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SCIENTIFIC SUPPORT PLAN FOR A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT POLICY
Sustainable Mobility

Synthesis report
Project MD/01/031

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Institute for Regional Planning, Leuven University, Belgium.
Langzaam Verkeer, mobility management consultants, Belgium.

December 2000.

1. TITLE AND SUMMARY.

Title of research project.

"In pursuit of effective public involvement in traffic and transportation planning."

Summary.

In most countries of the western world, public authorities and planning departments are increasingly aware of the crucial role of the *public* in transport projects for the success of a planning process. They are currently seeking for new tools to cope with the renewed role of citizens affected by transport projects and programs.

Therefore, this research project focuses on *public involvement* in the Belgian context, both on a theoretical and an empirical level.

We wish to demonstrate that the improvement of public involvement in transport programs and projects may contribute to the effectiveness, quality and successful implementation of transport policies[1]. It is intended to support transportation planning processes through the development of *profiles of public involvement*. Profiles are frameworks for specific but flexible sets of concrete approaches, techniques and methods, aimed at helping planners and decision-makers to organise and facilitate stakeholder involvement in a variety of planning or policy situations.

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[1] Research hypothesis.

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2. GOALS.

Stakes.

> *The stake directly related to this project is to find an integrated and inclusive policy or planning approach - and subsequent methods and techniques - which will help to build up legitimacy and public support for planning projects and programs.*

1 - Introduction.

Contemporary research with regard to traffic and transport issues mainly revolves around economic, spatial and technical solutions for problems like congestion, pollution, etc. Economists have convincingly demonstrated that pricing policies can influence travel behaviour. Urban planners stress the necessity of spatial proximity of diverse urban activities in order to reduce travel needs, while technology permanently offers technical safety improvements of vehicles or systems for traffic flow control (DTM, etc...).

This research project aims to bring the less investigated planning device of *public involvement* back on the agenda. It reintroduces this important turn in transport planning - clearly present in the research and policy discourse on an international and European level (*see below*) - in the Belgian context both on a theoretical and an empirical basis. We wish to demonstrate that the improvement of public or stakeholder involvement in transport programs and projects may contribute to the effectiveness, quality and successful implementation of transport policies

We consider public involvement to be a *process* which includes stakeholders who are affected by a program or policy into the decision process, and which validates the rich diversity of their views, opinions and understanding, in order to increase the quality of the planning and decision-making process itself, as well as the quality of actual planning outcomes.

Yet too often, ill conceived methods of planning, stakeholder consultation and co-operation lead to poor public legitimisation - or worse: an *appearance* of legitimacy. As a consequence programs and projects - and their implementation - face fierce opposition by concerned stakeholders and are retarded, leading to undesirable financial, economic and political consequences which might, in the end, undermine an entire project or policy.

Therefore, the actual stake directly related to this project is to find an integrated and inclusive policy or planning approach - and subsequent methods and techniques - which will help to build up legitimacy and public support for planning projects and programs.

2 - Policy relevance.

In addition to the issues mentioned above, the importance of the stake could be broken down into two interrelated components. Both however are connected to the notion of *complexity.*

1. Firstly, the field of mobility and the domain of transport policy are to great extent being influenced and shaped by developments, activities and choices in other fields, domains or sectors of policy, resulting in a complex interplay of causes and effects. Simultaneously, the policy domains of *spatial* and *environmental* planning are characterised by the same interplay too. In these very domains, European, national, regional and local public authorities - in the Western European institutional context being almost without exception the key agency behind planning and policy processes - slowly but steadily become aware that they can no longer fully rely on existing (sectoral) policy frameworks and instruments to tackle interrelated problems inside and outside their appropriate domains of competence.

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2. Secondly - specifically regarding the Belgian context - citizens today no longer rely on the old, yet still familiar socio-political constellations (social-democrats, Christian-democrats, neo-liberals, etc.) which have dominated political, institutional and economic life in Belgium for decades. Decision-makers are being confronted with citizens' increased awareness (e.g. education, access to information through internet, etc) on the one hand and a growing individualisation of citizens' interests with regard to certain key topics in policy and *daily life* issues on the other hand. No longer connected to traditional organisations, people and organisations try to find other ways of communication in order to raise their voice and to set agendas. Indeed, citizens compel attention and they increasingly demand a voice in often rather technical policy debates (e.g. multi-scale infrastructure projects), thereby changing their relation with public authorities and other decision-makers.

To tackle this complexity, today authorities in the domains of spatial and environmental planning are cautiously shifting towards new types of policy - and new types of *governance*. These types have to enable authorities to manage the implications of choices made outside and inside distinct policy domains by jointly setting goals and co-operating with various key institutional stakeholders in different domains, and on various levels. In addition, they know they have to find approaches and methods to involve more actors within the citizens' forums/networks and in business/industry in order to strengthen pubic support for plans and measures.

The first challenge - co-operating with key stakeholders (e.g. various public administrations, several governmental levels, and to a lesser extent business forums/environmental lobbies - already seems to be successfully implemented in some distinct planning projects and programs in Belgium (e.g. programs for *Integrated Territorial Development* integrating issues on housing, environment and economic development, "ROM"). The second challenge - involving citizens - has up till now proven to be much more hazardous.

It is the intention of this project to introduce the potentials of new types of *governance* in the domain of transportation planning, allowing to formulate and to put into practice an inclusive and integrated policy approach for issues on transportation and traffic. Within this approach:

1. we aim to seek answers to the question *how* vertically (trans-scale) and horizontally (trans-sectoral) integrated solutions in decision-making could provide solid alternatives to the constraints of current sectoral policy approaches and instruments in order to add strength and effectiveness to the outcomes of planning projects and programs;

2. we indicate *directions* to concrete answers on the question *how* (and in what circumstances) bottom-up processes - through input from, discussion and forming alliances with business/industry and citizens' networks – could increase the feasibility of complex policy frameworks and could possibly make their implementation more successful.

