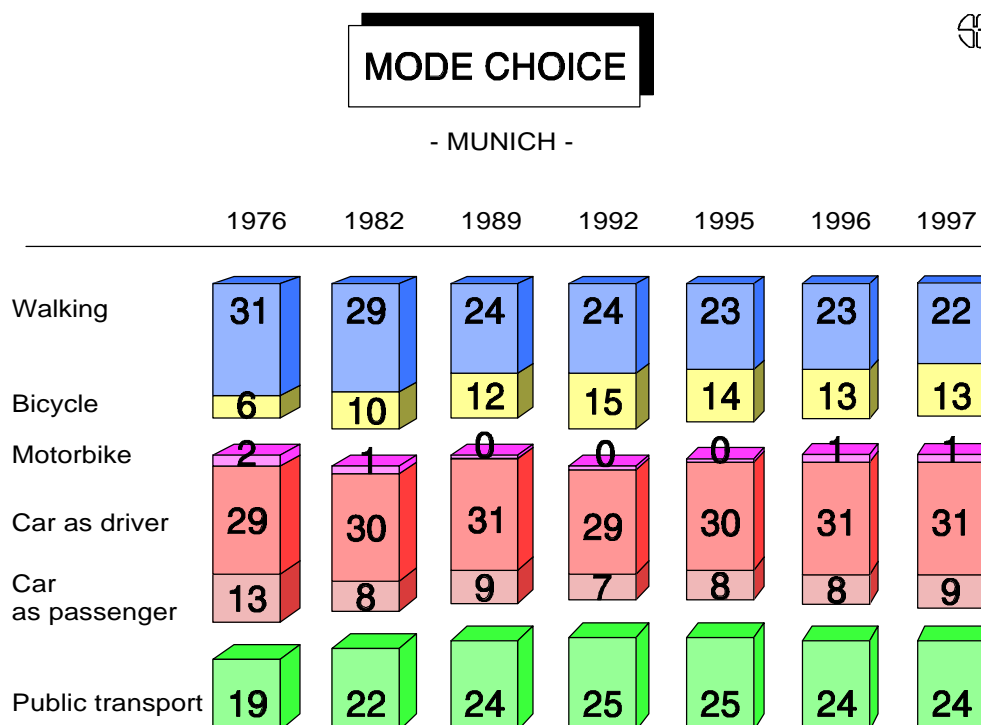


Can We Influence the Transport Future

Werner Brög

In the 80's there was a clear trend towards environment-friendly modes. The consequences of traffic for people, towns and the environment got increasing attention. The trend towards environment-friendly transport could primarily be recognised in the so called "bicycle wave". For example the mode share of bicycle trips increased in Munich between 1976 and 1982 by four percent points from 6 % to a tenth of all trips. In 1989 the inhabitants of Munich covered an eighth (12 %) and 1992 even 15 % of all trips by bicycle.



Then this trend reached a standstill. In 1995 just 14 % of all trips were made by bicycle; 1996 and 1997 this share stagnated to an eighth of all trips (13 %).

This declining trend also occurred for the other environment-friendly modes – walking and public transport. Between 1992 and 1997 this share of walking trips made by the inhabitants of Munich decreased by two percent to 22 % of all trips, the share of public transport decreased by one percent to 24 %.

Hence the following question: How can we influence the mode choice – in view of the current change of atmosphere towards motorised private transport – back towards environment-friendly modes, especially towards the bicycle?

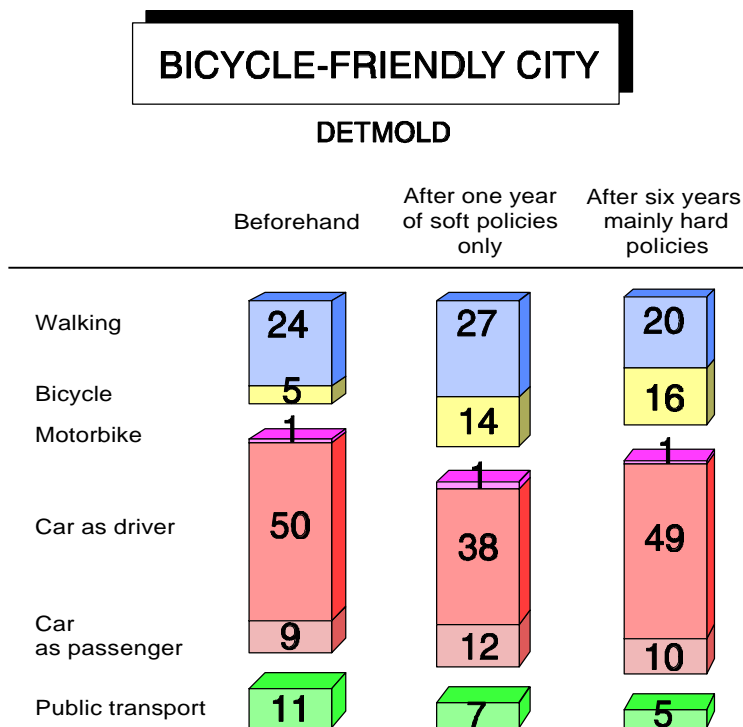
A solution for this problem can be found in measures in the system, so called "hard policies", but also in measures, which try to influence the individual behaviour of persons (so called "soft policies"). Transport planning is primarily dominated by measures on the system while the effects of

“soft policies” which can achieve changes of mode choice with communication and information are underestimated - even though hard policies are usually very expensive (e.g. construction of a new underground line or a bicycle path), require a long time till their conversion (e.g. planning and construction phase) and are furthermore spatially limited (e.g. route).

