewable energy
- Binding environmental legislation and international laws as a result of climate change and ecological problems

Work Package 2B: Potential future scenarios for company mobility (in light of global trends and projected demand evolutions)

Relevance: Many policy solutions/measures have already been put forward by different stakeholders (government, industry, interest groups) to increase the sustainability of company mobility, but none are currently endorsed by all stakeholders. The objective of this work package is to identify various policy measures (both existing/previously proposed and innovative/to be proposed) and group them into coherent packages / potential visions for future mobility policy, and assess their relevance in light of the insights of WP2A.

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Research teams are invited to address the following elements and issues in the approach of the WP:

- Description of (potential) policy measures, their (expected) impact (including short- and long-term potential to contribute to a sustainable change), their complexity and conditions to implement; this may include benchmarking²:
 - Measures to increase smarter use of vehicles and infrastructure (across modes)
 - Car/Ride/Bike sharing; shared fleets of self-driving cars
 - Better integration of and cooperation between collective/public and private transportation modes
 - Supply of suburban car parks geared towards the use of public transport
 - Mobility as a service
 - Intermodal infrastructure design

² As Brussels is concerned, some metropolitan benchmarking is needed that is adapted to its specificity or relevant for Brussels or Belgian cities in general. As such, the institutional context has to be taken into account as well, e.g. favoring decentralized (con)federal systems in the benchmarking analysis rather than centralized ones. Germany (rather than France, a more centralized country) might be an interesting point of comparison in that respect. In any case, the relevance of the transfer to the Belgian/Brussels case has to be made explicit. This premise does not exclude however that certain solutions might be explored thereby proposing modifications of the governance system. In sum, the relevance and transferability of proposed benchmarks needs to be clarified upfront.

- Pricing mechanisms:
 - Expensive parking rates in urban regions
 - Smart km charging
 - Commuting funds
 - Congestion tax
- 'Soft' measures like company transport plans, awareness raising campaigns, etc.
- Low Emission Zones
- Mobility budget; what kind of mobility solutions and services could be integrated as an alternative salary, e.g. participation in housing costs when employees live close to work
- Subsidy frameworks for Electric Vehicles (incl. E-bikes and speed pedelecs)
- Integration of external costs for all modes
- Changes in fiscal treatment of commuting costs
- Changes in position and use of fuel cards
- Revision of Ecoscore concept (parameters to be included, weights); measures to ensure that car manufacturers respect existing legislation e.g. on air quality
- Company/government fleet as levers for greening
- Location, spatial and urban strategies to support sustainable mobility
 - Which tools and measures to help companies make more sustainable location decisions, ...
 - Relocation of activities, company infrastructure/location swaps... (how to facilitate)
 - How can parking management reduce car use/dependency? What is the impact of location of car parks in relation to work locations
 - Increase the attractiveness of the 'last-mile' for pedestrians
 - Increase the attractiveness of mobility poles & intermodal infrastructures (workplaces, meeting solutions, coworking, etc.)
 - Introduction of car free city centers/zones
 - Territorial approach of mobility (leisure, work and residential connectivity)
 - Investing in a bicycle highway network
- Assessment of the complexity and timing to implement different scenarios
- Integration of policy measures into (more) coherent packages (incl. suggested sequencing in case of implementation)
- Identification of the impact of the current governance system and potential competence conflicts (w.r.t. integrated policy scenarios)
- Analysis of political factors which block progress on essential (policy) measures, incl. suggestions to unlock stalled situations
- From Total Cost of Ownership to Total Cost of Use (and potential scenarios in between, if relevant):
 - Definition of extreme scenarios
 - Potential transitions between models (evolution or disruption?)

- How can employers and employees be made aware of their level of (company) car dependency?