In our view, the second task consists of two distinct components:

- constructing ways of discussion, communication and co-operation between public authorities and key institutional stakeholders and networks through specific types of (process) organisation to link up platforms of *private actors, forums of organised citizens and key institutional stakeholders* with current governmental structures;
- giving shape to outreach and to discussion and communication with weaker groups in society, that often seem to drop out of decision processes. It requires a particular approach in order to give these categories of stakeholders the opportunity to raise their voice in a proper and effective way. Therefore it is necessary - in certain decision processes - to create a framework, within which citizens and groups that face barriers to (full) participation in their community are offered the opportunity to do so.

Purpose.

> *Finding an adequate theoretical and analytical basis for approaches towards and techniques of public involvement.*

1 - Strategic choices.

Evidently, the stakes depicted in the above paragraphs can be translated into various purposes, goals and (research) strategies. However, we have identified and formulated a number of strategic choices and priorities. These are a reflection of the most important values that are embedded in the basic planning approach or the theoretical framework *(see section II. "Activities and results"*), underpinning the guidelines for the actual empirical work in this research project. Actually, we identify three "categories" of choices.

> *A. Open processes versus technocratic approaches in decision-making.*

In many European democracies there is a struggle in the terrain of governance between two tendencies:

- pluralistic democratic ones, which seek to acknowledge a wide range of stakeholders – not necessarily public - and forms of knowledge - e.g. more open processes wherein non-expert groups/non-institutional stakeholders (citizens' platforms, commuters, various umbrella organisations,) are offered a voice in different phases during the cycle of policy design and implementation.
- techno-corporate ones, that wish to keep control over the management of public space, infrastructure, etc...., using tools of technical analyses and the routinised practice of collaboration between government, major business platforms and powerful, institutionalised groups - e.g. technocratic approaches in infrastructure and land-use projects dominated by governmental departments and private consultants (high speed train, inner city road schemes, parking regulations, etc).

This research wants too offer a qualitative approach that enables authorities to be sensitive to the claims and interests of relevant stakeholders in decision processes. Henceforth, it aims to make a modest contribution to the efforts needed to strengthen the pluralistic and democratic character of decision making[2].

> *B. Acknowledging the potentials of open processes necessitates a clear choice to recognise and to validate the diversity of voices in a policy process. Subsequently, diversity has to be reflected in the substantial outcomes of a process.*

It is not sufficient to be concerned about *(procedural) efficiency* in transportation planning alone. Including stakeholders into decision-making also implies *validating* the rich diversity of their views, opinions and understanding. Efforts to deepen and widen public support for projects should reflect concerns about inclusion, identity/diversity and actual *effectiveness* for participating stakeholders in a process. Therefore we state that:

1. *inclusion* is the reflection of a qualitative process, i.e. the process itself must produce 'added value' for stakeholders;
2. A decision-process has to be *result-oriented*: stakeholders have to experience that their interests and needs are being fully considered. If that is not possible, then government is accountable to stakeholders and should explain why certain claims are not being recognised;
3. Necessary attention must given to the quality of substantial outcomes (results) of a

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[2] This important issue is related to current research in social sciences. E.g. the debate around the crisis of representative democracy, and the subsequent efforts to redefine certain components of our democracies to make them more sensitive to issues of identity and diversity (hybrid democracy, etc...). This notion has been elaborated in the *actual* final report of this research project.

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process.

    C. Approaches to stakeholder involvement should be flexible and cannot exclusively build upon distinct tools and techniques.

We state that legitimacy for projects and policy measures can only be built upon process outcomes resulting from a set of agreements that reflect a large number of involved stakeholders' views and opinions. In this context, not stakeholders' status or position but the force of good argument should prevail when weighing interests and claims. This notion constitutes an important shift away from traditional methods of rather passive 'consultation' in planning practice: it is absolutely insufficient to search for support from 'society' or powerful individuals, nor is it helpful to serve a 'public interest'. There is no such thing as a 'public interest'; merely a multitude of differing and therefore sometimes *conflicting* interests.

As mentioned before, we feel that planners and policy-makers should take into account the diversity of interests and values of different stakeholders. Consequently, they should pay close attention to the constraints in communication and possible conflicts and imbalances in power between individuals, groups and institutions. Therefore, frameworks for stakeholder involvement will have to incorporate a technical approach (e.g., tools and instruments for deliberation, setting agreements, etc), complemented by methods that enable us to deal with issues of communication and power in a creative and uninhibited way.

    Conclusion with regard to strategic research choices.

An inclusive approach to decision making can never be presented and put into practice as a *book of recipes*, nor as an *optimal formula*. It has to be able to grasp complexity and diversity. Therefore we have intended to frame, build and design this approach using four analytical *tracks* or *trails*. Different strategies, methods and techniques along these trails will enable us to shape and organise stakeholder involvement in a diversity of planning and policy situations and contexts.

2 - Four *trails* to organise public involvement.

We estimate that any successful and feasible effort towards effective stakeholder involvement in a decision process should follow four trails or tracks. Every trail offers a set of *building stones*. Using these building stones should enable planners and decision makers to shape conditions for identification of stakeholders, agenda-setting, deliberation, co-operation, finding agreements and consensus, etc.

The **first trail** is related to all actions with regard to the preparation of a decision process (gathering of necessary information, stakeholder identification, initial agenda-setting,...), definition or problems, extensive agenda-setting, joint formulation of a framing vision based upon problem definition and agenda, deliberation about possible solutions on identified issues, organisation of the process itself, and the design of a framework for the implementation of concrete measures based on solutions which relevant stakeholders agreed upon.

