

# **URBAN TRANSPORT AND GOOD- PRACTICES: COMPARISON OF KNOWLEDGE-SHARING MODELS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Developing countries are facing a fast-growing mobility demand. Geographical proximity of Mediterranean countries and the sharing of common concerns in the urban and transport sectors encourage multiple actors to promote North-South cooperation in the region. Such initiatives are often driven by International Organisations (e.g. World Bank), development banks (e.g. AFD – *Agence Française de Développement*) or local governments. The European Union (EU) supports cooperation in the Mediterranean essentially through the European Neighbourhood & Partnership Instrument (ENPI) that supports the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). Actions frequently deal with dissemination of technical, managerial and financial solutions in the transport field, but a real debate on how to approach best-practices has never been instigated. The objective of the present paper is to deepen the concept of good-practice and that of knowledge-sharing in the urban mobility and transport fields through the presentation of theoretical and operational results.

The paper is organised into two parts.

The first part, based on findings from a doctoral research (Tomasoni, 2012), presents the Euro-Mediterranean neighbouring policy. It further approaches the problem of capitalising and sharing the experiences of urban mobility in the Mediterranean region.

The second part compares three platforms of good-practices' dissemination and sharing in the region. The three case-studies are: CODATU (Cooperation for the development and the improvement of urban transport), Medcities (Network of Mediterranean coastal cities created at the initiative of the Mediterranean Technical Assistance Programme) and UITP (International Union of Public Transport).

Lesson-learned and good-practice are very attractive concepts to inspire local development. But development rises from awareness building and awareness often come about from mistakes or self-implemented projects. Therefore accessibility to and transferability of good-practices is not always sufficient to avoid mistakes. As for the Mediterranean region, more attention must be paid to opportunities coming from "horizontal cooperation" (East-East and

South-South). The comparison presented in the present paper is an opportunity to analyse ongoing approaches and assess opportunities for the identification of effective knowledge-sharing models as for urban transport.

The efficiency and impact of dissemination actions have important implications for citizens and cities of developing countries. The sharing of good-practices is expected to creating greater understanding for decision-makers around the risks of promoting transport policies based on a contingency-response approach without long-term vision. Cooperation promoters must be capable of disseminating the idea that best-practices are not *prêt-à-porter* solutions; their role is that of “facilitators” in the dissemination process and researchers can give important support in terms of information assessment and presentation of scientific results.

*Keywords: Mediterranean region, neighbouring policies, urban mobility, urban transport, good-practice, knowledge-sharing platform, local development*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The concept of good-practice is quite recent in its application to urban matters; no official definition exists in the scant literature in the field. In fact the idea of good-practice has rather a pragmatic origin in the area of urban issues. It is usually applied to describe the outcomes of cooperation and research projects. The frame of application is definitely still blurred while its implications can be strong on territories, societies and the urban environment in general. Moreover, transferability and reproducibility are often cited in the definition of good-practice however what is effective in one location can be less good or even damaging somewhere else. The challenge is not that of homogenisation and reproduction of practices, but that of learning from them in order to capitalize knowledge (Arab, 2007). Contextualisation of good-practice of urban mobility management and planning therefore becomes necessary and fundamental (Dimitriou, 2011).

From the geographical (and the geopolitical) point of view the Mediterranean basin is historically a multicultural region and the cradle of the oldest civilisations in the world. Cohabitation of different societies in such a densely populated and constrained area has been, and still is, a significant contributing factor to major conflicts in the region. In order to rebalance social and economical inequalities between northern and southern countries, the European Union (EU) launched the Euro-Mediterranean policy in 1995 with the aim of getting countries of the two rims closer by favouring cultural and operational exchange. Due to their greater experience in urban development, the northern Mediterranean cities have been for many years the example to be followed in the eyes of the developing southern countries. The “north to south” logic is today largely surpassed. The transfer approach has been replaced by an attitude of sharing and cooperation. A new understanding is growing around the added-value of learning from experience (the second frame presented here below) and the cultural distance is considered less and less of an obstacle to cross-border cooperation in the Mediterranean region.

## The Euro-Mediterranean policy

*What is the Mediterranean? A thousand things together. Not a landscape, but numerous landscapes. Not a sea, but a complex of seas. Not one civilization, but a multitude of civilizations piled one above the other (Braudel, 1987).*

After having dismantled internal national boundaries (Schengen Area), the European Union (EU) aims to promote a bridge-building policy with Eastern and Southern neighbours; the aim being a more egalitarian and common development to facilitate exchange and cooperation. The challenge is considerable especially taking into account the instabilities currently affecting the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region. The wave of revolutions, that has inundated the Mediterranean area since January 2011, is unprecedented in the regions contemporary history. No one could have anticipated it and no one can say where it will lead. The objectives of each country will be reached through taking different paths on different timeframes.

The increased level of democracy in this region is expected to have a positive impact on urban transport and cooperation projects due greater decentralisation in territorial governance, larger financial autonomy for local authorities and an easier access, for international cooperation promoters, to decision-makers. The path towards new territorial governance systems is however not easy and will require several years of awareness raising and negotiation within southern civil societies.



