

**TECHNICAL
NOTE N° 7**

**COMPARATIVE
ANALYSIS OF
TRANSPORT
POLICY
PROCESSES**

**GREATER
LONDON**

CREATE PROJECT

**Congestion Reduction in Europe,
Advancing Transport Efficiency**

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THE CREATE PROJECT IN BRIEF

Transport and mobility issues have increased in relevance on political agendas in parallel with the growing share of EU population living in cities, urban sprawl and climate change. In view of the negative effects of car use, there is a renewed interest about the role that transport should play in the sustainable city.

The CREATE project explores the Transport Policy Evolution Cycle. This model is a useful starting point for understanding how this evolution took place, and the lessons that we can learn for the future. Within the CREATE project, the study coordinated by the Sciences Po, CEE team (WP4) explores the historical evolution of transport policies and processes – from ‘car-oriented’ to ‘planning for city life’ – in five European cities (Berlin, Copenhagen, London, Paris, Vienna). Paying attention to case-specific contextual factors, policy instruments and programmes and involved stakeholders, **this comparative analysis unveils the processes and the main drivers for change. This technical note concerns the Greater London area.**



Map of Greater London

Source : Shutterstock.com

DID YOU KNOW?

GRATER LONDON'S TRANSPORT OFFER IS:

ROADS



ROAD NETWORK
14.800 km



MOTORISATION
294 cars / 1.000 inhabitants

PUBLIC TRANSPORT



RAILWAY
800 km including the Overground, the Docklands Light railway, suburban railways, Heathrow Express



METRO
11 lines, 400 km



TRAM
1 line, 27 km



BUS
673 routes

SUMMARY FINDINGS

Despite London being a city with a developed public transport system, car-oriented policies were prevalent for a number of decades from the 1940s onwards. What these policies led to in a context of fragmented local political leadership was to enable a lower density suburban growth and the removal of some of the city's public transport infrastructure, such as the entire tram network.

The opposition to road-based policies came from the grassroots, as part of a growing ‘anti-road’ movement. In a context of steady economic growth and following the reintroduction of Mayoral functions in 2000, there came a remarkable change in transport policies. Combining car traffic reduction measures together with investment in public transport services, the thinking regarding transport increasingly reflected the concerns associated with mitigating the negative impacts of car traffic (including air quality, health).

More recently, increased attention has been given to walking and cycling, as well as to accommodating mixed uses on road space. From the historical analysis undertaken, **it can be said that London has followed the three ‘stages of change’ model, but it has not done so categorically.** There is an added level of complexity that has to do with legacy, geography and spatial differentiation. As with other older cities there was never a pure “car oriented” policy situation in London as there was an extensive public transport system in operation well before the mass advent of the motorcar.

Furthermore, whilst Inner London has shifted towards sustainable urban transportation, some socio-demographic groups or parts of outer London and London's peri-urban area still display car-oriented type policy making.

Prioritising car traffic as part of the road hierarchy approach (1948-1972)

Dominant for a number of decades, the car-oriented type of thinking enabled a lower density suburban growth in London. However, it was never fully realized because of the existing public transport infrastructure and the lack of popular appeal. Population in London decreased from the 1960s, alongside a movement to suburban and peri-urban areas. Thanks to the post war economic boom and to decreasing fuel prices, car ownership increased and there was general support for building new roads.

The Abercrombie plan (1948), the Buchanan report (1963), and the Greater London Development Plan (1968) reflect the car-oriented model. 'Predict-and-provide' was the main policy approach and influenced transport policy-making across all levels of government.

DID YOU KNOW?

MAIN TRANSPORT MEASURES 1948-1972



M25 Orbital motorway
since 1973, finished in 1986

Tramway dismantled
by 1952



Trolleybus dismantled
by 1962



Building more roads was considered as the solution to accommodate car-ownership and to solve traffic congestion. Measures to restrain traffic were believed to hinder economic prosperity. Roadway plans were superimposed on what now are termed "transit oriented developments" of pre-automobile times. The destruction of parts of London during WWII would have enabled some of the urban motorway proposals to be realised. However, only few of the road proposals were implemented.

London had a developed public transport network well before the growth of car-use. Tramlines were dismantled to make room for cars, including on street parking. Bus services were seriously neglected, with fares higher than car costs; this making it even less attractive for people to use public transport. But to a large extent, public transport remained significant throughout the post-war years. Some zoning policies and street designs discouraging walking and cycling were adopted in implementing the road hierarchy, segregating the car from pedestrians on top level roads, but this was not widespread.

