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“Walking is the first thing an infant wants to do and the last thing an old person wants to give up. Walking is the exercise that does not need a gym. It is the prescription without medicine, the weight control without diet, and the cosmetic that can't be found in a chemist. It is the tranquilliser without a pill, the therapy without a psychoanalyst, and the holiday that does not cost a penny. What's more, it does not pollute, consumes few natural resources and is highly efficient. Walking is convenient, it needs no special equipment, is selfregulating and inherently safe. **Walking is as natural as breathing**”, says John Butcher, Founder of Walk21.

The high potential of walking



Image: © Carlos Corao

On average an inactive person spends up to 40 percent more days in hospital and visits the doctor up to six percent more often than an active person. Already back in 2006, the **World Health Organisation (WHO)** reports that a lack of physical activity is one of the leading risk factors for ill-health in its 53 member states in the European Region, contributing to an estimated nearly one million deaths per year. **Inactivity is encouraged by overuse of private cars.**

The **European Commission** states that road transport contributes about one fifth of the EU's total emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂), the main greenhouse gas. While these emissions fell by 3.3 percent in 2012, they are still 20.5 percent higher than in 1990. **Transport is the only major sector in the EU where greenhouse gas emissions are still rising.**

Join me for a walk!

Walking is such a ubiquitous activity that it is often not regarded as a transport mode at all. Therefore, pedestrian associations are working hard to change this perception.

For example **Walk21** champions the development of healthy, sustainable, and efficient communities where people choose to walk. Through the Walk21 **conference series** and the **International Charter**, Walk21's vision is to create a world where people choose and are able to walk as a way to travel, to be healthy and to relax. The **XIX International Conference on Walking and Liveable Communities** will take place from 15-19 October 2018 in Bogotá, Colombia.



Image: © Harry Schiffer

Another such organization is walk-space.at, the Austrian Association for pedestrians. The federation was founded to represent the interests of pedestrians in Austria. Their main goals are, inter alia, to show quality orientated solutions and offers, and to encouraging quality orientated planning for pedestrian traffic, especially for children and mobility impaired people. The [XII Austrian conference for pedestrians](#) will take place from 04-05 October in Graz, with the main theme "Transformation of public space and safety, liveable streets".

Walking to tackle urban congestion



Download FLOW's "15 Quick Facts for Cities" in 7 languages!



CIVITAS FLOW: Quick Fact No2

Most cities want to reduce congestion and its negative impacts, and to implement walking and cycling measures. Therefore, it is helpful to understand the impacts such measures may have on congestion.

The Horizon 2020 project [CIVITAS FLOW](#) (2015-2018) aims to **put walking and cycling on an equal footing with motorised modes** as a solution to tackle urban congestion. To achieve this, a [methodology](#) has been developed to assess the effectiveness of walking and cycling measures in addressing urban road congestion. The six partner cities [Budapest](#), [Dublin](#), [Gdynia](#), [Lisbon](#), [Munich](#) and [Sofia](#) are piloting the FLOW assessment tool and the improved transport modelling tools.

These tools are used to develop implementation scenarios and action plans to add or upscale cycling and walking measures shown to reduce congestion.

Walking in a low-carbon economy

Walking is an efficient way of using expensive and scarce space in urban areas, and is healthy, clean, cheap and energy efficient. **Nearly half of all car trips are less than five kilometers.**

The Interreg Europe project [Cyclewalk](#) (2017-2021) aims to support the shift from car use to cycling and walking over shorter distances, improving the accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists. The participating regions from Austria, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Romania and Slovenia select and adopt best practices and carry them out according to action plans, developed by each partner.

The [HEAT tool](#) (health economic assessment tool), a multi-phase, open-ended project, is coordinated by WHO, and is designed to enable users without expertise in impact assessment to **conduct economic assessments of the health impacts of walking or cycling**. The tool is based on the best available evidence and transparent assumptions. It is intended to be simple to use by a wide variety of professionals at both national and local levels.



Cover HEAT, 2017

Walking to reduce harmful emissions

A key challenge in cities is to **improve transport systems and accessibility in an environmentally-friendly manner.**

The [CityWalk](#) project, financed by the Interreg Danube Transnational Programme (2016-2019) helps cities in the Danube Region to reduce emissions, noise and to become safer, better places to live, by increasing the role of more sustainable forms of mobility in the urban transport mix, especially active transport modes.



Image: © Harry Schiffer

To do so, the main focus of project is to **improve the key conditions of walkability**. Although the emphasis is on walking, the project addresses the challenge with a holistic approach, namely by improving urban mobility through efficiently combining various means of transport. The project develops a toolkit (walkability guide, index and online tool), design walkability plans, deliver pilot actions, and develop and present policy proposals.