Figure 1 - ENPI CBC-MED Cooperation area (Source: <http://www.enpicbcmed.eu>)

The EU's policy in the Mediterranean cannot be considered neither successful nor effective to date. The European Neighbouring Policy (ENP), based on the Barcelona Process, was launched in 2003 with the EU's Communication "*Wider Europe – Neighbourhood: A new Framework for relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours*". The ENPI is a "policy driven" financial tool that operates under the framework of bilateral agreements and action plans between the EU and the neighbouring countries (Figure 1), to support the ENP strategy. The "*European social policy for cohesion*" integrated the ENPI CBC-MED (Cross Border Cooperation in the Mediterranean), this specific tool was established to provide support to cooperation between the northern and southern countries of the Mediterranean Basin. For the period 2014-2020 the ENPI will be the best funded instrument of the EU (€16 billion) as a concrete sign of the EU's wish to promote multilateral cooperation with its southern partners.

Finally, following the events of the Arab spring, the EU reviewed its neighbourhood policy and, in 2011, published the document “*A New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood. A review of European Neighbourhood Policy.*” The objective of the review was to support democratisation and sustainable development of the partners within the ENP (Tomasoni, 2012).

European policies towards the Mediterranean Region were implemented through projects funded by ENPI. Knowledge- and experience-sharing are at the basis of almost all initiatives funded by ENPI. As this paper shows in the following sections many other organisations and institutions operate in the Mediterranean area with the objectives of reinforcing cross-boarding cooperation and the sharing of knowledge, thus participating to the achievement of targets of a Euro-Mediterranean policy that still hardly finds its reason of being.

### **Defining good-practice**

The first use of the term “good-practice” and of the process for its transfer is identified in business marketing and management literature. Organization and management procedures are considered good-practice if their implementation has *improved business results for an organization* (Jarrar *et al*, 2000).

Even in the world of management and business world, which is arguably simpler than the urban one, it is difficult to objectively define the method and added value of the transfer of best practice. *In the glossary of benchmarking terms* (American Productivity and Quality Centre, 2000), *the American Productivity and Quality Centre (APQC) noted that although there is no single best-practice, because “best” is not best for everyone, what is meant by best are those practices that have been shown to produce superior results; selected by a systematic process; and judged as exemplary, good, or successfully demonstrated. Best practices are then adapted to a particular organization. Best-practice is always contextual* (Jarrar *et al*, 2000).

According to Jarrar *et alii* we do not consider transferability as a *sine qua non* condition of good-practice’s definition. Moreover we prefer in our research to speak about “good” instead of “best”-practice in order to highlight the not-absolute character of each learning.

The concept of **lessons-learned** is as interesting as that of good-practice. It commonly refers to those experiences whose outcomes or effects do not respond to expectations. Failure is therefore at the heart of lessons-learned. It represents the knowledge that must be capitalized and shared in order to raise the awareness of individuals or organizations, who are interesting in implementing similar ideas.

Good-practices in the urban transport field are made up of two main parts (Tomasoni, 2012). There is firstly a “contextual” or “endogenous” (Arab, 2007) part, that makes the good-practice correspond to one specific urban context, and secondly a sectoral or “exogenous” part, that is to say technical aspects that are common to projects of the same type and order. This second part often represents the “transferable knowledge”, while the first one makes reference to the peculiarities of the local context in which the good-practice was originally developed and that cannot be or are difficult to reproduce. Thus adaptation becomes a key step of the knowledge-sharing process. According to Offner (Offner, 2006) *urban problems*

*are heterogenic from city to city and they [...] rely on choices' and priorities' order, hierarchy and arbitrary evaluation following local situation always different.*

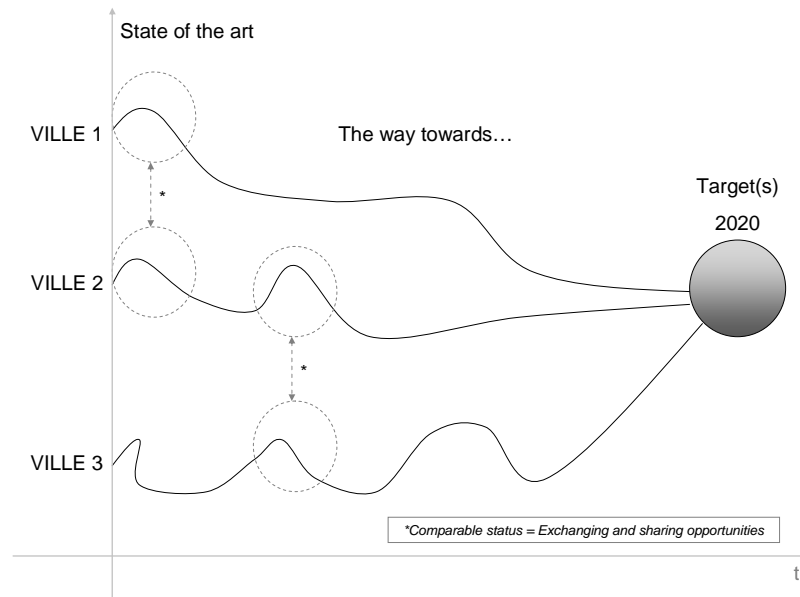


Figure 2 – Schematic representation of development paths of cities.  
Adaptation of a good-practice is easier when they share a similar status.