2.3. **Research Theme – Work Package 3: Impact assessment of current and future scenarios for company mobility**

Relevance: Various stakeholders will experience different impacts upon implementation of particular policy scenarios (WP2B). Impact assessments are often only partial and focus on either the social, economic or environmental impact, or limit themselves to the macro, industry or micro level. Given the complexity of the debate, it is crucial to understand the impact on different domains, levels (micro and macro) and stakeholders. The objective of the WP is to develop an integrative impact assessment model and carry out the impact assessment for different policy scenarios, taking into account a triple bottom line perspective (Prosperity-Profit / People / Planet). The ambition of this WP is not to definitively settle the impact discussion, but to provide some important clarifications of the multiple objectives concerned, as a strong contribution to the debate.

During the EOI phase, interested research centers and researchers can **either** submit a research proposal addressing **several topics/expertise domains or one specific topic/domain** of expertise (in the latter case, BSI will function as a match maker composing a research consortium based upon the submitted proposals).

Research teams are invited to address the following elements and issues in the approach of the WP:

- Take into account the results of WP1, WP2A, WP2B
- Develop an integrative impact assessment framework based on the company mobility ecosystem validated in WP1 (i.e. define ways to quantify/qualify impact of policy measures/scenarios, including their contribution to strategic objectives cf. climate summit objectives)
 - Impact of different policy scenarios on profitability and job creation/destruction through market and economic impact analysis
 - Micro- and macro- economic impact of the abolition of company cars as an alternative salary (impact on individuals, households, companies, government tax base, ...), including estimation of the welfare losses induced by company cars compared to same cash transfer under equal (para)fiscal conditions
 - Spatial impact of different scenarios
 - Impact of (employers and employees) location choices on choice of travel mode and travel related burdens caused by commuters and customers, such as travel time spent, amount of fuel used, congestion and pollution
 - Impact of different policy scenarios on attractiveness of urban centers

- Impact of different scenarios (incl. shared mobility) on congestion and environment (local, regional, global)
- Impact of different scenarios on health (sedentary versus active life style) and quality of life
- Social and potential redistributive impact of different scenarios (incl. shared mobility)
- Sensitivity analysis (e.g. based on external evolutions from WP2A) to assess the robustness of calculated impacts
- Overall comparison of selected scenarios and formulation of recommendations based on the integrated assessment (strengths/weaknesses), differentiated analysis per stakeholder / analysis level and potential mitigation strategies (how to improve certain scenarios)

2.4. Research Theme – Work Package 4: Dissemination

Relevance: WP1 to WP3 will have generated a large body of knowledge on company mobility, as well as needs for further research. This knowledge should be valorized to a maximum degree, so as to inform the policy debate and in general to support the transition towards a more sustainable society. Attention needs to be paid both to areas of consensus as well as ongoing debate. In order to do this, the necessary tools and other forms of dissemination need to be created and sustained. The dissemination process particularly needs to address decision makers involved with mobility policy as well as those involved with scientific research.

Teams are invited to propose the following means in the approach of the dissemination WP:

- Overall summarizing BSI paper based on the gathered output of WP1 to 3
- Development of further research recommendations and policy suggestions based on the gathered output of WP1 to 3
- (Book) publication
- Organization of a large conference and debate
- Animations, schematic representations and/or cartography

3. Delivery of outputs and timing

3.1. Type and format of outputs

We expect that each research theme leads to one (or more) BSI synthesis note(s) (research teams are invited to look at the format on the website of the e-journal Brussels Studies: www.brusselstudies.be). These notes can (or rather should) be complemented by publishable articles where the research is developed more in detail. By application of this model, the results are communicated to a larger audience and the burden that often rests on stakeholders and experts to get a hold of the research results is reduced. This way of operating facilitates the

participation of stakeholders in the debate, while at the same time offering scientific depth. Considerable attention will be paid to dissemination events. Research teams are expected to deliver a contribution to the content and set-up of these events.

3.2. Proposed timings of the work packages

The following table provides a timeline indicating (1) when (full) proposals for each research theme are expected, (2) when a WP is expected to kick-off, and (3) when a it is expected to end (including a dissemination event).

