

# 10 years

## of European Mobility Week 2002-2011

**Making life better in cities**



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## Foreword

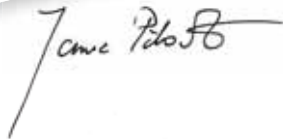
Ten years ago, the European Commission invited municipalities across the EU to take action against the threat of climate change and to improve the quality of life for citizens by making cities more pleasant places to live in.

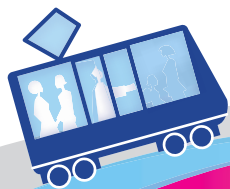
The result was European Mobility Week, a week-long celebration of improvements to urban transport that has spread across the globe. From a small event involving some 320 cities in 2002, European Mobility Week has grown into a phenomenon which included a record 2 221 cities in 2011. It has shown that promoting sustainable mobility is not about banning people from using their cars – it is about offering practical and convenient alternatives.

Much has changed over the past decade. We are more aware of how personal mobility choices affect our well-being and that of our neighbours.

There is a growing awareness of the need for alternative forms of transport, to cut greenhouse gas emissions and produce less of the pollutants that contribute to respiratory diseases and damage our environment. The health benefits of cleaner transport are numerous, from improved fitness, as people adopt walking or cycling as part of their daily routine, to higher economic efficiency and economic growth.

This brochure focuses on 22 cities which have featured in the Mobility Week awards in the last ten years. It highlights the broad range of original ideas and activities that have formed part of the mobility week brand – many of them the fruit of grass-roots initiatives by local communities – and the permanent impact they have had both on the urban environment and on people's behaviour. It is a fitting tribute to inspiration coupled with hard work and determination.





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## Happy birthday European Mobility Week!

European Mobility Week is 10 years old – and that is definitely a cause for celebration. Over the last decade, this European Commission initiative has helped cities across Europe to make impressive progress in reducing traffic congestion and creating more pleasant and healthy environments for their citizens.

The European Mobility Week award is designed to recognise the achievements of the most innovative cities, serving as role models to others across Europe. This brochure highlights just some of the vast range of activities and initiatives that have earned 22 cities in 15 countries, inside the EU and beyond, a place on the shortlist.

EMW, held each year from 16-22 September, is all about education, raising awareness and offering alternatives to the old, environmentally harmful ways of getting around in towns and cities. Consequently, involving young people is a fundamental part of the campaign, because good habits formed early will last a lifetime, and so fun activities for children form a thread running through the stories.

### A call to action

Back in 2002, a series of natural disasters in Italy, Germany, France and Eastern Europe pressed home the urgent need to take action to combat climate change.

With transport rapidly becoming the largest single contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, it was clear that moves to encourage Europeans to find alternatives to the car were urgently needed. Exhaust fumes also contain nitrogen oxides and airborne particles that damage human respiratory systems and harm the environment.

But more than that, by the turn of the millennium, traffic congestion and pollution were making life in Europe's cities increasingly unpleasant. People moving out of city centres in search of a better, healthier lifestyle at the same time brought the threat of higher car usage and urban sprawl.

The first car-free day had taken place in 1999, inspired by 66 French and 92 Italian cities, with Commission support. Some initial reactions were sceptical, but the public response was so positive that the scheme snowballed spontaneously. So in February 2000, the Environment Commissioner Margot Wallström put forward a new plan for an annual car-free day in cities throughout Europe, on 22 September. That year, 760 cities, with almost 65 million inhabitants, participated. By 2001, the number had increased to over 1 000. Furthermore, three countries – Belgium, Denmark and France – took advantage of car-free day in 2000 to organise a week of awareness-raising.



## Common goals

Thus Mobility Week was born, with enthusiastic backing from the European Commission and funding of €3.5 million from DG Environment's LIFE programme. "We are moving up a gear," announced Margot Wallström.

In 2002, the first Mobility Week took place in 328 cities in countries that now make up the EU-27, offering a variety of activities on the theme of public transport, cycling, living streets and greenways. In total, 23 European states were involved, including not only EU members but also neighbouring countries like Switzerland and Turkey. Nor was it only a European phenomenon. As the years passed, cities in Canada, Japan, Brazil, Mexico, Taiwan and elsewhere also joined in.

EMW's achievement is that it offers a platform for local authorities, NGOs, community groups and associations all over Europe to try out new schemes and policies, to set up partnerships and learn from each other, as well as being part of a Europe-wide campaign with shared goals and a common identity.

The event was instantly popular with the public, because it addressed their immediate concerns: air quality, noise, traffic congestion, lack of green space, their children's welfare. And it enabled people to make their views heard and put forward their own solutions to local mobility problems.

In 2002, the Commission also launched the Mobility Week pledge, designed to boost support among European and international organisations, signing a commitment to action to promote sustainable means of transport. In 2005, business leaders came on board through the Business Leaders' Initiative on Climate Change.

## Sustainable mobility for all

In 2003, 672 EU-27 cities (721 worldwide) took action on the theme of accessibility, tying in with the European year of people with disabilities, and covering a wide range of topics including ease of access to public transport for buggies, wheelchairs and older people, responsible car use, and access to local shopping and leisure facilities. Professor Rodolfo Cattani from the European Disability Forum welcomed the chosen theme, describing EMW as a truly imaginative and grass-roots initiative and praising the way young people were encouraged to get actively involved in creating an inclusive environment. The first EMW conference, in Brussels, laid the groundwork for an exchange of good practice.

The European Commission itself launched its 'Smart Moves' campaign, to encourage its 20 000 staff to explore more sustainable ways of getting to work.



# 100







A competition pitted different Directorates-General against one another, with DG Environment coming out on top, and a special intranet site offered different options such as car pooling and public transport routes and timetables. Even senior EU figures joined in, with Britain's European Commissioner at the time, Neil Kinnock, taking to a wheelchair to discover how accessible Brussels really is.

EMW 2004 involved 818 EU cities (854 worldwide). The theme was safe streets for children. This offered organisers a wide range of issues to work on, from fighting traffic pollution and improving air quality, to guaranteeing safe routes to school. In that year, across 20 EU countries, more than 1 400 young people below the age of 15 were killed in road accidents, many of them on the journey to and from school. Thousands more die from illnesses such as asthma, linked to exposure to air pollution. At the same time, children need to gain traffic awareness so that they can travel around safely by themselves as they get older.