Several southern stakeholders still claim that cultural differences are the main obstacle to good-practices' exchange and sharing, but such a position can no longer be sustained. The idea of building a sustainable knowledge-sharing environment should include overcoming practical obstacles like the linguistic one.

Despite some background and cultural differences, the sharing of general and specific objectives (e.g. reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, improvement of living conditions, establishment of a performing public transport service, improvement of public transport capacity, etc.) is sufficient of a foundation to support the knowledge-sharing process. Each city is then expected to find its own particular path to delivering on common targets (Figure 2).

## **URBAN TRANSPORT: HOW TO MAKE SUSTAINABLE USE OF GOOD-PRACTICES?**

### **Urban transport in southern Mediterranean**

According to the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and Blue Plan, urbanization will involve two out of three people in the Mediterranean countries (75% of the population by 2030). Further to this the population is expected to grow from 130 to 470 millions inhabitants by 2050. The urban population in southern Mediterranean countries is increasing rapidly, especially in cities and *monocentric* metropolis (Chaline, 2001); from 2005 to 2009 it has increased by 14% in the Palestinian Territories, 13% in Syria and Jordan and 11% in Algeria, this indicates an average increase of more than 3,2% per year. This is due not only to the increase in population but also to internal migrations, from rural to urban areas, as people

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search for better living conditions. Commuting by public transports is rarely possible due to the low incomes of rural families and bad condition or absence of a public transport service in rural areas. In the southern Mediterranean metropolises (e.g. Cairo, Istanbul, Tunis and Casablanca) the low-quality of public transport service has led, for a long time, to a favorable environment for the development of informal (or artisanal) transport systems ensuring connections between peripheral and central areas. Privately provided transport can constitute up to 20% (e.g. Izmir in Turkey) of the urban transport availability in some cases. Walking still remains the most used transport mode in many southern cities where it is not uncommon to find walking rates greater than 50% (e.g. 56% in the city of Alger). In revenge, bicycle is almost unused. Clean modes rates are however tricky. In fact, high walking and/or public transport rates (Figure 3) do not have to be intended as a preference in terms of modal transport choice. People are driven to select these modes due to the unaffordability of the private vehicle (Tomasoni, 2012). As trends show, the motorization rate is rapidly growing in the region (+4% per year average in southern countries – World Bank Database, 2011).

City	Algiers 2004	Beirut 1994	Cairo 1998	Casablanca 2004	Istanbul 2005	Tunis 2002	Teheran 2004
Public Transport*	65%	29%	74%	50%	58%	40%	58,5%
Private Vehicles	29%	71%	26%	30%	36%	50%	34,5%
Taxis	5%	—	—	11%	6%	10%	—**
Two-wheelers	1%	—	—	9%	—	—	7%
Total Individual Mobility	35%	71%	26%	50%	42%	60%	41,5%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

\*: Public Transport includes metros, buses, minibuses, shared taxis, etc.  
 \*\*: For Teheran, taxis are counted as shared taxis.  
 Sources: Household surveys and counts.

Figure 3 - Urban mobility indicators in SEMC (CODATU, 2008)

The car is still a status symbol as it was in Europe forty years ago and the purchase of a car is tangible evidence of social-climbing in developing societies (Gakenheimer, 1999). The transport mode split in southern cities will be completely inverted in the next 15 years if such trend does not slow down or change.

The establishment of effective transport authorities is difficult in southern cities; this is one of the main reasons for the inefficiency of the public transport service offered. However some good examples exist as in the case of Casablanca that funded an Organising Transport Authority for the Great Casablanca as well as a public society in charge of the tramway project (Casatramway).

Besides a strong densification of urban centers, southern Mediterranean cities are also confronted with urban sprawl (i.e. increasing of transport demand from peripheral to urban

areas) and non-regulated land use. The role of integrated urban and transport planning must therefore be enhanced as well in order to combat this.

Southern transport stakeholders have indicated (Investigation with Euromed RRU<sup>1</sup> partners attending the CIVITAS Forum 2012) four topics on which to focus the sharing of good-practices in the Mediterranean area. They are: Sustainable Urban Mobility Transport (SUMP as defined on the ELTIS platform), urban freight transport, establishment of Public Transport Authority (PTA) and tram-train projects.

This short list of focus areas, developed by the southern delegates, shows how close urban transport issues are in northern as in southern urban areas. Therefore, whether urban mobility demand is the more and more equivalent between northern and southern Mediterranean cities, strong inequalities subsist in terms of urban mobility supply and available local resources (Allaire, 2004). Several solutions have been developed in northern cities over the last 30 years and many are being developed today in southern ones. The aim is not the transfer of practices (from north to south), but their capitalization, to maximize learning, as well as their contextualisation in order to develop tailored solutions to meet the rapid growing demand of southern countries. Any experience is unique and no *prêt-à-porter* solution exists. The great challenge is the building of an effective and reliable experiences' exchanging framework.