In complex decision processes most of the implementation frameworks will consist of long-term measures. However, it will often be necessary to find solutions to very urgent issues within the problem definition. This will offer additional incentives to stakeholders to continue their commitment during the overall course of a process. This effort can be defined as the **second trail**.

The **third trail** focuses on internal and external communication within decision processes. External meaning: communication with target groups and amongst all settings/arenas that are essential to the creation of public support for solutions and concrete measures. Internal meaning: facilitating the co-ordination and communication between the various components

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of the project or process organisation, and guiding the actual decision-making, e.g. through a process manager.

A crucial exercise - but in planning practice still neglected too often - is the communication and active exchange of information and arguments between public authorities and "the public". This is the **fourth trail**. The "public" comprises a multitude of categories of relevant stakeholders currently not claiming - or rather not being able to claim - any visible or direct stakes in planning or decision processes. However, within this rather large common denominator, there is a distinction between:

- *organised* entities or powerful individuals (e.g. a citizen or a committee holding potential knowledge or organisational capacity to raise a voice through representative channels, such as members of local councils, pressure groups, etc)
- *non-organised* categories of individuals and socially weaker groups, facing *structural* barriers to participation (e.g. migrant groups, low-income groups,...with no organisational capacity due to lack of education, lower self-esteem, etc).

In this research project, particular attention is given to non-organised and weaker groups.

3 - From *trails* to *frameworks*: putting research intentions into practice.

The value of the four trails to the project is an *analytical* one. But the actual purpose is to identify the very crucial building stones within those trails to facilitate stakeholder involvement with. Therefore, the building stones need to be made *operational*. The latter is being done by moulding them into two different but complementary frameworks: a *generic* and a *specific* framework. Simultaneously, the frameworks are the devices with which the research hypothesis is being 'unpacked', i.e. by testing the hypothesis during the empirical phases of the project (*see section II. "Activities and results"*).

The generic framework is built up from the angle of *contexts*. It contains the necessary building stones to organise stakeholder involvement with within a general frame, i.e. not related to any specific policy context, group or institution. The *specific* framework is built up from the angle of *weaker groups* in society. It contains the *complementary* building stones needed to facilitate relevant stakeholders that often drop out of decision processes.

As a reference to the analytical level of the four trails: the generic framework builds upon *all four trails*, the specific framework only builds upon the *fourth* trail.

4 - Identification of the *building stones*.

The following building stones are being elaborated within the *generic* framework.

- Removal of barriers to participation.
- Facilitating dialogue: awareness about issues of equality and power.
- Setting conditions within which stakeholders have actual impact on agendas and outcomes.
- Possible actions to re-define and reorganise some components of the task of public authorities in planning or policy processes.

The following building stones are being elaborated within the *specific* framework.

- "Outreach".
- Preparatory efforts and long-term learning processes.
- Target group approaches.

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Objective.

> *Having constructed an adequate analytical and operational framework, the objective is now to design profiles. Profiles are frameworks for specific but flexible sets of concrete approaches, techniques and methods, aimed at helping planners and decision-makers to organise and facilitate stakeholder involvement in a variety of planning or policy situations.*

1 - Design of profiles of public involvement based on the elaboration of building stones within generic and specific frameworks.

The prime objective now is to design *profiles* based on the aggregation of the building stones elaborated in the generic and specific frameworks. Using the *profiles* should allow planners and decision-makers to shape the adequate conditions for stakeholder input in a more professional and effective way. Profiles of course must offer solutions applicable in a variety of planning or policy situations. Therefore they are not formulas containing arbitrary guidelines but specific and flexible sets of concrete approaches, techniques and methods. The way they are put into practice will always depend upon the interpretation and appreciation of contextual factors - politically, administratively, field of stakeholders, etc - shaping the planning or policy environment in which a project or program is being initiated.

There is a clear distinction between *profiles* resp. based upon the generic and the specific frameworks.

The first will consist of a *common* trunk (*truncus communis*) of concrete approaches, techniques and methods, applicable in a general planning context. The latter will offer complementary but necessary approaches that focus on the inclusion of citizens and groups that face structural barriers to (full) participation.

Now that the prime objective is stated, we briefly have to refer to *some examples* of mentioned building stones, which constitute the main input for the profiles of public involvement. During the course of the project, these stones have been uploaded with the empirical research findings (*see section II. "Interim results"*).

2 - Elaboration of building stones, to be tested in empirical research (cases, Delphi survey).

I. Generic framework.

I.1. Removal of barriers to participation.

This building stone is focused on approaches and strategies to remove barriers that stakeholders face to (full) participation in their community or in decision process *settings*. Of course, particular attention goes out to weaker groups (e.g. non-organised citizens) that are being confronted with difficulties to participation due to *structural* barriers (lack of know-how, means, etc). This notion however is further being elaborated in the specific framework (see below).

The general framework comprises all categories of stakeholders (individual citizens, groups, organisations, institutional stakeholders, etc) that face barriers to enter decision processes due to the character of the actual *organisation* of planning processes. Often these barriers are related to lack of access to the *settings* in a planning or decision process. Settings are places for, and moments of discussion, deliberation and (formal) decision-making (e.g. advisory boards, councils, committees, etc).

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I.2. Facilitating dialogue: awareness about issues of equality and power.