A Mobility Week conference in Brussels heard about a range of good practices including London's newly introduced congestion charge.

## Paying dividends

In 2005, attention turned towards clever commuting: promoting sustainable travel to and from work and school through cycling, walking, car-pooling and public transport. Companies were urged to offer their staff public transport subsidies, or bicycles for short journeys.

With diseases related to air pollution causing some 300 000 premature deaths in the EU each year, a Mobility Week conference in London focused on strategies to couple urban mobility with better air quality, through the use of clean vehicles and efficient public transport. Clever commuting also makes sense financially, saving both time and money for companies and staff and creating an opportunity to boost Europe's social and economic performance. By 2005, 923 EU cities (964 worldwide) were involved, and this tally has increased year by year, reaching a total of 2 105 (2 221 worldwide) in 2010. Themes have covered climate change, clean air, streets for people, improving city climates and 'travel smarter, live better'.

## Prize-winning performances

A consortium of three networks of local authorities now coordinates Mobility Week: Eurocities, the Climate Alliance, and Energy Cities, in partnership with European and international associations and with the support of the European Commission Environment and Transport DGs, while a network of enthusiastic national coordinators is the driving force behind the campaign in 42 countries, covering Bangladesh, Israel and Ukraine.

The EMW award is open to cities of all sizes. Any city can apply, so long as it undertakes to organise a car-free day as part of its week of activities. An open and democratic selection process involves a range of stakeholders including NGOs and universities.



One of the most important principles of Mobility Week is that improvements and innovations in travelling habits and infrastructure should not last only for seven days, but should make a long-term impact on the quality of life in cities. This brochure contains numerous examples of such changes, and emphasises again and again the importance of public consultation and support at all stages, in achieving progress.

EMW promotes an integrated approach to sustainable mobility. Local authorities are urged to draw up urban transport plans to make their cities safer, more efficient economically and more sustainable for the future. But the ultimate goal is to offer residents a healthier environment and better quality of life. The plan should aim at the overall reduction of private vehicle use, in favour of alternative forms of transport or ways of working.

This approach means taking account of people's living, working, shopping and leisure needs, and above all developing measures in co-operation with local communities, to cater for all groups in society including children, disabled and disadvantaged people.

## Onward and upward

In 2011, alternative mobility is the theme. The tenth edition of European Mobility Week wants to support the transition towards a resource-efficient transport system by promoting clean, fuel-efficient modes and human-powered travel. Mobility is both a social and an economic necessity, and EMW continues to look at mobility in new ways and move away from the stranglehold of the private car towards more sustainable transport. Better mobility can also mean a better and healthier environment, and co-benefits in terms of reducing harmful emissions. These are places where people will want to live and work and where companies will want to move to.

EMW is evolving all the time. Measures to restrict car use are now no longer necessary in some of the most advanced cities where people themselves are pushing the boundaries of alternative mobility. After 10 years, Mobility Week continues to be a focus for campaigning and activity, an inspiration to all those working for a better urban environment, and an outstanding example of how European solidarity can make a difference.





## Europeans want to shape their cities

In 1999, when I was appointed as European Environment Commissioner, some cities in France and Italy were launching the first innovative steps towards freeing their streets of traffic congestion and vehicle pollution.

It was instantly apparent that this strategy not only benefited the environment in a number of ways, but also attracted the support and involvement of city dwellers across Europe.

Three years later, in 2002, we extended the annual car-free day to a whole European Mobility Week: moving up a gear and increasing opportunities to widen the debate on sustainable mobility. Since then, I am pleased to say, the event has gone from strength to strength.

EMW responds to a demand for participatory democracy that is visibly increasing in modern societies. People want to understand and get directly involved in the decisions that affect their everyday lives. European citizens have taken full ownership of mobility week, which involves millions of people across the EU and beyond, every year. It shows that local initiatives driven by citizens can improve the environment and the quality of life in our cities and influence policies to fight climate change.



*Margot Wallström*  
European Environment Commissioner 1999-2004





# Almada

## Portugal — Winner 2010

Almada has taken part in every edition of European Mobility Week. Each year, it has taken the focus to a different borough of the city, involving more than 300 organisations and thousands of citizens over the past 10 years.

In 2010, the city council and local energy agency, joint organisers of EMW, brought the action back to the city centre, laying on 90 activities, including an innovative Mobility Festival. There were street markets, electric vehicle demonstrations, street art installations, bicycle fairs, concerts, dance and street performances and bike sprints.

Catarina Freitas, head of the sustainable environmental management and planning department, says that one of the most satisfying achievements was the success of the meetings set up to prepare events. She describes “auditoriums packed with people and local entities that wanted to contribute to the initiative”.

## Tons of enthusiasm

There is no doubting local enthusiasm for EMW. In opinion polls conducted around the event, “87% of the population considered the event ‘good’ or ‘very good’, and 89% said they would like to see the initiative repeated,” she notes.

In a record field of over 2000 cities around Europe, Almada took home the EMW 2010 award, impressing judges for doing more than any other to promote alternatives to the car and highlight the positive impact of other means of transport on public health and the environment.

Among dozens of permanent measures, the city installed cycle parks and charging stations for bikes and electric vehicles. It also opened new cycle lanes and pedestrian areas in public spaces once congested with dense traffic.

“The concrete and lasting measures contribute to improving local mobility and quality of life, creating a more human and friendly city,” concludes Ms Freitas.

## Ready for more

87 % of Almada’s population said EMW in the city was ‘good’ or ‘very good’; while 89 % would like the initiative repeated.





# Arad

## Romania — Runner-up 2007

"I remember winning first prize in the bicycle race when I was at kindergarten," says Călin Tărhună, aged 7, recalling European Mobility Week in Arad. "We learned about pollution and I remember telling my father that I would be upset if he went to work by car that day."

Arad puts educational activities at the heart of its EMW programme. In 2007, children learned about air quality, sustainable transport and environmental protection. "Investing in children's education is investing in the future of the community," says Romana Bistrean, chief officer for development programmes and European integration. The most popular events each year, she says, are the sports contests held on car-free day.