### **Knowledge-sharing in urban development as an approach to good-practice transfer**

As previously said, the objective of identifying and capitalising good-practices is to ensure their dissemination in order to inspire and support the design of urban development in a separate context.

Accordingly to APQC (American Productivity & Quality Center) position, "knowledge-sharing" is *the systematic process of identifying, capturing, and transferring information and knowledge people can use to create, compete, and improve*. Although we prefer not to directly couple the term "transfer" to those of "good-practice", the APQC definition brings to the fore the three steps that form the foundation of the term "transfer" we decided to use in our research. They are:

1. Identifying (those experiences that better correspond to local specific needs)
2. Capturing (the core knowledge of a good-practice to be transferred by distinguishing contextual from generic information accordingly to each specific case)
3. Contextualising (the captured knowledge through reappropriation of experience and adaptation to the local context)

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<sup>1</sup> Euromed Road, Rail and Urban transport (RRU) is an ongoing two-years (2012-2014) project funded by the European Union in order to favour the development of transports in southern Mediterranean countries at regional, national and local level.

No labels exist that certify or objectively recognise a good-practice. This is another interesting point of the debate on good-practices that however will not be addressed in the present paper.

The concept of “urban model”, rather than of good-practice, is more commonly applied in the field of town-planning. Cities are complex systems and identification, capitalization and sharing of good-practices are complicated by the number of variables that could (negatively) affect reproducibility of a practice in a context different from the original one. Moreover, certain conditions could be identified as “essential” or as a “threat” depending on the “distance” (Cummings, 2003) between the original and the destination urban frame. Many criteria, across a number of different spectrums including political, economical, social, etc. dimensions, have to be considered in evaluating the reproducibility of good-practices in the field of urban transport. Thus, it is essential to develop a favorable environment for the knowledge-sharing process and provide it the right structures, means, actors and tools to ensure a sustainable capitalization and reappropriation of learning.

Although the theoretical and scientific debate on good-practices in the urban field remains limited so far, its empirical side is quite well established; at present many projects, funded by the EU, International Organizations (e.g. World Bank, AFD, UITP) or regional and local associations (e.g. CODATU and Medcités) use the term good-practice to describe expected results and make good-practices and knowledge-sharing the core of their activity.

Knowledge-sharing doesn't only correspond to the simple implementation of a communication and dissemination plan. It is a continuous, multi-criteria and multi-step process that needs to be well-framed in order to give rise to a long-lasting work framework. Knowledge-sharing is not a sequence of punctual actions, but a continuous flow of information and exchange between two or more parties. For that, knowledge-sharing actors should work to establishing a sustainable form of knowledge-sharing with short and long-term objectives in terms of process effectiveness and desired impacts.

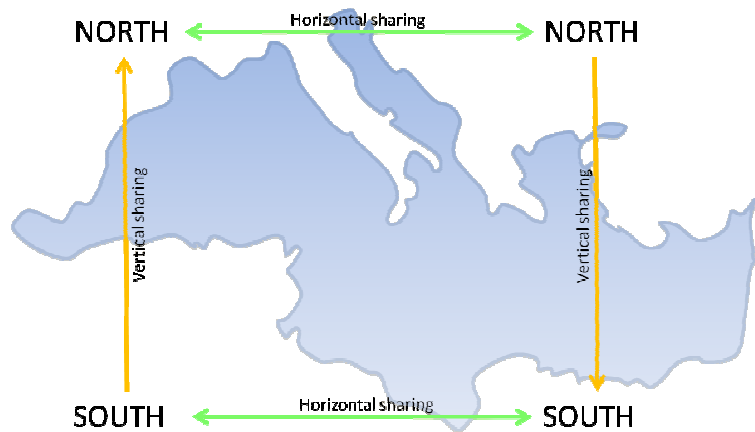


Figure 4 – Knowledge-sharing directions in the Mediterranean Region (Tomasoni, 2012)

One of the main challenges, in the hands of knowledge holders (the source) and knowledge-sharing facilitators, is to give all potential beneficiaries (the recipient), no matter their geographical location, the tools for extracting transferable knowledge from good-practices.

This thus raises the question; *What is the right context in which to implement knowledge-sharing?* From a geographic point of view, two possible approaches are identified (Tomasoni, 2012) in the Mediterranean region: vertical (north-south or south-north) and horizontal (north-north or south-south). In accordance to the literature (Cummings, 2003), the horizontal approach (Figure 4) is the most effective one because it shortens (background) distances



between the source and the recipient. In the urban transport sector that could mean for exemple closer territorial governance systems or legislative framework. Thus the transferable knowledge, contained within a good-practice, is not exactly the same for everyone; it is a relative concept that mainly depends on the recipient's adaptive capacity.

According to Cummings *knowledge transfer is facilitated when the parties hold similar social identities*. Sharing backgrounds and initial status can strongly favour the exchange of good-practices in the urban transport sector and possibly make the knowledge-to-be-transferred wider.

Some sharing models, developed by international bodies, such as the EU (Project Ruract and Project SUMPA-MED), The World Bank and alii (CMI – Centre for Mediterranean Integration) and CODATU (Coopération pour le développement et l'amélioration des transports urbains), were analysed (Tomasoni, 2012), but many others exist that would be interesting to evaluate further.