Evidently, we plead for an intensive and continuous dialogue with and amongst a diversity of involved stakeholders in decision processes. Such a dialogue creates opportunities but equally entails certain risks. On the one hand, an intensive dialogue can produce new ways of (mutual) understanding in decision processes, leading to creative and diverse solutions with which more participants can identify. On the other hand, dialogue brings along risks. People's awareness and commitment of people in issues related to the physical environment, spatial planning, and transportation, is apparently high, therefore their ability to explicitate their views and interests is definitely growing. In that context, dialogue could act as a catalyst for bringing out differences of opinion between participants. Subsequently, conflicts emerge, as it becomes clear that participants' views with regard to certain policy questions cannot be reconciled.

But in many cases, these circumstances will generate a development in which interests and opinions are being subtly 'removed' from the core of decision-making. This results in process outcomes that merely reflect the views of dominant players, or that represent the interests of stakeholders that already have full and easy access to certain consultative structures.

Henceforth, it is absolutely necessary that planners, mediators and process managers are able to deal with unequal power balances that occur in the settings they operate in. For instance, what would they do when certain participants use their power position - which they possibly derive from settings that lie beyond the boundaries of the process - in order to try to suppress arguments from other participants? And how exactly would they do that? Often this effort will not be a matter of how to implement 'techniques' or 'methods' correctly. Mediating successfully will rather depend upon the ability of the planner to read and understand the *politics of place*, and to formulate solutions on the basis of objectified information derived from the arguments and claims of various stakeholders.

I.3. Setting conditions within which stakeholders have actual impact on agendas and outcomes.

It is not sufficient for stakeholders to have merely access to settings and structures. We suggest that they ought to feel that their interests and needs are being fully considered, that their views matter in policy-making. Therefore we would need *guarantees* that their input could actually have an impact on process outcomes. This suggestion can be made operational in two ways:

- an effective link is needed between preparatory/informal settings and formal settings in a process, i.e. enabling and enhancing the transfer of meaning and viewpoints from one setting to another;
- this link has to be shaped or designed in such a way that during the transfer of (temporary) conclusions or recommendations we can avoid issues to be slowly or subtly 'removed' from the project agenda.

Another path would be to shape guarantees not only around the notion of links and relations between settings, but also in terms of the *voice* settings have in relation to the distribution of power in the entire consultative structure of a process. One option here would be to offer "real power" to certain settings, which today cannot take formal decisions within the entire consultative structure of a process. Thus creating interdependent relations amongst the stakeholders in different settings. Obviously, this implies a necessary transfer of competence and power away from formal policy settings (e.g. officially mandated councils) towards other settings (e.g. advisory boards).

This building stone therefore will try to translate these suggestions and options into a number of feasible approaches and methods.

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I.4. Possible actions to re-define and reorganise some components within the role of public authorities in planning or policy processes.

One of the crucial angles used to explicitate the stakes with regard to this project was linked to the fact that public authorities are key agents in planning processes. In order to adapt to the context of increasingly complex and diverse policy processes, they were to vertically and horizontally integrate their structures – an important task in order to anticipate on problems of co-ordination and to manage flows of information in designing and implementing policy programs.

An essential building stone within the generic framework will therefore have to formulate suggestions towards possible actions by public authorities on the shorter and longer run. E.g.:

- making adjustments to policy instruments and sometimes rethink the current distribution of competences;
- reallocate means to implement policy frameworks and actions that are usually spread over a number of diverse sectors and departments, by forming alliances and networks with those actors in order to articulate strategies in an open dialogue;

    E.g.:

    In some planning processes authorities try to work with and in informal settings for deliberation and preparatory decision-making. For example: new settings where institutional and non-institutional players are brought together from existing settings in order to make arrangements for the elaboration of broad and complex policy programs.
    They are often designed for the purpose of a specific process, because complex decision-making beyond the boundaries of departments, agencies and competences requires another environment. Participants get to learn about each other's views and are able to look at potential conflict situations from a different angle, sometimes creating new openings to solutions.
    However, working with informal settings will never guarantee good results, nor is it a method that is effective in *any* possible situation.

- move away from generic types of policy to more project-driven approaches (e.g. integrated but territorially differentiated projects for economic revitalisation in regional policies or inner city redevelopment).

II. Specific framework.

II.1. "Outreach".

As mentioned before, we suggest that a particular approach is needed when dialogue and co-operation has to be established with socially weaker groups, groups that are likely to drop out of decision processes or have no part in the dynamics of discussion and deliberation at all. Therefore, the first step of this approach often consists of efforts to introduce weaker groups into these dynamics. The common denominator for such efforts is "*outreach*". It is literally about public agencies or social organisations *reaching out* to people through means of interpersonal communication, trying to convince them of the necessity to raise their voice and explicitate their claims and needs in certain policy matters, which they have a clear and concrete stake in.

Henceforth, this building stone will focus on strategies and direct methods in *outreach*.

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II.2. Preparatory efforts and long-term learning processes.

Outreach is but the first step. It is necessary to proceed to an approach that can help weaker groups actually to establish active commitment in and to offer substantial input to decision processes. In other words, these groups have to appropriate a certain *culture of participation.*

However, offering them a direct voice in policy settings could hardly be effective. Lack of experience or knowledge would not make them very successful. A solution would be to work with (*preparatory) planning settings*.

In this building stone we seek solutions for a number of concrete issues:

- how would such an environment preferably be designed?
- is there any advantage in linking-up preparatory into networks (for example: networks of local community organisations in cities)?
- and, what actor or agent should take up a steering role in these networks?

But there is more. The function or scope of a preparatory setting must be clearly defined. For instance, in terms of *time*. One possibility would be to interpretate preparatory settings as being places for continuous *learning processes*, i.e. ranging from 'learn to argue or reason' to - much later during a planning process - 'learn to present and defend outcomes of preparatory discussions in front of formal policy settings'.
Another possibility, constituting an even broader interpretation, is that preparatory settings would become instruments or means in *parallel* processes, which are connected to formal policy processes. The 'rhythm' of these parallel processes would be much slower, enabling authorities and social agencies to use particular methods of outreach, communication, etc. Thus engaging not only in a project-driven discussion with 'disempowered' citizens, but into a long-term dialogue.