Potentials for the Bicycle

One objective of transport and town planning is a “short-trip town”; yet this kind of town needs not to be created since it already exists: In many smaller German towns for example the average length of an urban journey is about two kilometres - one would think ideal conditions for walking and cycling, but though in average more than half of all trips are covered by motorised private transport. Ideal preconditions for an increased use of non-motorised modes are useless, if people do not want to change.

On the other hand “free of choice” behaviour changes are often of a higher impact than changes due to infrastructural measures. This can be explained on the example of the town Detmold, which was model city of the project “bicycle-friendly town” of the German Federal Environmental Agency in the 80’s: Before the project the inhabitants of Detmold covered six out of ten trips with motorised private modes – motorbike and car (as driver and as passenger), the share of bicycle trips was however just five percent of all trips.



In the first phase of the model project no system measures were realised, instead there was lively discussion about transport-related issues (“soft policies”). The car as driver-share decreased as a result by almost a fourth from 50 % to 38 %, in contrast the share of bicycle trips increased almost by three times. Within the following six years where almost exclusively system measures (“hard policies”) were carried through, this share increased by just two more percent. This increase of the

bicycle share which is based primarily on soft policies could be maintained over a longer time – though an opposite trend back to motorised private transport with a share of 60 % as in the initial year.

An application form of “soft policies” – Individualised Marketing

Soft policies – as already described on the example of Detmold – bear enormous potential to influence the mode choice. One possibility of implementing soft policies is motivation in direct contact, the so called Individualised Marketing. The background of Individualised Marketing (IndiMark) is that the subjective perception of the world by individuals is the basis for behaviour decisions. Soft policies can influence the mode choice without system measures: By correcting the (incomplete and too negative) subjective perception towards environment-friendly modes with individual motivation in direct contact.

The Individualised Marketing approach has already proved to be successful in several European projects for the promotion of public transport, which were conducted by the institute Socialdata. In 1997 a pilot project for the promotion of all environment-friendly modes (walking, cycling and public transport) was successfully conducted in Perth, Australia. The IndiMark-campaign increased the share of walking trips in the “car city” Perth by 16 %, the share of public transport by 21 % and the share of bicycle trips by 91 %.

To prove the long-term effects of IndiMark a second evaluation was conducted one year later. The results confirmed, that IndiMark is an effective tool to sustainably influence mode choice: The number of trips with the car decreased by a further ten trips per person per year while walking trips increased by an additional twelve trips and cycling by one trip per person per year. Though the number of public transport trips decreased by three trips per person per year in the second evaluation there is still an increase in the share of 17 %, compared to the initial situation.

These positive results could be confirmed in the first IndiMark-campaign for environment-friendly modes in Europe: The town Viernheim, Germany conducted an experiment in autumn 1998. The Viernheim IndiMark achieved increases in the share of walking trips by 6 %, in the share of cycling by 13 % and public transport trips by 24 %. Correspondingly the number of trips with car as driver decreased by 8 % and as passenger by 9 %.

So both IndiMark-campaigns for the promotion of environment-friendly modes achieved positive results for the share of bicycle trips.

Therefore it can be stated, that the future of transport can be influenced towards environment-friendly modes with the help of soft policies. Communication, information and “tailor-made” Individualised Marketing are appropriate instruments for influencing mode choice.

References

Werner Brög: *Strategy for the Systematic Promotion of the Bicycle*; Velo Australis Conference, Perth, October 1996

Werner Brög, Erhard Erl: *Can Daily Mobility be Reduced or Transferred to other Modes?*; European Conference of Ministers of Transport, Round Table 102, March 1996

Werner Brög, Marion Schädler: *Verkehrspolitische Einstellungen und Mobilität – Veränderungen im Zeitverlauf*; In: Internationales Verkehrswesen; January / February 1999

Socialdata: *Community Survey and Marketing Campaign for the South Perth TravelSmart Project – Final Report*; July 1998

Socialdata: *Community Survey and Marketing Campaign for the South Perth TravelSmart Project – Report of the second Evaluation*; March 1999

Socialdata: *Schadstoffminderung im Straßenverkehr durch Änderung des Mobilitätsverhaltens – Viernheim*; Report, April 1999