### **Opportunities and threats to good-practices' exchange in the Mediterranean area**

Geographically speaking, the Mediterranean region is an immense basin of cultures, backgrounds and expertise. Differences exist from rim to rim, from country to country, but also from region to region and at a national level, with regards to the level and quality of development of urban transports systems.

Although specific issues regarding urban transport are not exactly the same for everyone, targets and challenges are for the large part shared at regional level. Learnings, even if locally developed, could inspire similar or different solutions somewhere else.

There are a number of areas that could strongly favour the building of a sustainable knowledge-sharing environment in the Mediterranean area (Tomasoni, 2012):

1. an increase in the political will, from southern governments, for sustaining the involvement of cities and transport authorities in international networks or projects promoting knowledge-sharing in the field ;
2. a raised awareness in southern decision-makers on the importance of sharing experience and the concept of transferable knowledge that could be captured from developed and tested good-practices;
3. the establishment of a cooperation network in the southern Mediterranean for the reinforcement of the south to south (horizontal) approach;
4. the formal recognition (labels) and institutionalisation of "knowledge-sharing" as a field of action and research as well as the launching of a "think-thank", within the international community, on how to make sustainable use of good-practices.

The ongoing wave of democratisation is expected to facilitate access to the decisional (local) level in those southern countries that better integrate citizens' wishes with their political organisations, reforms and programs (i.e. Tunisia, Morocco and Jordan). Decentralisation is a key expected outcome of the democratisation process. The redefinition of the jurisdiction of local authorities in urban and transport matters can strongly affect the effectiveness and the sustainability of the local development.

The aim of the comparative analysis, presented in the second part of this paper, is to show, mainly through the presentation of strengths and weaknesses of existing sharing models, that understanding is increasing consciousness on the importance of good-practices as a support to development.

## **COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF KNOWLEDGE-SHARING MODELS FOR URBAN TRANSPORT PRACTICES**

### **Scope of the analysis and case study choices**

The two main reasons at the basis of such a study are:

1. The debate on urban good-practice is still dormant in the academic field. The paper therefore aims to raise awareness about the scientific value of the subject. The operational side of the topic is well supported and is often used in the urban practice, but the frame of action lacks scientific basis and reliable methods.
2. The author of the present paper and interviewed experts are directly involved in the models presented and deal daily with knowledge-sharing in and out of the Mediterranean environment. Through this work urgent requirements have been identified such as: tools for the capitalization of good-practice, systems for the monitoring of the impact of knowledge-sharing actions, evaluation of experiences of good-practices' reappropriation, labelling of good-practices and reinforcement of cross-border cooperation.

The aim is to enlarge the debate about: (1) the definition and role of the knowledge-sharing "facilitator"; (2) the evaluation of existing sharing models; (3) the academic and scientific interest of the subject; (4) southern partners' opinion and approach as regards to the effectiveness and expected results of knowledge-sharing activities.

In order to do so we decided to carry on a survey by means of a questionnaire to be submitted to representatives of the three chosen facilitators: CODATU, UITP and Medcities.

The choices of models to be analysed is based on:

- *Methodological criteria - Knowledge-sharing is part of the body's strategy:* the three selected models clearly mention dissemination, spreading of knowledge and promotion of exchange as targets of their overall objectives.
- *Geographical criteria - The Mediterranean region falls within the bodies' operational area:* Medcities network is specifically created to connect Mediterranean coastal cities, while CODATU and UITP have a worldwide

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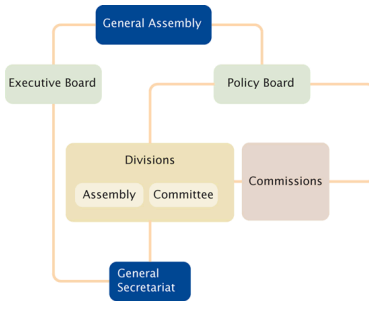
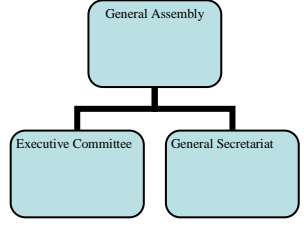
approach in which the Mediterranean region is a beneficiary of specific strategies and projects.

- *Field of action - Urban development, with a focus on urban transport, is the core subject of the body's knowledge-sharing activity:* UITP and CODATU work exclusively on urban transport matters, while the range of subjects is larger for Medcities whose activities are however focused on cities and urban environment in general.
- *Authoritativeness of sources - Chosen models are formally recognised and have been acting in the sector for a minimum of 20 years:* CODATU, UITP and Medcities hold a recognised status and have been working in the knowledge-sharing field respectively since 1980, 1985 and 1991.
- *Organisational model - As different kinds of organisations (networks, international organisations, associations, etc.) can work as facilitators in knowledge-sharing processes, it would be interesting to compare two or more different organisational models:* selected models are representatives of two type of organisational form: CODATU and UITP are international associations whilst Medcities is a network of cities.
- *Comparability of models - Selected study-cases must share at least targets, type of activities and framework of action:* the three selected models aim at promoting awareness-raising of local bodies mainly through the sharing of knowledge and experiences. Further, they all support the access to good-practices by means of active communication such as conferences, workshops, training, publications etc. and try to build a cooperation and exchange environment that should be of reference for local stakeholders and other involved partners. They all act in order to support development and cooperation.