II.3. Target group approaches.

Nonetheless, every single project or planning process will demand for specifically tailored efforts as well. For instance, on the short run it could be feasible to develop certain target group approaches to pursue input from weaker groups. These approaches come in various forms.

One opportunity would be to provide minorities with certain rights - related to specific planning projects - even if they do not have sufficient voting power within settings, districts, areas, or other geographical or political descriptions within which the planning process takes place, so that they still can contribute relevant claims to the (core) decision-making. Another path consists of trying to develop mechanisms or measures of affirmative action in favour of disempowered groups.

Developments within the research plan.

The initial set of scientific objectives has not quite changed since the drafting of the proposal for this research project. On the contrary, the issues at stake - pursuing input from citizens, involving key stakeholders in complex policy matters, public authorities being responsive to stakeholders and moving towards trans-sectoral and trans-scale approaches in policy - have since even become more topical. E.g. efforts done by the Belgian government to integrate relevant structures and redefine its daily organisation with regard to control mechanisms on meat processing in the agro-industrial sector, organisation of plebiscites in Ghent and Sint-Niklaas, etc.

However, analysis of certain decision processes within the domain of *environmental* planning and *spatial* planning conducted by other members of the ISRO-team during the past three years - *"ROM", Integrated Territorial Development*, etc - has offered new insights into

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methodologies put into practice to enhance stakeholder involvement.

These insights have lead us to the conclusion that the identification and the design of a large number of distinct and unique profiles of public involvement for different planning situations would not be feasible. No planning context is exactly similar to another. Consequently, profiles designed in function of a multitude of contexts would hardly constitute exploitable instruments to planners and decision-makers.

Therefore we have chosen to redefine the function of a profile in slightly way. We suggest that profiles are specific but flexible sets of concrete approaches, techniques and methods (offered through the elaboration of building stones as mentioned in the above paragraphs). The modalities of the use of techniques and methods are being decided upon by the planners and decision-makers, which are most familiar with the unique political, economic and social context they work in.

Subsequently, the profiles to be designed will be less numerous, because they are built upon two frameworks. In the generic framework we seek ways to involve all categories of relevant stakeholders, regardless of the planning context they are situated in. The specific framework focuses on the involvement of weaker groups that face structural barriers to participation (*see above, "Purpose" and "Objectives"*).

3. ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS.

3.1. Activities.

Activities.

Analytical framework.

The development of *profiles of public involvement* (*see section I. Goals, "objectives")* is being conducted through a filtering process from formation of theory to a field-test in a current, ongoing transport project. An expert panel offers feedback at the end of each step in the research. The main research steps are:

- Development of an analytical framework
- Formulation of a theoretical framework or initial inclusive planning approach or (see above, "I. Goals")
- Empirical research and case studies
- Delphi Survey
- Testing of research findings of previous research steps in an ongoing transport project
- Consecutive evaluation of results by an expert panel consisting of consultants, academics, civil servants and representatives of various organisations and pressure groups.

The entire research plan consists of five phases (see below). Throughout these phases, both the theoretical framework as well as the set of *profiles* of public involvement will continuously be elaborated and tuned.

Theoretical framework (planning approach).

For additional data on this approach, we refer to section I. "Goals" in this report.

In order to substantiate the research goals, we need a sound theoretical basis - a planning approach. The planning approach enumerates the (general) conditions that have to be met in a certain planning context in order to be able:

- to include stakeholders that are affected by a program or project into the decision

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process;
- to validate the rich diversity of stakeholders' views, opinions and understanding;
- (and consequently) to enhance the quality of the planning and decision-making process itself and the quality of planning outcomes (project and program results).

The *way* this is done depends on several variable elements. E.g. what type of transportation program or project are policy-makers/planners confronted with, which stakeholders are involved, what are their interests? What is the level of scale or policy relevant to the program or project, etc...?

That is why operational and flexible instruments or *profiles* are needed. Deducting every operational characteristic of profiles directly from planning theory is not possible. Instead – on an analytical level – four trails for public involvement have been identified (see section I. "Goals"). These contain the building stones for approaches, methods and techniques, with which planners should be able to organise and facilitate stakeholder input during the course of a process. The building stones offer the substantial input for the elaboration and design of the profiles. Subsequently, in an early stage of the research, they gave us a first indicative view on what a profile should be like.

The empirical work in this project (mainly the case studies and the Delphi survey) has proved to be very helpful to upload the building stones, and to check them with reality. Therefore, the case studies and the Delphi enabled us to redefine and fine-tune the profiles.

Case studies

Case results partially indicated whether the course of the analysed processes and outcomes complied with the conditions and modalities as defined in the planning approach and the first design of profiles. Answers helped indicating in what sense the profiles as well as the planning approach needed to be adjusted and redefined, in order to increase their feasibility and effectiveness.

Delphi survey

Key witnesses in all sectors (public, private, economic, environmental and political) have been consulted to define and refine the profiles. Their opinions and ideas have been collected by means of a Delphi survey. A Delphi survey is aimed at forming a consensus about a qualitative issue among experts by carrying out several consecutive surveys, which lead to common viewpoints and opinions. Several consecutive rounds are needed so that participants can review and tune their opinions when confronted with other opinions from the previous survey round. The Delphi survey has been carried out on an international scale in order to include public involvement examples from abroad into the research project.

Testing research results in a current transportation project.