RT/WP	Expected Proposal	Expected Start	Expected End	Expected Duration	Dissemination Events
1	31/05/16	01/09/16	28/02/18	18 months	12/2016 06/2017 12/2017
2A	31/08/16	01/12/16	30/11/17	12 months	06/2017 12/2017
2B	31/11/16	01/03/17	28/02/18	12 months	06/2017 12/2017
3	31/05/17	01/09/17	31/08/18	12 months	06/2018 11/2018
4	30/06/18	01/10/18	31/03/19	6 months	03/2019

Note:

The final conference ought to be planned within the election period of spring 2019 (could be supported by a publication). Regarding the context of the 2019 elections, the delivery of the results is planned only to nourish the debate and thought process on the issue of companies and sustainable mobility. As such, lobbying is not the purpose of this research chair and incompatible with the independent nature of the research that the chair wants to host.

3.3. Proposal submission

Launch of the call: February 24th, 2016

A two-stage approach is proposed:

1) First stage: Expression of Interest

We invite both research teams as well as individual researchers to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) to one specific or more topics/WPs. Although these EOIs could thus cover a full (or large part of a) WP, this is by no means a prerequisite. The EOI needs to contain (1) a short description of the research team and/or researcher(s) involved and their relevant expertise (under the form of a short bio or description not spanning more than 500 words) (2) the topic / WP of interest and a short vision document on the questions one wants to address, the research approach and the output envisaged (max. 1.000 words). This EOI phase

is thus applicable for all WPs, irrespective of the submission deadline of the proposals.

EOI to be sent in by March 20th, 2016

Based on the EOIs received, research teams will be invited by the Brussels Studies Institute to a brokerage event taking place during the week of April 18th, 2016 (to be confirmed). The objective of this event is to bring teams, issues and approaches together to form larger, multidisciplinary, coherent teams able to tackle the diverse work packages. Following the event, the (recombined) multidisciplinary teams that intend to address WP1 are then expected to develop a proposal to be sent in by May 31st, 2016 (see infra). For the submission deadlines of the other work packages we refer to the table above.

2) Second stage: formal proposal stage

The following elements need to be taken into account in proposal development:

Budgeting/finance/resources: Based on the average salary cost of the profile(s) involved and/or working costs. The way the financial resources will be used in relation to the tasks and realized outputs, needs to be sufficiently clear and transparent.

In total, about 350.000 euro will be distributed among the proposals addressing WP1, 2 and 3. A limited supplementary budget will be reserved for WP4 (dissemination).

Length of proposals: Maximum of 4.500 words (including references, excluding annexes)

Stakeholder inclusion: Each proposal needs to contain a clear plan on how the ideas of stakeholders and experts will be integrated into the approach, both for ex-ante input and ex-post discussion (e.g., through a stakeholder committee, preferably mentioning potential members, the envisaged frequency and agenda of meetings; face-to-face interviews; other mechanisms).

Dissemination proposals: Each study will be the subject of at least one dissemination event. Each proposal is expected to provide some ideas and input on the organization and topics of the dissemination event. Other dissemination ideas are appreciated (e.g. through social media).

Intellectual Property of the Results: BSI contracts stipulate joint property of the research results. Researchers are free to use the research results in publications, teaching or other relevant activities.

Evaluation criteria:

- (1) Extent to which a wide variety of topics, as suggested in the work packages, is covered (against the demanded resources; match making by BSI is foreseen)

- (2) Quality of methodology and realism of planning
- (3) Research team: relevant expertise and interuniversity, multidisciplinary and cross-community composition
- (4) Stakeholder inclusion mechanisms
- (5) Dissemination strategy & proposed outputs
- (6) Complementarity with / co-financing by other ongoing or planned projects

Decision making process: responsibility of the steering committee of the Chair who decides upon recommendation by the four academic members of the committee; a live presentation of the proposal / further negotiation on the scope and resources needed, may be asked.

Sending of proposals: Via pdf files, to be sent via e-mail to Joost Vaesen, Michaël Doms and Loes Vandenbroucke

Deadline: May 31st, 2016

Start of the research: September 1th, 2016

Information requests:

A broader information session / brokering event will be organized by the coordinators after the EOI stage. Coordinators can be contacted at any time for clarifications.

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