According to teacher Amelia Faur, whose school has taken part in EMW since 2002: "The drawing contests, thematic exhibitions, open classes, anti-pollution activities and especially the bicycle competitions have had a remarkable impact on both participating children and adults."

### Trucks away

As well as investing in its youngest citizens, in 2007 Arad was also making significant upgrades to its public transport network, and reorganising road space. The city authorities implemented a permanent restriction on freight transit through the centre and diverted it to the ring road; and reallocated road space to pedestrians by stopping car access to several streets and extending green areas along roads. The measures reduced pollution, congestion and road accidents, and helped improve citizens' quality of life.

Călin Tărhună says: "Now I am in the 1st grade at school and would like to take part in the contests again with my school mates. My parents have bought me a new bike with 18 gears, so I want to win first place again."

### It's joining in that counts

More than 500 children took part in cycle, roller, scooter and skateboard contests. Each participant got a certificate or prize.





# Bologna

## Italy — Runner-up 2006

Bologna seized the opportunity of European Mobility Week to carry out a bottom-up consultation on its urban traffic master plan, entitled 'Bologna, a changing city'. It attracted more than 300 people from 45 stakeholder associations, with 3000 registrations for an online debate. Many of the suggestions and ideas were introduced into the final plan.

The authorities also introduced new cycling facilities, and inaugurated 21 new methane-fuelled buses. Clean buses now make up half the city's fleet.

One of the highlights was a sale of second-hand bicycles found abandoned in the city. The bikes were sold off for a token price to customers chosen by the auctioneer. "The winners were selected for their vivacity and friendliness and their ability to capture the auctioneer's attention by their eccentricity," recalls Mauro Borioni from Bologna's mobility department. "With hundreds of people participating, it

became a lively, loud and colourful party." One objective was to discourage people from buying stolen bicycles. "Better second-hand than stolen" was the slogan.

### Immortalised in the movies

Since then, the bike auction has become a regular event, with some 2500 cycles already allocated to new owners. It is so well-known that in 2010 it was used as the backdrop for a scene in the film *AmeriQua* by Bob Kennedy III.

During EMW 2008, Bologna – judged the best Italian entry – built further on its achievements. It extended its cycle path network, which today covers 127 km, and distributed free maps and safety guides. It launched a bike-share system *C'entro in bici*, which now comprises 22 stations with 184 bicycles around the city, and a video-surveillance system to control traffic-light violations.

### Sweet success

In 2008, Bologna organised a guided evening bicycle tour of the city including ice cream tasting sessions for hungry cyclists.







# Budapest

## Hungary — Winner 2008

Budapest, a dedicated participant in European Mobility Week since 2002, went big and bold in 2008, closing the city's landmark Andrassy Avenue to traffic for two days.

"We revived the tradition of wandering along Andrassy Avenue," explains event organiser Laszlo Kovacs. "The road was built for promenades in the 19th century, but has been taken over by cars. For two days, pedestrians reclaimed the street."

A huge street festival replaced the usual traffic congestion, bringing the normally grid-locked street to life with performances, art workshops, sports events and a demonstration of eco-vehicles. Celebrities took part in a commuting race to highlight the efficiency of public transport, and there was an exhibition on the environmental impact of 'food kilometres' and the importance of buying local produce.

For the organisers, both the best and worst memory of the year was the overwhelming level of interest. "We have never had so many NGOs, theatres, companies and exhibitors who wanted to participate," recalls Mr Kovacs. "We could barely squeeze them all in along the 2.5-kilometre road."

### Controversy breeds success

Not surprisingly, in the run-up to EMW there was fierce debate over closing such a major artery for two consecutive days, including one working day. The largest-circulation tabloid newspaper splashed "Stupid" on its front page, accusing the organisers of "causing chaos on purpose". But 25 000 people took to their bikes to protest at this coverage, and many more said they thought the street should be closed to traffic every weekend of the year.

The year also saw the introduction of several long-term improvements: the city upgraded its tram fleet, set up a new Park & Ride and cycle-storage scheme, and inaugurated an additional section of the ring road to ease congestion in the centre.



### Dancing in the street

100 000 visitors attended a vast street festival on Budapest's iconic Andrassy Avenue, which was closed to traffic for two days.



# Copenhagen

## Denmark — Winner 2005

Changes that affect people's mobility need active support to be successful. "Six years of participation, from 2000 to 2005, 'branded' Copenhagen's Mobility Week as an excellent platform for debating city environmental and traffic issues," says coordinator Klaus Grimar.

In 2005, city authorities listened to local people before organising 15 small traffic experiments in different neighbourhoods. In the Mimergade area, barriers to vehicles and parking spaces for car-sharing helped discourage through-traffic and make the zone quieter and safer. Because people were consulted, the experiments were appreciated, and offered a means of testing ideas from local citizens and validating permanent traffic planning decisions.

The procedure proved so successful that Copenhagen still uses traffic experiments before launching major construction projects. The city has more recently carried out a two-year trial on Norrebrogade, one of the main arterial roads, where traffic has been reduced and wide bicycle lanes and sidewalks created.

### People say yes

Surveys showed that 81 % of citizens were aware of European Mobility Week, and 89% knew about car-free day. Eight out of ten believed that it was a good idea to hold it in Copenhagen. Mr Grimar says the three car-free days organised in the old part of the city were important when it came to spreading the message about the week as a whole.

Danish TV broadcast a news feature without commentary to show how peaceful the middle of Copenhagen was during car-free day, while the Dane Age association organised a Nordic walking tour through the city.

### Bright idea

1 400 kindergarten children in Copenhagen were given road safety lessons and shown how to become 'traffic stars'.



# Donostia San Sebastián

## Spain — Runner-up 2004

The Spanish city of Donostia San Sebastián marked Mobility Week 2004, and its theme of 'safe streets for children', with rallies and games for young people, together with educational road-safety activities.

Already shortlisted the previous year, in 2004 Donostia San Sebastián impressed the award judges with its comprehensive and dynamic programme for raising awareness about sustainable urban mobility. The city invited celebrities to join in, to boost the profile of the week. It organised street workshops for children, and launched two public awareness drives entitled 'Let's move for the Sahara' and 'For you and those following you, cross on green'. The experts found the city had worked hard to find innovative methods of communication and information.