The research findings from the theoretical analysis, the case studies and the Delphi survey have been tested in an ongoing transport project. In this way, the initial design and conception of profiles could be reworked into feasible and usable sets of instruments to secure the inclusion of all relevant stakeholders into transport planning process and programs.

Testing research results in an expert panel.

A panel of Belgian users and providers of transport facilities have reflected upon the main findings of each research step and have offered valuable feedback.

Methods.

Desk-based research.

The initial steps in the project mainly involved desk-based research:

- the development of an analytical framework;
- the development of a planning approach (theoretical framework);
- browsing through available empirical data on planning processes and projects in Belgium and abroad.

Interviews with (field) experts and academics in related disciplines.

These interviews have been a complementary source of information with regard to the empirical research. It enabled us to fine-tune some results, which were partially used as input for the questionnaires in the test case (see below).

Cases.

Selection of cases and fieldwork. Interesting examples of projects or programs containing a high learning potential with regard to participatory aspects of planning or decision processes were selected. Comparability and diversity were two other main criteria for selection. Examples did not necessarily have to be in the realms of transportation planning.

The case studies were divided amongst the two project partners according to their respective strengths. ISRO observed planning practice with special attention to inclusion of underprivileged groups in Toronto, Hamburg and Antwerp. LV observed participatory processes focussed upon mobility issues in Wassenaar (NL) and Lille (F). Field -work on the spot was conducted during 1999 and 2000.

> The **'N44 Wassenaar'** case[3] is a fully elaborated application of *InfraLab*, a method developed by the Dutch Transport Ministry in the early nineties in order to induce public involvement and public support for large infrastructure projects. Out of the literature, InfraLab appeared as a much appreciated and effective approach which now becomes more and more a standard procedure. Therefore, it was a case not to be missed in this research.

> The **'PDU Lille'** case[4] was chosen for two reasons. First, it concerned a large scale planning process in a meso-context, i.e. an urban agglomeration. The challenge here lies in the fact that *direct* participation by the public was not on and that intermediate ways had to be sought. Second, it concerned a voluntary initiative by the local authorities (generating public involvement was by no means an obligation). Inducing any form of bottom-up approach in a very top-down oriented *culture de gestion* (as is the case in France), appeared to be a challenge that might hold useful lessons for experiments of participative democracy in Belgium.

> The **Toronto** case was particularly interesting with regard to participatory processes in a very large metropolitan area, comprising 2.5 million inhabitants. It shows how to learn from the constraints public authorities and social organisations face when working with a very diverse population in several fields of municipal and regional policy.

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[3] N44 is the name of the primary road cutting through the town of Wassenaar, leading to problems in terms of safety and livability.

[4] PDU or Plan de Déplacements Urbains: the French government imposed to all big cities to develop a strategic plan (horizon 2015) in order to diminish the negative effects (environment and livability) of car usage.

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The regional *'Soziale Stadtteilentwicklung'*–program and the local '*MITwirkung*'-project in **Hamburg** constituted very useful examples of the importance of *self-organisational capacity* of communities and public-private co-operation within the frame of small and large-scale urban redevelopment efforts.

Antwerp was chosen for its interesting *social network-building* efforts within the frame of the European URBAN-initiative.

Case study methodology.

The case study methodology was based upon a combination of two elements: (1) an elaborated comprehensive checklist holding the lot of questions that have been arising during the theoretical stage of the project; (2) a sequence of interviews with a sufficient number of stakeholders in an interactive planning process. The checklist served as a constant guideline, making the cases useful in relation to the theory and comparable with one another. This worked out well and allowed the researchers to derive the maximum from their cases.

In general terms, case study analysis comprised two main parts.

Part 1. "Determinants". Firstly, a number of deciding factors shaping the context in which a transportation project or program is being initiated and moulding the content of the project or program proposal, was examined. To put it briefly, the purpose of in this part was to get a thorough view on the *politics of place.*

- Analysis of the political and institutional context of the community (any defined area e.g. city, region,..) in which a project will be carried out:
- Analysis of possible stakeholders concerning the project or program:
- Analysis of the project or program in terms of:
- Analysis of the actual proposal for a project of program - important questions are:

Part 2. Analysis of the decision process and outcomes. Secondly, the development/progress of the planning and decision process itself (i.e. from agenda-setting and first proposals to final outcomes) was examined. In this analysis 'settings' for communication were used as an analytical concept. It allowed gaining understanding into:

- the way individuals and groups are included in or excluded from decision-making,
- the role different stakeholders play in a process,
- the formal or informal networks and alliances they form,

and to get a better perception of the way in which stakeholders alter or adapt their viewpoints during the process and to what extent these changes have effects upon (certain aspects of) the content of the policy proposal.

Working like this enabled us to find out *how* and *why* certain decisions are taken in the course of a process. This information could tell us more about the conditions that have to be met in a planning/policy process in order that planners and policy makers could - in the best of their abilities - eliminate possible unfavourable turnings in processes (exclusion of stakeholders, hidden agendas, inefficient communication,… And it was a next step towards a clearer view on a possible design/construction of a profile.

Delphi survey

The Delphi-method intends to collect opinions, ideas and viewpoints of experts on the object of this research. The problem issues within strategies of consultation and collaboration in planning are actually related to several domains of know-how and practice - (transportation) planning, communication, politics, etc.... As a consequence, this variety was reflected within the field of experts participating in the survey. A Delphi-survey takes place in several rounds. There were two rounds in this survey. In that way, the participating experts could be confronted with the main research findings of the previous survey round. This enabled them

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to reflect upon others' viewpoints and possibly adjust their own viewpoint. And that leads to common viewpoints about qualitative issues.