Tableau 1 - Presentation of case-studies

		UITP	CODATU	MEDCITES
	<b>ABOUT THE BODY</b>			
Q 1	Country	Belgium	France	Barcelona, Spain (General Secretariat) - Rome, Italy (Presidency)
Q 2	Statute/By law	International non-profit association governed by the Belgian Law of 27 June 1921 on non-profit associations; non-profit international associations and foundations.	Non profit organisation, Association under "French Law 1901"	Mediterranean network of towns
Q 3	Year of establishment	1885	1980	1991
Q 4	Partners	No partners. Only members	Worldbank, AFD, etc.	Only members

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Q 5	Governance structure		<p>A board is elected by the General Assembly. Some members of this board are designated to be in the executive board to organize activities.</p> <p>An executive director is in charge of managing the activities with the team under the authority of the executive board.</p>	
Q 6	Members ( <i>Statutes and Number</i> )	Nearly 1200 (industries, transport operators and authorities, local authorities, PT associations, academics and professionals)	Nearly 60 (industries, transport operators, local authorities, academics, consultants and professionals)	Local authorities, 25 members We prefer to be an efficient small network
Q 7	Number of employees	Nearly 80	3	9
Q 8	Source(s) of funding	Membership fees Conference or exposition fees Incoming from other events	Membership fees and programs financed by partners or members	Membership fees International Development Institutions Grant's and partners' contribution in Cooperation Projects

The term “facilitator”, as we intended it, refers to someone (a person or an organisation) who *enables groups of peoples* (or authorities in our case) *to work more effectively; to collaborate and achieve common objectives. They are a 'content neutral' party who by not taking sides or expressing or advocating a point of view during the knowledge-sharing process, can advocate for fair, open, and inclusive procedures to accomplish the groups' work* (Doyle, 2007).

As previously mentioned, the study is carried out by means of a questionnaire and a comparative analyses; the work methodology is briefly introduced in the following paragraph.

### Methodology of work

The study has been conducted in two steps: an investigation phase and a comparative/evaluative one.

The building of the questionnaire for the investigation has been carried out following some standard criteria. The first is the “comparability” of information. Information requested is predominantly qualitative, except for some data about budget and number of employees. Comparability is ensured thanks to the sharing of targets, type of activities and framework for action as one of the conditions for the choice of models to be compared. Moreover, the restriction of the focus geographical area (Mediterranean) and field of action (urban transports) helps in ensuring a common vocabulary and facilitating comprehension and comparison.

The questionnaire is made up of two main parts: the first part concerns the description of the “facilitators” relating to their organisation and methods for carrying out actions; the second interrogates parties on good-practices, in terms of definition and use, and knowledge-sharing models as for target groups, tools and feedback.

The observation categories have been developed in order to collect information and feedback on:

- The theoretical side (definition of good-practice and approach to knowledge-sharing)
- The operative side (target groups, tools, barriers & threats, monitoring of actions, ...)

The questionnaire is built in order to allow a comparative evaluation of the three models to find out the main strengths and threats of these existing practices. The comparative analysis aims at highlighting convergences and divergences of the three approaches that could pave the way towards an effective model of knowledge-sharing.

Questionnaires were sent to experts<sup>2</sup> from the three involved structures (CODATU, UITP and Medcities) by e-mail and lately discussed by phone interview. Feedback from southern cities in the analysis and evaluation of sharing-approaches are evaluated alongside both reactions from southern urban transport stakeholders (Investigation with Euromed RRU southern partners at CIVITAS Forum 2012; Tomasoni, 2012).

## Discussion

The investigation and following comparative analyses led to the uncovering of a number of interesting points. The first relevant feedback concerns the definition of good-practice and the interpretation of knowledge-sharing. The presented **definitions of good-practice** are quite different from case to case; this underlines the **lack of a common theoretical and literary basis highlighted earlier**. Although a common definition cannot thus be found, it is interesting to see that all main features attributed to good-practice in the previous paragraphs are for the largest part there. While UITP highlights the importance of **drawing inspiration** from others', positive and negative, experiences, CODATU puts the accent on their **reproducibility** in another territory with the same effects. This vision is shared also by Medcities that geographically focuses replication opportunities between Mediterranean cities. Even on the use of good-practice answers do not exactly correspond. Good-practices are considered as a sort of "exchanging goods" by UITP, internally and externally (lobbying) to the association. Medcities sees good-practice as a means for *institutional strengthening of beneficiary towns* through training and building of new tools developed from existing experiences. The vision of CODATU is the one closer to commentaries made before in the present paper. It is based on two main points: (1) According to the idea that contextualisation of practices can contribute to produce innovation, CODATU affirms that *implementation of relevant and innovative policies (or actions) need sometimes to be tested somewhere else*; (2) According to CODATU **giving examples of what has been done in another city demonstrates the feasibility of policies (or actions)** that is to say that educating local bodies via knowledge-sharing makes them more aware of the value of their own and others experiences. The three models agree on the type of projects implemented: **multilateral with a horizontal (south-to-south) or vertical (north-to-south) approach** (see page 8).