Car-oriented policies were more acceptable in the new suburbs from the 1930s onwards, mostly outside Greater London, typically featuring suburban detached housing with cul-de-sacs, collector and distributor roads. Up until the 1970s there were very few voices that questioned the axiom that building roads was necessary to cater for the inevitable growth of car ownership.

From anti-road movements to stagnating transport policies (1972-1997)

The opposition to road building came from the grassroots and led to the introduction of traffic mitigation policies. However, this was not enough in a context of fragmented local leadership and new economic paradigms.

By 1970, opposition grew against solutions involving further investment in road infrastructure. The realisation that building new roads could not of itself solve transport issues soon developed into political, social and institutional conflicts. In this phase, abrupt political and institutional changes were interrelated with a more gradual shift taking place among transport experts and traffic planners in order to address congestion. Motivated by environmentalism, political ecology and a 'not in my back yard' type of reactions, the "Homes before Roads" movement opposed the road-building programme of the Greater London Development Plan. In this context, the London Labour party, which was originally responsible for the motorway proposals, won the 1973 local election by promising to abandon new urban motorway projects. The London Ringways plan was put aside and, within the Greater London Council (GLC), increased attention was given to traffic mitigation measures in order to lessen the negative impacts of traffic in residential areas.

DID YOU KNOW?

MAIN TRANSPORT MEASURES 1970-1997

GREATER LONDON COUNCIL PLAN



Traffic and parking management
1976

GREATER LONDON COUNCIL

Abolished by UK parliament by 1986



Centre-led



Privatizations

Docklands Light
Railway (since 1987)

Predict-and-
provide
approach



STAGNATION

Following the abolition of the GLC in 1986, all transport functions of the capital city were transferred to the central government. In a context of population decline and lacking a champion to promote the city's interests, financial constraints and the new neo-liberal thinking resulted in the idea that it was up to the private sector to build and operate transport systems; this deepening the neglect of public transportation.

During the following decades, apart from developments underway in the Docklands, there was little or no public investment in any form of transport. Transport policy was characterized by **stagnation**, leading to a period of gradual decline. To help address this on the London Tube, the Labour Government, elected in 1997, opted for a Public-Private Partnership. In taking this decision it faced opposition from a number of quarters, including unions, safety campaigners and the future Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone.

From traffic reduction to reallocating road space (1997-2011)

With population increasing again from the mid-1980s, transport demand increased accordingly. Traffic congestion emerged as a major priority, due mainly to its economic impact. There was also increased realisation of the adverse impacts of traffic pollution on public health. The increase in demand and deteriorating conditions on the network led to a change of view in favour of improving transport conditions in Greater London.

In this context, the reintroduction of local democracy in London accelerated the emphasis towards traffic mitigation, improved public transport and, ultimately, the reallocation of road space between street users. From then on, transport was considered a major priority in successive Mayoral election campaigns. By the late 1990s there was general agreement that it should be a priority to secure investment in London Underground in order to bring the network up to modern standards after a long period of lack of investment that created a big backlog of maintenance.

A historic turn took place after the establishment of the Greater London Authority (GLA), the election of Mayor, and the creation of an integrated transport agency, Transport for London (TfL) which took responsibility for all modes of transport, including major roads and road traffic.



TfL's "Healthy streets approach"

Source: Transport for London, 2013

extending the Docklands light railway) and massive investments in improving existing infrastructures and systems (e.g., bus, over- and underground networks, etc.).

Together with accommodating projected population growth, air quality, vehicle and greenhouse gas emissions reduction now form an important determinant for transport policy developments in Greater London. Although with some differences, successive Mayors' transport strategies have considered transport policies as a driver for economic growth and a tool for managing transport demand, but also as a way to improve quality of life. The post-

WWII road hierarchy was replaced by a nine-fold classification of 'street-types'. A more diverse range of transport solutions were introduced, and now increasingly favour non-motorized solutions, especially in the urban core.

Since 2007, a new "policy orthodoxy"?

The new "policy orthodoxy" now combines a double approach: the reduction of road supply together with increased investments in public transport and active travel modes. Between 1992 and 2009, it is estimated that some 25 per cent of the effective road network capacity in central London was reallocated away from general traffic towards a range of other priorities, such as safety and urban realm improvements. Capacity loss allows for capacity re-allocation towards other street users. Roads are not to be seen exclusively for the movement of motor vehicles but also for a diverse range of street users and outdoor living, thus confirming the definite shift away from the car-oriented city. The "Healthy Streets approach" in London's latest Transport Strategy particularly exemplifies this, together with continued investments in public transport and cycling investments (e.g., "cross rail for cycling").