In the first round, participants could express their opinion about a number of problem issues. Bases on their responses, some crucial themes (*i.e. also reflected in the "building stones" within the generic and specific frameworks used to test the research hypothesis, see section I. Goals, "purpose" of this report*) were singled out and further developed in a second round, in which participants were invited to react to the standpoints of their colleagues.

The survey was carried out at an international scale (Europe, North America and one country in Africa). Approximately 85 people were invited to participate. These included:

- academics in the fields of sociology, planning, political sciences, communication
- researchers at a non-academic level, consultants
- politicians from different policy levels
- planning officers from different policy levels
- representatives of pressure groups
- representatives of local, non-institutional groups and organisations (community groups)
- journalists.

Test case in an ongoing transport project in Belgium.

In order to respect the logic of the project's build-up, the research team decided that the test case was to consist of a series of thorough interviews with professionals. These professionals functioned as an interface between mobility planning and information/consultation activities towards the public, within the framework of four Belgian *Mobility Plans*. They were confronted with a number of questions on remaining issues concerning the 'feasibility' of certain methods and approaches in organising public involvement.

The test-case methodology was shaped through the usage of a checklist, which has been based upon the analytical four trails of public involvement (see section I. Goals, "purpose") and already available findings from the case studies and the Delphi survey.

User panel meetings (expert panel).

Four user panel meetings have been organised. The last one will be held in December 2000. Meetings were scheduled at the beginning of the respective research steps. Each meeting has been preceded by a mailing to participants, containing a round up of interim results and a number of questions, the latter contributing to the interactivity of meetings. Panel members received the minutes of the meeting.

Tools and sources of information.

Examples of sources of information:

- theoretical literature (planning, management, sociology,…);
- working papers from planning congresses;
- internet sources;
- empirical data on current and finalised planning processes (Belgium and abroad)
- interviews
- etc.….

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3.2. Results.

3.2.1. Interim results

The generic and specific frames mentioned in section I. (Goals, "purpose") contain a number of *building stones* facilitating and setting conditions for the organisation of public involvement in transport planning processes. Throughout the research plan, the frames have been uploaded with theoretical insights, conclusions form case studies, and findings consolidated within the Delphi survey and the test case. Each of these steps has offered separate valuable results. These interim results contribute to the fine-tuning of the inclusive planning approach and the mentioned frameworks, and of course to the design of the *profiles* of public involvement (see "Final results").

Case studies.

The **InfraLab case (Wassenaar)** made the point of involving the public around a recognisable problem and carefully structuring the timing and communication in a participation process. Indeed it proved that professional management is required and a key determinant to successful outcomes. It also proved that raising the expectations of the public entails definite risks (e.g. the public turning away from politics) when the planners and decision makers cannot live up to them.

The **Lille case** showed the difficulty of involvement in a large scale & *far horizon* plan. In addition, it pointed out the necessity of structuring participation as a building process and of making efforts that go beyond the mere *PR rethorics* of a city council. Non-organised (and weaker) groups were not reached by simply opening the debate and giving a voice to all. Nevertheless, these 'failures' offered important lessons for the research project.

The **Toronto** case offered learning potential with regard to:

- diversification of strategies for stakeholder involvement in terms of level of scale;
- linking results of participatory efforts to core-decision-making;
- aspects of time in participatory processes;
- various exploitable examples of approaches in *community building, outreach,*…
- etc

The **Hamburg** case offered learning potential with regard to:

- *self-organisational capacity* of communities as one of the first steps towards effective stakeholder input;
- importance of continuous learning processes and joint strategies at a grassroots level;
- public-private partnerships,...;
- etc

The **Antwerp** case showed that preparatory efforts are indispensable when facilitating involvement of non-organised or weaker groups. In this case, efforts consisted of particular methods of transfer of information from authorities to local communities (neighbourhoods,...), social agencies and ngo's joining forces and know-how to reach out to minority groups, etc.

Delphi survey.

The Delphi survey has resulted in a vast amount of information. Most participants have been very elaborate in answering the questions. Their argumentation was rich, and contained a diversity, which we only had hoped for when first conceptualising the questionnaire in 1999.

The survey's size and scope has allowed to gather essential and valuable elements with regard to all building stones - and even far beyond that - with which the profiles of public

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involvement will be designed.

Test case

The test case underlined the importance of acknowledging the fact that stakeholders - including categories of stakeholders within the common denominator of "the public" - *are* quite able and often *do* have the experiential knowledge to enter discussions in policy processes. Authorities will have to set the right conditions within which discussion takes place however: making clear what the margins for certain decision are, defining commonly and well-understood problem issues rather than only 'imposing' abstract goals or long-term visions upon stakeholders, establishing a fair working procedure and professionalising the meetings.

Sometimes, public authorities should preserve the right to push through their vision when it comes to themes of general interest, such as "sustainable development" and "equity". To put the principle of *bottom-up* processes into practice, there seems to be a tendency in (local) expert opinion to prefer organising involvement within the delineation of *neighbourhoods*, rather than focusing on target groups. Finally, public involvement is a learning process for all, requiring years and in some cases even decades of practice.

Note - comparibility with other research efforts in Belgium and abroad (short references):

- methods of *integrated territorial develop*ment (University of Leuven and Nijmegen, Prof. J. Vandenbroeck)
- decision making in transport plans in the UK (University of Newcastle, Prof. Dr. P. Healey and Geoff Vigar)
- decision making and consensus-building in Italian planning projects (Polytechnico di Milano, Prof. Dr. A. Balducci)
- *consensus-building handbook* (Berkeley, Prof. Dr. J. Innes e.a.)
- *etc.*

3.2.2. Final results

Profiles

Profiles are frameworks for specific but flexible sets of practical, and operational approaches aimed at helping planners and decision makers to organise and facilitate stakeholder involvement in a variety of planning or policy contexts.