Knowledge-sharing is at the heart of the three models philosophy. UITP, CODATU and Medcities are facilitators in the knowledge-exchanging process with a particular accent on

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<sup>2</sup> Julien Allaire – Executive director at CODATU, Mohamed Mezghani - Senior consultant at UITP and team leader of the Euromed Road, Rail and urban transport (RRU) project ; Gabriel Jodar and Joan Parpal - Advisor to and ex-president of Medcities.

dissemination and training for UITP, capitalization and awareness-raising for CODATU and training for Medcities. Cities and local stakeholders are the main target groups for CODATU and Medcities, whilst UITP puts a strong accent on professionals.

The second relevant learning is about the operational side of knowledge-sharing. More affinities can be identified in this area. The three models share a **proactive strategy for the involvement of local actors and the recruitment of members**. Tools and actions like conferences, workshop, study tours, training sessions, are also in common use. Information and communication technology (ICT) are the foundation of the three models work-methodology as for internal and external dissemination of news, results and successful case-studies. The medium of the **newsletter** is the most used means to spread information among members and partners. Medcities implements (in collaboration with CMI – Centre for Mediterranean Integration of the World Bank in Marseille) a Knowledge Transfer Platform, a Technological Platform 2.0 for exchange of knowledge and networking activities is also under construction. **Capitalization of good-practices**, as mentioned in precedent paragraphs, **still remains vague and lacks of effectiveness and tools**. Moreover Medcities acts often through projects funded by the EU or other international organisations in the Mediterranean. Cities are at the heart of such projects and as well as acting directly on territories at local level. Important achievements have been attained by the three structures: UITP and CODATU regularly hold international conferences (20 Conferences for UITP just between 2009 and 2011 and one international conference every two years since 1980 for CODATU) and publicise thematic studies on urban and public transport matters. One important issue, concerning dissemination and knowledge-sharing in general, is the question of **knowledge accessibility**. The three models follow, for the largest part of their outcomes, an **open-access policy**. However, UITP reserves for its members the access to some sectoral studies' outcomes or to statistic databases. Concerning achievements, the Medcities model allows implementation of actions at a local level. Outcomes from its activities are thus more operational such as mobility plans (Sousse, Tunisia) and local development strategies (Urban Community of Al-Fayahaa, Lebanon). Finally both **CODATU and Medcities are both strongly involved in the activity of the CMI** (Centre for Mediterranean Integration of the World Bank in Marseille).

A part of the survey was specifically built to investigate the in force monitoring strategy from two points of view: the first one concerns the effectiveness of knowledge-sharing actions and tools, i.e. efficacy of the role of facilitators, while the second one concerns the monitoring of the impacts of knowledge-sharing actions at the local level, i.e. changes in and development of urban transports occurred due to the participation of local stakeholders in knowledge-sharing activities. Regarding the first point only UITP affirmed having collecting qualitative information on events and actions from participants. Neither UITP nor CODATU have a monitoring strategy to address the second point. Medcities, whose outcomes are often more operational and territorialised than other models, regularly develops monitoring plans on a project-by-project basis; no report exist that collects general achievements and impacts attained due to networking. Although monitoring is not really in use in all the three models, some feedback was provided by the interviewed experts based on their experience. Talking about the most effective actions, in order to deliver results as a local level, the UITP and

Medcities agree that **pragmatic outcomes and results are generally the most welcomed** by local authorities and societies. Medcities, as with CODATU, puts the accent on raising political awareness in order to make action really effective at a local level. According to that vision, the three models agree that the **lack of political will is one of the main threats** for the successful implementation of measures for urban transport development at the local level in southern countries.

The final finding concerns the urban transport sector. The three main weaknesses for the development of urban transport in southern Mediterranean cities are:

1. Lack of political will and decentralisation;
2. Lack of understanding that motorization does not mean development;
3. Lack of urban transport and mobility plans

Hence, **training and awareness-raising actions are identified as key activities** to be implemented. Raising awareness means a better knowledge of others' experiences in order to show that projects sustained by the political level are indeed more effective. The **competence and jurisdiction of local authorities are often not sufficient** to implement (lack of financial resources) and support (lack of decisional power) urban transport projects. Furthermore, **many local authorities and bodies from southern countries are still reluctant** to embrace opportunities coming from learnings as well as the idea that a good-practice or a lesson-learned always holds a transferable-knowledge (cf. p.8) Finally, CODATU, UITP and Medcities agree that **recent and ongoing events** in the Mediterranean region have had **negative impacts on the short term as political instabilities** make it difficult the implementation projects at a local level. **Positive effects** are expected and already started to come out in some southern countries such as Tunisia where the political will is becoming stronger as regards to development and implementation of policies and measures in favour of urban sustainable mobility. Two successful regional workshops recently took place in Tunis (December 2012) and Sfax (March 2013) organised by CODATU/CMI and the Euromed RRU project in partnership with municipalities, governorates and ministry of transport to discuss about the future of urban transport in Tunisia. **Among positive effects an easier-access to the decisional-level and a larger degree of decentralisation is also strongly expected.**