### Developing a cycling culture

At the same time, Donostia San Sebastián took advantage of the week to introduce several more permanent measures,

including a reorganisation of the traffic flow network to make mobility easier for pedestrians. And planners designed an ambitious city-wide programme for a new cycling network and for developing the cycling culture.

"EMW represents the perfect opportunity to promote the benefits of the bicycle, to organise bicycle training and free maintenance and open new cycle lanes," points out coordinator Josu Benaito Villagarca.

The city also opened new pedestrian streets and dedicated microbus lanes, and programmes to make it easier for people with reduced mobility to get about. "We share the dream of a city whose inhabitants live, work, play and co-exist in a sustainable, comfortable and safe environment," explains Ernesto Gasco, who was the city's councillor for mobility at the time.

### Pedal power

EMW generated a measurable shift in mobility habits. Cycling increased to 4 % of Donostia San Sebastián's transport needs.





# Ferrara

## Italy — Winner 2002

The city of Ferrara was the winner of the first European Mobility Week Award in 2002. It had the most comprehensive action plan, covering free public transport, green shopping (using electric vehicles), solar-powered cycling and responsible car use.

Ferrara is regarded as Italy's city of bicycles: in 1991, a survey found that cycling – practised by more than 30% of the population – was more common in the city than in Holland. According to Gianni Stefanati of Citta in Bici, the people of Ferrara learn to ride a bike before they can walk. So measures to facilitate cycling have been a hallmark of EMW in the city, culminating in a dedicated website: [www.ferrarainbici.it](http://www.ferrarainbici.it).

Diego Marani is a local writer. "For us, the bicycle is like the horse in the Far West," he explains. "Stealing one is a serious crime, and thieves risk being lynched! If you are looking for someone, you check first to see if their bike is outside the bar. Cycles don't yet come when you whistle,

like Zorro's horse, but one of my neighbours swears he has seen some bicycles carrying their drunken owners home."

### No exception to the law

Mr Stefanati has several recollections of European Mobility Week 2002: people photographing themselves sitting in the middle of the road; a person on a skateboard with a Ferrara number plate; and the indignation of a female cyclist who was fined for going through a red light. "The traffic cop said that even if there were no cars, the Highway Code was still in force!"

The most important measure to come out of EMW 2002 was the tripling in size of the restricted traffic zone, with access now protected by a video-control system. Other permanent changes included replacing diesel-powered buses with low-emission vehicles, extending cycle routes, and limiting vehicle access to urban areas.

### The transport of the future

Ferrara's Bicycle Policy 2010-2020 cites 17 goals, including maintaining bicycle use in the city at 30% or more.





# Frankfurt

## Germany — Runner-up 2007

For Frankfurt, European Mobility Week 2007 provided the opportunity to announce and test the permanent closure to traffic of the Hauptwache, a central plaza and meeting point in the city. It was a daring move, not least because the timing coincided with the city's world-famous biennial auto fair.

“There was a lot of debate at the time around the closure of a major road, especially during the Frankfurt Motor Show,” remembers Winfried Schmitz, head of marketing for the city's public transport authority.

It turned out to be the perfect ‘fringe’ event to the motor show, providing a forum to discover alternative and sustainable transport.

For the local population, a programme of information and entertainment on the Hauptwache gave an idea of the benefits of permanent closure, which would come into effect in 2008.

Citizens tried out bike taxis and solar-powered vehicles; children took part in road safety exercises and bicycle checks; there were guided art and architecture tours in the city's underground; and a sustainable transport organisation offered car buyers advice on the environmental performance of vehicles.

The mix of cultural events, information and testing made the week a success, says Mr Schmitz.

### Environment of trust

EMW 2007 also saw the introduction of an electronic system that refunds passengers if their bus or tram is over 10 minutes late. The ‘10-minute guarantee’ was designed to inspire trust in public transport and give the company a better overview of travelling behaviour.

“The main idea in Frankfurt was to give the EMW a framework within which several partners, themes and aspects of sustainable mobility could be bundled,” explains Mr Schmitz. “We established EMW as a central event, year on year; a forum to discuss mobility, sustainability, ecology and better life circumstances.”

### Satisfaction guaranteed

**Public transport users are reimbursed if their bus or tram is over 10 minutes late.**





# Gävle

Sweden — Winner 2009

“It is important to think long-term and see European Mobility Week as a regular activity week for the coming years,” says Ingegerd Krantz, project manager for sustainable transport in the municipality of Gävle in Sweden.

The Baltic coastal city has taken part in EMW since 2005 and won the Mobility Week Award in 2009 for its strategic use of marketing to effect long-term changes in attitudes and behaviour. “If you aren’t in the public eye, you won’t be noticed,” says Mr Krantz.

## Getting the youth perspective

The city tapped into the power of social media to reach children, young people and their parents – the principal target groups – recruiting a young blogger to spend the week recounting her experiences on public transport, and a camera team from an upper secondary school to record and broadcast the week’s events.

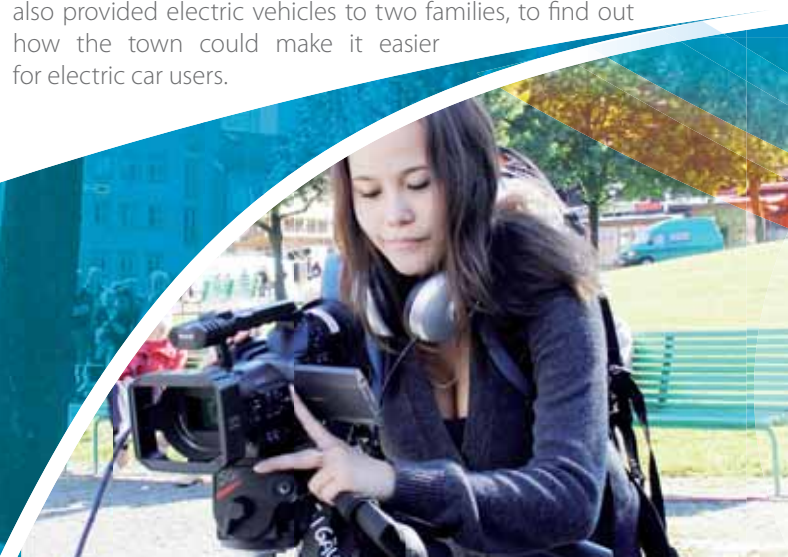
## Let it snow

The city introduced guidelines for snow removal to give priority to pedestrian and cycle paths.