DID YOU KNOW?

MAIN TRANSPORT MEASURES SINCE 1997



Investments in public transport



Centre-led flagship projects

Docklands Light Railway extension
Channel Tunnel Rail Link, St. Pancras
Thameslink improvements



Greater London Authority and a directly elected Mayor since 2000



Transport for London 2000



Congestion charge 2003



Legible London 2006



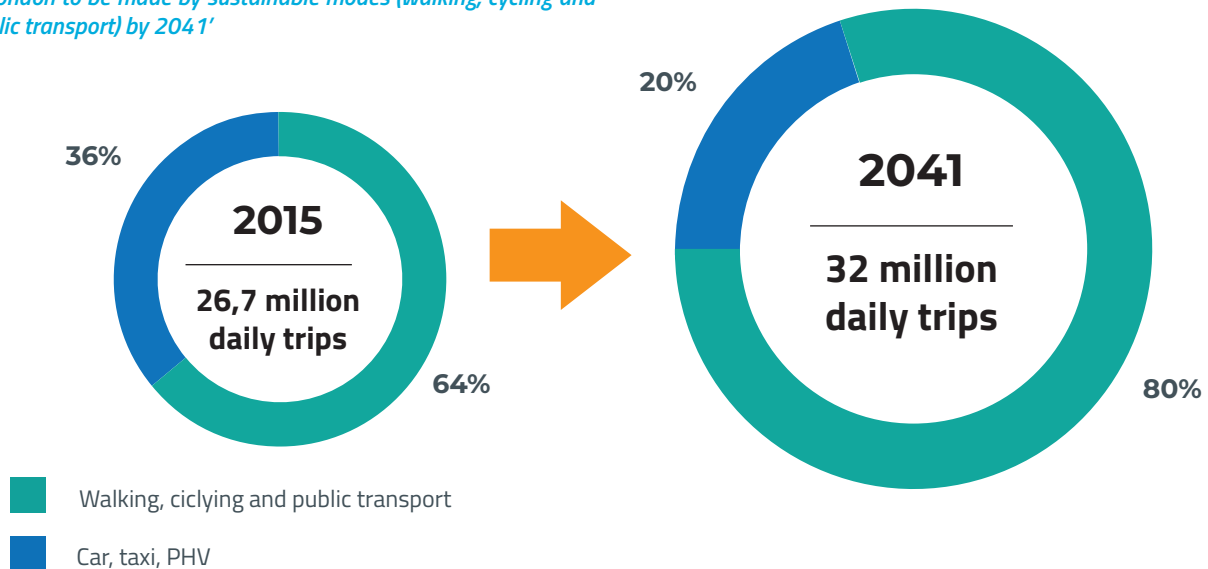
"Whole-street" approach
New street classification 2013

Current and future challenges

Since the mid-1990s, in a context of rapid population growth, car use decreased substantially, while public transport use increased significantly. Nowadays, walking and cycling have a prominent place in the Mayor's and TfL's agenda. Paradoxically, although traffic demand has fallen, **traffic congestion is still a priority**. More optimizing through smart city solutions and technologies is possible, but there might be a need for a more comprehensive re-appraisal of priorities for the road network. In addition, more efforts are needed in order to further expand this new policy orthodoxy outside the urban core, in areas characterized with lower densities where car use remains high.

Future challenges mainly result from new projections of **population growth** reaching 10 million in two decades, which justify the planning and building of new public transport infrastructure. The public transport network will also have to accommodate changed travel behaviours among younger generations, including lower driving licence holding, car ownership and use. These changes in lifestyles and **demographics**, together with **evolving patterns of employment and consumption**, raise new issues about the **need to travel in the future**. New technologies will undoubtedly contribute to accommodating some of these challenges. Yet other changes may shape transport policy developments in the future: resources available for transport, changes in the political outlook etc.

'The London Mayor has recently revised his Transport Strategy, in which great prominence is given to Healthy Streets policies. Among the aims of this strategy, the vision is for 80 per cent of all trips in London to be made by sustainable modes (walking, cycling and public transport) by 2041'



Source: Transport for London, 2018

INDICATIVE REFERENCES

NB. Technical note n°5 introduces the analytical framework and the methodology for this study.

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