## **Conclusion**

Following the study it can be concluded that the three models seem to be effective in implementing their objectives, but the monitoring of the effectiveness of the actions taken is still not well developed. It should be noted that it is not only the effectiveness of the actions that is of interest but their effects on local development and decisions. Questions such as the following need to be asked:

- *How did participation to training sessions, conferences, reading of studies, etc address or inspire urban (transport) projects at the local level?*
- *What indicators and measures can be used to evaluate this?*

Each of the studied models has built its own sharing environment. However there is an increase in nesting logic as shown by the involvement of two out of the three models in the CMI. This allows for a higher strategic level of action. Coherently with this logic Euro-Mediterranean policies should provide and represent the higher political framework in which to develop and implement knowledge-sharing in the Mediterranean.

Barriers to knowledge-sharing in the field of urban transport in the Mediterranean area are of two types. Firstly, reluctance from many southern stakeholders towards the usefulness of knowledge-sharing and the endurance of linguistic/cultural barriers represent an obstacle to the good implementation of knowledge-sharing models. Southern stakeholders often look for imitation of measures and urban transport systems applied in developed cities without adequately assessing the feasibility and sustainability of such practices in their own context. Secondly, the analysis of the three knowledge-sharing models showed that knowledge-sharing platforms have to look for higher effectiveness and, to do so, start to measure the real effects of their activities on the territories.

Criticising “transferability” of good-practice, this paper shows that the knowledge-sharing process is made-up of three main steps: capitalization, identification/capturing and contextualisation of good-practices. The comparative analysis has led to a number of observations concerning the weaknesses of each of those four steps;

- Capitalization: lack of effective data-bases and of capitalization models are other critical points that emerged from the comparative analysis. Good-practices are also hardly to recognise. A quite recent initiative was launched in the field of urban transport in Europe: the ELTIS platform collects good-practice concerning urban mobility from European cities.
- Identification/capturing: a good capitalisation of knowledge will permit a better evaluation of practices implemented in a separate context. Recognition of the transferable knowledge should be facilitated as well.
- Contextualisation: the analysis showed that once the transferable knowledge identified, the adaptation to the local level must be attentively set-up. Sectoral studies on existing examples of good-practice adaptation are definitely rare.

Moreover, the comparative analysis highlights once more the lack of academic debate on the subjects of good-practices’ sharing as regards urban affairs. Even though some studies and articles can be found in the academic world, this field still does not represent a real axis of research.

Here below are introduced some of the main reasons we chose to defend the need for an axis of research specifically dedicated to knowledge-management in the urban (transport) field.



## 1. General scientific interest

- Fields of application are multiple. Results from research could be applied to a large range of issues in the urban field as well as other fields.
- Implications on territories and society are real. The tailoring and adaptation of good-practices to meet a specific environment is of great value. That calls for the application of some classic research methodologies such as diagnostic studies, investigations and the development of prospective scenarios.
- Urban (transport) good-practices involve, for the majority of cases, a multitude of stakeholders and decisional levels. The interaction between the stakeholders and the study of the decision-making processes are two of the most developed and intricate research areas in the urban field.
- Maximising the value of good-practice requires data-base development. The real challenge for researcher is to develop data-base able to support decision makers and facilitate the comprehension of the stocked knowledge.
- Monitoring of knowledge-sharing processes and, above all, of their effects on decisions and development at a local level are important pillars of the proposed research. Effective and measurable indicators are urgently needed.

## 2. Scientific interest for urban transport research

- Capitalization of good-practices and the development of data-bases require for uniformity and comparability of data. Interesting findings could be drawn from sharing and comparing the results from measuring and monitoring systems applied in the field of urban transport
- Transfer of transport technologies is an opportunity for testing practices out of their original context development. Innovative solutions could rise from their adaptation under different local conditions.
- Transfer of urban transport policies is perhaps even more challenging than the technological issue raised above. Numerous variables must be taken into account and the beneficiary territory should be assessed *a priori* by investigating on the receptive capacity and capability of the receiving party in order to ensure the good transfer of the right knowledge.
- Assessment and labelling of urban transport good-practices. *Does it really make sense? What part of the practice can really be labelled? Following what criteria?*

Facilitators should strength their role in order to be more effective in:

- Guaranteeing the reliability of sources and actors;

- Increasing confidence of southern stakeholders in knowledge-sharing and more open to opportunities coming from others' experiences;
- Nurturing relationships between source and recipient.

The openness and sensitivity of organisations like CODATU, UITP and Medcities towards research and the scientific field in general are highly valued and essential to the building of a synergic and stimulating research environment. They represent the operational side of the research, the application field that provides access to a wide range of territories, actors and authorities to concretely test methodologies and tools.

We can confirm that in the Mediterranean Region things are progressing. The construction of a research platform for the sharing of knowledge in the urban development and transport field is launched and in progress. However this platform still lacks organisation, cohesion, shared references as well as measurable effects.

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