It also ran a programme of talks, visits and activities for the entire community to promote sustainable transport, the benefits of exercise and road safety. One dramatic event with a strong visual impact was a staged traffic accident, with the emergency services on hand to advise local residents on what to do.

“The goal of the campaign is to improve the traffic environment for everyone living in Gävle municipality,” explains Mr Krantz. “We want residents to be aware of alternatives to car travel and to increase their knowledge about traffic safety.”

Besides its dynamic campaign, the city made permanent improvements to its transport infrastructure. It set up bike parking for commuters at key bus stops, designated parking spaces and charging points for electric cars, and limited free parking spaces in the city centre. It also provided electric vehicles to two families, to find out how the town could make it easier for electric car users.





# Geneva

## Switzerland — Runner-up 2002

Geneva secured the 2002 award for the most innovative permanent measure, the 'Bouquet de Transports', based on the principle that local authorities should act as mobility models for other participants. The bouquet launched four schemes to cut municipal staff car-use: discounts on public transport; making 50 bicycles available; car-sharing for business trips; and car-pooling through a dedicated website.

"We still have the prize in the entrance hall of our office," notes coordinator Sandra Piriz proudly. "I have excellent memories of the welcome we received in Brussels, and the discussions with other cities."

Mobility Week comprised 30 different activities, many around the theme 'Respect Changes our Lives', involving 24 local partners, including schools, associations and businesses. They included a street party entitled 'The Street is Yours', and numerous transport alternatives such as solar boats, rickshaw taxis, roller skates and bicycles.

## The business case

Seven separate measures ensured that EMW left a permanent legacy in Geneva, including mobility management training courses for local firms. As a result, a number of organisations have adopted mobility plans, including the local hospital, social services, and several major private companies, generating a new market in advice for employers.

In 2006, the city inaugurated a Mobility Business Prize for companies that support staff in adopting healthier, cheaper and greener mobility habits. Together with local associations, it developed 'walking bus' lines, and initiated a 'Monday Night Skate' for rollerbladers.

Earlier, in 2000, an evaluation revealed that 93% of respondents were aware of car-day, and 77% thought it was a good idea. Air and noise pollution fell, and the event received plenty of positive media coverage.

## A bus without wheels!

**'Walking buses' are convoys of children, accompanied by adults, who travel to school on foot rather than by car. They operate in Switzerland, Austria, France, the UK, Canada and elsewhere.**





# Ivanić-Grad

## Croatia — Runner-up 2009

Size and budget proved no obstacle to Ivanić-Grad, a city of just 14 000 inhabitants, which in 2009 showed what could be achieved with strong partnerships, a good campaign and a large helping of enthusiasm.

The city adopted two strategic documents during EMW 2009: a noise-mapping programme and an environmental protection programme. It updated infrastructure to boost safety and the quality of life for wheelchair users, cyclists and pedestrians, reducing traffic accidents and injuries, and creating “the foundation for sustainable development of the city”, says Vlatka Berlan Vlahek, head of Ivanić-Grad’s development department.

With many of its citizens commuting to work in Zagreb, 30 km away, the city also opened new car parks near the railway station and by the highway, to encourage the use of public transport and car-sharing. “The number of cars in the parking lot proves that citizens have accepted the Mayor’s suggestion to car-pool,” adds Ms Berlan.

### Winning recipe

Local interest in EMW has grown annually in the five years since Ivanić-Grad has taken part. Each edition sees more activities and growing participation, thanks to the number of partners involved, and to good co-operation with the media, which monitor all the activities, says Ms Berlan.

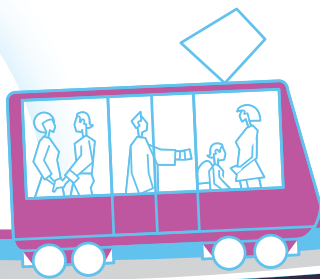
In 2009, successful one-off events included outdoor aerobics classes for senior citizens and free blood pressure and glucose testing to promote healthy activity. The city’s schools and nurseries are also keen participants in the programme, with children conducting research on car-use and enjoying sports days.

“The best moments in European Mobility Week are always those related to our youngest citizens – kindergarten and schoolchildren,” she says. “They are really happy with all the activities we organise, and spending time with them is always fun.”

### Starting on the right track

Some of the kindergarten children had their first-ever train ride on an organised trip from Ivanić-Grad to Zagreb.





"Día del  
peatón"



Las Palmas





# Koprivnica

## Croatia — Winner 2007

A keen participant in European Mobility Week since 2002, Koprivnica is an example in Croatia and beyond of what a small city can do to promote sustainable mobility.

With a population of 30 000, it won the mobility week award in 2008 for its ambitious three-year mobility programme, launched during EMW 2007, which aimed to make the city 100% accessible for all, including children, disabled people and the elderly. The strategy included reallocating 1.5 km of roads in the city centre to non-motorised traffic, promoting walking, and supporting public transport vehicles fuelled by bio-diesel.

While some changes are still in the pipeline, Maja Ištvan Krapinec, head of Koprivnica's department for urban planning, says they are strongly supported by decision-makers in the city as well as the vast majority of citizens.

## Winners want to keep winning

Support for EMW also remains strong. An enthusiastic partnership of some 50 clubs and associations is keen to build on the city's success. "The fact that the ideas promoted in Mobility Week, if they get the backing of local people, have a much better chance of being realised in the short term has encouraged steadily growing citizen participation and media coverage," says Ms Krapinec.

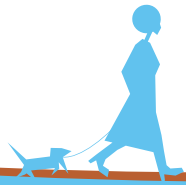
Meanwhile, Koprivnica has established itself as an ambassador for the cause: it set up a network of Croatian cities for sustainable mobility, helping others to achieve great results for themselves.