Walking and technology

Walking can be enhanced and complemented by various means such as wearable technology, devices, applications or social strategies.

The mission of the Horizon 2020 project **CIVITAS TRACE** (2015-2018) is to assess the potential of **movement tracking services to better plan and promote walking and cycling** in cities, and develop tracking tools that will fuel the take up of walking and cycling measures.

CIVITAS TRACE develops two types of tracking tools, **behaviour change and mobility planning tools**. The behaviour change tools **Positive Drive**, **The Traffic Snake Game** and **Biklio** aim at enhancing certain aspects of existing and potential cycling and walking promotion campaigns, thus making them more successful. The Tracking for planning tool **TAToo** is an instrument for tracking data analysis for urban mobility planning and policy making purposes.

Walking and urban planning



Prime footpath in the Suermondt-Quarter -
Image: © City of Aachen

The walk mobility planning for social and economic policies should provoke further reflection on the theme, and creating policies and projects suitable for pedestrians.

The demonstration project **Suermondt-Quarter in the City of Aachen** is within the field of research '**Active Mobility in Urban Quarters**.' One aspect of this project is the promotion of a prime footpath. This path is part of a network of 10 prime footpaths that lead from downtown Aachen to the city's surrounding greenspaces. Measures for the prime footpath include making crossings safer for pedestrians, ensuring an accessible design, installing newly designed tourism way-finding, additional greening along the path to improve the inner-city micro climate, and to ensure a pleasant stay.

This demonstration project is part of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety's research programme **Experimental Housing and Urban Development** (ExWoSt), which supports innovative planning and measures regarding important civic and housing political topics.

Walking as a national strategy

The first **national Austrian strategy for the promotion of walking**, the **Master Plan for Walking** aims to be a turning point in that it promotes walking as an environmentally friendly type of mobility (the full version of the Mater Plan is available in **German** language only).

It was developed by the Ministry for Environment (BMNT) and the Ministry for Transport (bmvit) together with the Environment Agency Austria and experts from the Federal States, cities, municipalities, environmental organisations, industry and the scientific community. **klimaaktiv mobil** – the BMNT's National Action Programme for Mobility Management – provides support for environmentally friendly mobility projects and the promotion of walking in Austria's municipalities, businesses and associations, as well as in schools and youth initiatives.

The aim of the Master Plan for Walking is to **raise the status of walking and to pay more attention to the needs of pedestrians** in policy-making as well as in the strategies and plans of the federal government, the federal states, and the cities and communities in Austria.



Cover MASTERPLAN GEHEN, 2014

Conclusion

For many cities, the overall quality of life for its citizens is of utmost importance. This is not only characterised by a healthy environment, good living conditions and a growing economy, but also by the possibility to travel in a positive way. Therefore, there is enormous potential for walking, already tapped into by pioneering towns and cities. **Walking is mankind's earliest means of travel and currently the latest (re)discovery for making our lives more healthy, sociable and sustainable.**



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Conditions for walking can be enhanced by incorporating equitable access to living spaces into the design of urban areas, for instance through pedestrian zones or shared space concepts.

Therefore, urban planning should intervene not only in the legalisation and deployment. A profound vision and critical view on the city's own development, verifying aspects of development, and prospecting the direction of the city's growth are important too. All these factors directly impact the city and especially in the movement of pedestrians in close proximity to motor vehicle routes. By increasing the quality of pedestrianisation in cities, and by analysing the pedestrian's needs, urban planning can help to move towards better levels of quality of life and sustainability in urban centers.

Upcoming events in May and June 2018

- **22nd ECOMM, The European Conference on Mobility Management 2018**
30 May – 01 June 2018 | Uppsala, Sweden
www.ecomm2018.com
- **EU Sustainable Energy Week Policy Conference**
5 June – 7 June 2018 | Brussels
- **Smart Mobility solutions in Antwerp, Madrid and Berlin**
7 June | [Webinar](#)

For more events, please visit the [EPOMM calendar](#).

The banner features logos for several organizations: BEPOMM (Belgian Platform on Mobility Management), Euromobility, Bundesministerium für Nachhaltigkeit und Tourismus, IMT (Instituto da Mobilidade e dos Transportes, I.P.), Cerema, Liikennevirasto (Finnish Transport Agency), KpVV CROW, and Bundesinstitut für Bau-, Stadt- und Raumforschung (in Bundesamt für Bauwesen und Raumordnung). Below the logos is a navigation bar with icons and text for: ECOMM 2018, allinx, feedback, subscribe, unsubscribe, fullscreen, and news archive.