One memorable moment of the week took place on the final day. The Mayor invited families to the car-free area for a 'pram promenade', and EMW bibs were given to the youngest children. Ms Krapinec recalls: "There were hundreds of prams, and toddlers taking their first unsteady steps in the city square, on a wonderfully sunlit and peaceful day, with not a car in sight – truly an amazing experience."

## Urban paradise

Hundreds of parents and toddlers enjoyed the 'pram parade' in the city square.





# Kraków

## Poland — Special mention 2002

Since organising its first European Mobility Week in 2002, Kraków has been recognised as a 'Golden City' for its sustainable mobility activities in Poland every year.

EMW 2002 was all about involving people. The judges singled out Kraków for its 'excellent local partnership', with 28 organisations – including NGOs, schools and businesses – planning the programme. The events attracted over 3 500 participants: 1 500 of them children and young people.

At that time, Poland was not yet an EU member. "Participation in a European action promoting EU standards in terms of sustainable development was therefore particularly important for us and generated lots of emotions," remembers Jolanta Zajęc from Kraków's local authority. "The award made everyone very happy and motivated us to participate permanently in the organisation of the EMW. The best evidence of the positive attitude towards the campaign was the widespread participation of citizens, especially children and young people, in bike rallies and bike skills tests, ending with cycling licence tests."

## Getting used to sustainable transport

The campaign also attracted widespread, positive media attention. In 2002, the city unveiled its first bike lane, and since then more cycle paths and routes allowing cyclists to travel against the direction of traffic have opened.

In 2008, Kraków was again the best Polish entry in the contest. This time, the city focused on sport and mobility, with the final leg of the prestigious 'Tour de Pologne' cycle race taking place in Kraków. This was the launch pad for BikeOne, Poland's first bike rental scheme, and other permanent innovations including bike-carrying facilities on buses and a telebus service offering on-demand transport for people in rural areas. In 2010, the city opened a new pedestrian and bicycle bridge across the Vistula.

## Green lifelines

On bicycles, or in boats on the Vistula River, residents explored three new greenway corridors through the city centre.





# Kroměříž

Czech Republic — Runner-up 2004

The small city of Kroměříž in the Czech Republic stood out from many other European Mobility Week competitors in 2004 thanks to a pioneering ‘peer’ programme, encouraging schoolchildren to share safe transport practices with each other. “All new first-grade students received reflecting armbands from their older schoolmates, who gave them advice on how to behave in traffic and get safely to and from school,” explains Deputy Mayor Olga Sehnalová. Local police offered the prize of a new bicycle to well-equipped young cyclists who wore helmets and knew their safety code.

Many other activities took place, says project coordinator Jana Knapková. They included exhibitions in the local library and town hall on sustainable transport and responsible car use, plus walking tours around the town and bike/train trips into the local countryside.

## Staying safe on the streets

Road safety and accessibility were the themes running through the week. Kroměříž’s main square hosted open-air games and activities on car-free day. Another peer programme focusing on disabilities was run by the special school for children with multiple handicaps, while the Czech Red Cross gave instruction on first aid skills in the context of a safe riding competition.

Feedback from the public was very favourable. “The community especially appreciates the contra-flow cycle lanes in the town, and illuminated zebra crossings,” points out Jana Knapková. The permanent legacy of EMW includes the gradual implementation of a ‘Barrier Removal Plan’ designed to extend the pedestrian network and car-free areas.

The EU award helped the city to raise awareness about sustainable mobility among citizens. “It is always nice to know someone recognises our efforts, and it makes the topic even more visible to the public,” adds Olga Sehnalová.



## Crossing continents by bike

The local library screened a slideshow by adventurer Jan Tomšíček about his trip across Africa on a bicycle.



## Las Palmas Gran Canaria Spain — Runner-up 2003

Las Palmas in Gran Canaria caught the judges' eye because of its high-quality communication strategy: a comprehensive programme of activities focused on different modes of sustainable transport.

Each day of Mobility Week offered a different activity, ranging from 'A walk around the city', with guided tours and workshop visits, to 'Bus Day' with additional services and an extra 'yellow bus' for people with reduced mobility.

The EMW theme was accessibility. Other permanent measures designed to make life easier for disabled people included traffic lights adapted for blind pedestrians, pavement ramps for wheelchairs, and new low-floored buses.

### No rail, just road

Since Gran Canaria has no train system, road is the only means of transport, points out coordinator Octavio Galvan. "While we share the same traffic problems as other European cities, we wish to maintain the quality of life that has always distinguished us as a city with a privileged climate

and open to the sea. Dwellers do not want to give up the advantages of life with a car, but they also rebel against the noise, contamination and pressure of traffic that generates aggression and tension. In view of this reality, we knew that initiatives like EMW would have a warm acceptance."

Las Palmas adopted a whole number of communication options including posters, banners, leaflets and postcards, as well as a TV spot. Through 10 specific messages, citizens committed themselves to car-pooling, respecting bus lanes, not parking on pavements and obeying traffic laws.

Local buses acquired a new livery bearing the Mobility Week logo and slogans appeared on flyovers spanning the city's main transit road. Press releases, special briefings for journalists and public announcements completed the strategy.

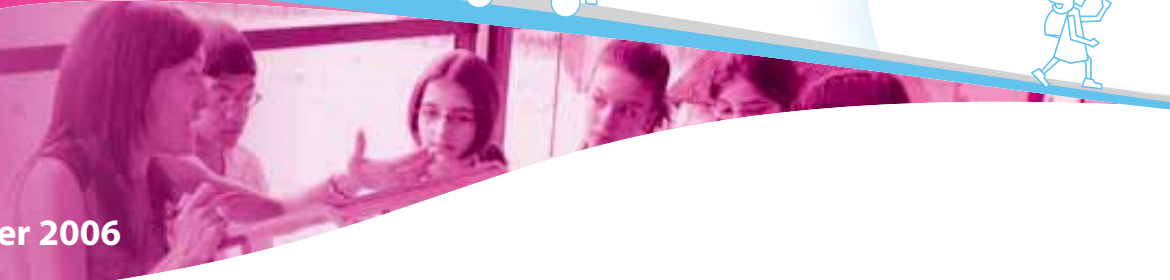
### A taste of freedom

From 2002 to 2003, the door-to-door yellow bus service for people with reduced mobility carried more than 25 000 passengers.



# León

## Spain — Winner 2006



The city of León was a European Mobility Week competition finalist in both 2006 and 2009, winning top prize in 2006 for its initiatives on climate change and renewable energy.

In September 2006, a group of 25 11-year-olds and their teacher, from one of León's primary schools, visited the Centre of Renewable Energies and discovered the positive impact of renewables in combating climate change. They found out about some of the most relevant new technologies, such as modern wind turbines, mini hydropower, solar panels and biomass.

### Harnessing youthful energy

"All the explanations were completely appropriate to their age and study level," explains Cristina Villalón Robles, an environmental technician from León city council. "The children were really enthusiastic during the talk, they took some

notes and, at the end, they asked several questions and a nice discussion took place." All the youngsters received a brochure entitled 'You can control climate change'. "Everything to do with children always works perfectly well," adds Ms Villalón. "They are the top actors and the best reference for our future."

In 2009, the city also introduced a training session in energy-efficient driving for city council staff and police, to cut fuel consumption and improve air quality. León was anxious to ensure a lasting impact for Mobility Week, so in 2009 it took steps to reduce speed limits to 30km/hour in the San Claudio, old city and university neighbourhoods. Business partners teamed up with the local authority to install new bicycle racks and expand bike-hire facilities. All in all, with measures to reduce road traffic and spruce up public spaces, León made significant progress in promoting a better quality of urban life.

### Getting a free ride

**León held a bicycle raffle during EMW 2009: the city's councillor for security and mobility gave away 50 cycles to the winners.**





# Ljubljana

## Slovenia — Winner 2003

Free tickets for public transport during Mobility Week left the city of Ljubljana, Slovenia's capital, with no traffic jams and much better air quality. But when the city's Environmental Protection Institute monitored overall results, it realised that temporary measures would not bring the desired long-term results of reducing pollution or congestion. So the authorities set about changing citizens' behaviour through information campaigns, coupled with the introduction of green transport technologies.

The judges praised the commitment by the city and its partners to permanent improvements in urban mobility. A special circular bus route operating throughout EMW generated an increase of 55% in the number of passengers using public transport. A free bicycle rental service for residents and visitors was made available from three points in the city.

Ljubljana also took steps to improve access for disabled people, creating more dedicated parking spaces and building wheelchair ramps in the local public transport operator's passenger centre. A round-table debate between local decision-makers and the national association representing disabled people produced a number of concrete proposals.

### Online resources

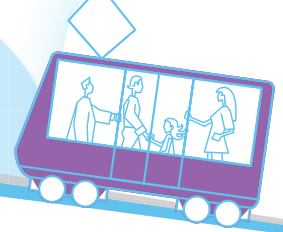
After securing the European Mobility Week award, Ljubljana continued its journey in 2006 with the help of many new technologies, including hybrid electric vehicles. The city introduced two new buses using biodiesel fuel, following a testing phase supported by the EU co-funded Civitas-Mobilis programme, with the aim of reaching an optimal mix of biodiesel and diesel fuel on city buses by 2009.

The city also set up an interactive transit route map on the internet, to help people to get around more easily thanks to updated information and advice on the best public transport facilities available.

### Insurmountable obstacles

Rising bollards were installed to prevent cars from entering the car-free area in the city centre.





# Lund

## Sweden — Runner-up 2002

Lund was a pioneer in sustainable transport, opening its mobility office in 1999. “We worked to inform people about the climate change effect and how traffic contributes to it, through huge information campaigns,” says Anders Söderberg from the department of technical services. “We met a lot of people in the streets and held many events telling them about traffic problems.” During Mobility Week 2002, the local authority distributed 55 000 brochures to households and travellers, erected posters and placed advertisements, winning it the distinction of ‘best communication strategy’.

The city invited residents to sign up to a climate pledge, inaugurated a health walk, and enabled people to try out a selection of green vehicles including scooters and electric bicycles.

### No need for the car

**Within Lund city, approximately 43% of journeys are made by bicycle, 26% on foot and 15% by public transport.**

“Mobility Week has played an important role in making the public very aware,” affirms Mr Söderberg. An opinion poll revealed that 57% of respondents at the time were worried about traffic congestion, 78% were in favour of restrictions on car use, and 99% supported car-free day.

### Dialogue on the doorstep

Having achieved a high level of awareness, Lund has adopted a more targeted approach. “We knock on people’s doors and talk to them about their transport needs,” explains Mr Söderberg. “We enable them to try out different methods of commuting, such as car-pooling, public transport and cycling. We get better results through this direct dialogue.”

The local authority also works with major companies, developing sustainable travel plans for staff, including Sony Ericsson (headquartered in Lund), Gambio, Tetra Pak, the Ideon Science Park and AstraZeneca. All these measures mean car-free day is hardly necessary in the city any more, says Mr Söderberg. “We have closed almost all the streets to through traffic. It’s very difficult to drive at all in Lund.”







# Murcia

## Spain — Runner-up 2010

European Mobility Week's legacy in the Spanish city of Murcia is a range of services and infrastructures that citizens will use "to develop their quality of life through more sustainable mobility and all the benefits surrounding that concept", says the Mayor, Miguel Ángel Cámara Botía.

One of these services is a cycle strategy, designed to transform Murcia into a bike-friendly city. It now has a dedicated 'bicycle office', and a bike rental scheme set up in collaboration with local retailers. The municipality created 33 km of new cycle paths, bike parking facilities, and purchased 50 bikes for the use of council staff.

During EMW, local police officers took 320 schoolchildren on circuits of the city centre for a practical lesson in urban cycling, through group games. The event provided organisers with some of their best memories of the week: "It was lovely to watch the children and their teachers having such fun," recalls Adela Martínez-Cachá, the city's Deputy Mayor.

Other age groups welcomed the free health checks that were offered in a cordoned-off area of the city centre. Doctors tested citizens' blood pressure and glucose levels, and advised how they could improve their diet and physical fitness thanks to more sustainable mobility.

## Support for people in need

EMW organisers were also delighted with the response to the 'Solidarity Bus', which parked in one or two districts a day, and served as a collection point for donated clothes, toys, books and non-perishable food. "Given the current economic crisis, this was a really important initiative and the results were amazing. We collected 15 tonnes of items to help the poor and socially excluded," says Ms Martínez-Cachá. It also helped promote public transport: "the master key in urban sustainable mobility", she adds.

## Bringing everyone on board

The Solidarity Bus collected 15 tonnes of donated clothes, books and non-perishable food for people in need.





# Nantes

France — Winner 2004

Ser Semaine  
eui européenne  
de de la mobilité

“Change is always an effort, but it brings benefits that individuals can see for themselves,” says François de Rugy, the Nantes Vice-President who was responsible for coordinating Mobility Week activities in 2004. Nantes has consistently been one of France’s most active EMW participants. Today, the French city on the estuary of the River Loire has some 590 000 inhabitants, half of them living in the ‘métropole’ area. In 2013, it will take over the title of European Green Capital.

Back in 2004, it had already established its environmental credentials when it won the European Mobility Week award for its efforts to make the streets less hazardous for children. Its bicycle-friendly initiatives included moves to encourage children to cycle safely to school, teaming up with friends and a supervisor. The scheme aimed not only to improve the youngsters’ health and fitness, but also to make them more autonomous, and to regenerate a sense of neighbourhood.

## Commuting on water

City authorities work with a range of partners to involve the whole community in decision-making. Special incentives have encouraged a growing number of businesses to adopt company travel plans for staff.

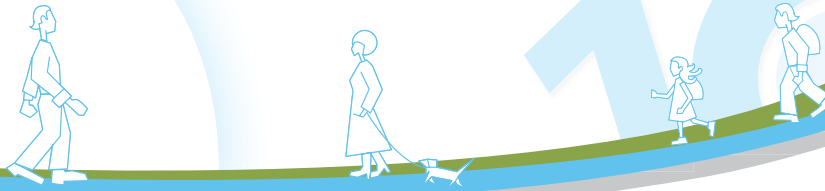
For the long term, Nantes introduced new park-and-ride facilities, pedestrian areas and bus lanes, followed by a river shuttle service designed not only for visitors but also for regular commuters, easing congestion in the city centre and freeing up the roads. It also launched an internet forum where people could air their views on local transport facilities.

“We were very happy with this distinction,” notes Mr de Rugy. “It showed us that we were moving in the right direction. We decided to continue offering new services to the public and to encourage changes in behaviour.”

## Green cities score on sustainable mobility

Mobility is one of the 10 indicators used to select the European Green Capital each year. The scheme was launched in 2010.





## Riga

### Latvia — Runner-up 2010

Everyone was invited to get involved in European Mobility Week 2010 in Riga by letting the city's traffic department know where it ought to lower pavements for easier access by people with reduced mobility, pushchairs and cyclists. The council committed itself to follow up the 'Lower the Curbs!' campaign with an action plan to improve access around the city.

Another successful public campaign centred on a competition to identify the healthiest workplace in the Latvian capital. In keeping with the year's 'travel smarter, live better' theme, the city promoted activities to encourage a healthy lifestyle as well as sustainable transport. Employees sent details to the city council of what they were doing in their workplace to promote 'healthy' transport habits – and received a basket of wholesome food as a prize.

### Police go green

Fun cycling activities were backed up with a serious lesson – on the need to respect traffic rules, use bicycle bells to alert pedestrians, and avoid accidents.

The Latvian Red Cross Youth Organisation was one of dozens of organisations that joined the event.

Members handed out respirators to motorists during the city's rush hours, along with information booklets about the composition of car exhaust fumes and their impact on health, and tips for more eco-friendly driving.

The municipal police also got involved, conducting patrols on electric bikes, scooters and bicycles. On car-free day, they left their motorised transport at the station and patrolled on bike and foot alone.

Among other long-term measures – besides the curb-lowering campaign – the city introduced a new public transport lane, consulted people about a cycle lane-in-the-making, and opened a new charging point for electric vehicles; while bike-sharing company BalticBike cut its hourly hire charge to the same price as a one-way ticket on public transport.

### Working up a healthy appetite

**Businesses and public officials competed in the healthiest workplace contest, to win wholesome food hampers.**





# Zagreb

## Croatia — Runner-up 2008

Disability rights campaigners led Zagreb to get involved in European Mobility Week, following a city-wide strategy to improve disabled access to housing, transport and public buildings in the Croatian capital.

“It was an enthusiastic beginning, and its strength came from the fact that there were so many partners involved,” recalls Marinka Bakula-Andelić, head of the city’s department for social care and disabilities. “All the stakeholders were there, and for some it was the first time they had sat together around a table. It was a great way to get everyone to talk about their concerns.”

### Something for everyone

Inspired by the 2008 ‘Clean Air for All’ theme, the week included a sport and recreation day, a city clean-up and tree-plant, and children’s visits to air-quality measurement stations and to a centre for guide-dog training. The police got tough on motorists using bus lanes, health professionals offered free fitness tests, and the Croatian motoring organisation tested vehicle emissions and tyre pressure.

### Mobility is child’s play

The entire budget for EMW 2008 was € 7 000.

Over 300 new children’s playgrounds were built in two years.

“We gave each organisation the opportunity to do something in its own field, which produced excellent results,” explains Ms Bakula-Andelić.

For the long term, Zagreb introduced low-floor buses and trams, extended the cycle network, made public transport free for children, students, pensioners, unemployed and disabled people (around 70% of users), and introduced higher parking charges in the city centre. It also teamed up with fellow EMW participant Koprivnica to create a national network of sustainable mobility cities.

The event has gone from strength to strength, affirms Ms Bakula-Andelić. “We don’t need to persuade organisations or companies to take part; they tell us what they want to do. It’s like having 30 good players for a football team when you only need 11.”





# Links and contact information

Environment Directorate-General: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/index_en.htm)

European Mobility Week: <http://www.mobilityweek.eu/>

Transport Directorate-General: [http://ec.europa.eu/transport/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/index_en.htm)



European Commission

**10 Years of European Mobility Week 2002-2011**

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