A distinction is made between short and long term profiles and between different policy and scale levels. As additional level to help weak groups on their way to regular channels and means a target group approach is adopted. The line of approach is linked to the four trails. Mainly the fourth trail is important to organize public involvement .

Long term.

The added value realised during the basic process is reflected in actual planning processes and projects. The short learning processes (preparatory forums) in specific projects provide an input for the basic process. The dynamism of the basic process constitutes an undercurrent for the profile 'long term'. This profile encompasses as well the efforts for the long term as the necessary linkages towards specific projects. In these specific projects the results from the basic process are valorised by and for stakeholders.
The basic process consists of a continual dynamic of trust building between stakeholders, learning processes, the building of knowledge and fighting spirit. A distinction may be made between governmental initiatives and 'grassroots' initiatives. Successful cases are provided as inspiration. Within the grassroots initiatives learning processes are crucial. Learning

processes consists out of training and action. Training support actors in building contextual understanding and the way certain dependences and barriers can be overcome. Actions are oriented towards influencing decision making processes in order to defend interests. The content and functioning of the basic process reflect the experiences of best practices studied in the case strudies (e.g. Wilhemsburg-Hamburg). These cases clearly illustrate how weaker stakeholders need to be supported in the making of independent choices. Out of this analysis conclusions are drawn for the basic process of the long term profile.

- Transparency builds trust. For the selfconfidence of the stakeholder it is needed to involve them with the initial formulation of problems and goals;
- Understanding the diversity of the stakeholder community adds to the ability to handle differences in visions and opinions;
- It is important to book real results through small actions. Afterwards the more difficult themes could be tackled;
- The government must recognise the merits of the stakeholder community. This means responding with clear commitments;
- Long term strategies are never single issue 'strategies';
- Start working from the very concrete problem;
- Provide links between long and short term strategies and between informal ways of cooperation and formal institution;
- Institutionalisation, moving towards existing channels in the long term, possible valorisation of existing dynamics.

For Belgium two possible tracks are proposed: using existing programs and policy instruments and working with pilot projects. Weaker stakeholders can be prepared with two possible strategies:

- Long term through preparatory forums taking the shape of a basic process;
- Short terms through preparatory forums taking the shape of a specific methodology of training helping the weaker groups to prepare themselves in a specific way.

Short term

The methodology of the short term consists of three overlapping phases:

- Outreach, consultation, consciousness-raising and trust building.
  This phase is directed towards the identification of the 'right' stakeholders. Diversity should be oriented towards the way relevant stakeholders perceive problems. For stakeholders different to reach gate-keepers and intermediaries are involved. The first discussion is focussed on knowing each other and on building mutual trust.
- Organisation and training.
  This phase is divided in two parts: the organisation of the group and identification of main issues, training in specific skills directed at the interaction with other stakeholders. In the first part (with the help of intermediaries) the most important problems and bottlenecks are translated in clear policy issues. These issues are systematically deepened. Gradually the main points of discussion and action are transferred to the stakeholders (empowerment). In the second part the emphasis is on handling knowledge and importing specific skills as preparation for the interaction in formal settings;
- Design of strategic planning and networks.
  This third phase is focussed on interaction with other stakeholders in formal processes. In the supra-local planning the focus is on the construction of networks between the groups of stakeholders dealt with in the second phase.

Accompanying results.

Accompanying results will be in the realms of the many distinct approaches and methods to enhance stakeholder involvement. The case study material and - even to a more extent - the

Delphi survey have resulted in a vast amount of potential *ready-to-use* techniques. Not all of these examples can be incorporated into the final results and the set of profiles in an extensive way. However, they are quite useful for continued research.

Indeed, the ISRO en LV teams are already defining some paths for new research, which can build upon the added value of the current project, or in which certain components of the current project are very useful for analysis or synthesis. For ISRO these efforts have already lead to the drafting of two *Fifth Framework* research proposals, together with European partners. The first proposal is aimed at an analysis of societal developments influencing transport policies in Europe, the second one focuses on best practices in *decision making* in local and regional transport schemes (*for more information: see below).*

Timing of the project

Task	Period
Development of analytical framework and theoretical framework.	March-December 1998.
Empirical research: case studies and first round of the Delphi survey.	January 1999 - August 2000.
Insertion of preliminary research results in ongoing transport project and second round of the Delphi.	September 1999 - September 2000.
Final report and feedback.	September - December 2000.

Possible elements assuring validity and strength of results.

Strength of results can be assured (*preliminary appreciation*):

- as empirical finding have been tested in real life settings in four Flemish Mobility Plans;
- as the research discourse and elements from the interim results have been used for the drafting of two European research proposals (see above: "Accompanying results").

Scope of circulation and dissemination of results.

Current and future opportunities for circulation and dissemination.

Opportunities within the realms of regional and local policies.

- opportunities for policy valorisation exist due to close contacts of KUL-ISRO with the Flemish regional administrations of land use planning and housing (AROHM, Ministry of Flemish Community) and with the 'Mobiliteitscel', the key agency for policy preparation and design at the Ministry of the Flemish Community, which operates directly for the Minister of Transport and his administration;
- other opportunities for policy valorisation - mainly through the *manual* - within information departments in larger cities, agencies responsible for social and urban development in cities (e.g. "*samenlevingsopbouw*"), local authorities drafting/designing Municipal Mobility Plans, private agencies focusing on communication and process management in policy processes, etc

Opportunities with regard to continued research.

- initiating new projects through mentioned policy networks - on a regional level - on specific findings of the research, particularly relevant for the Flemish and Belgian context;
- valorisation of research results in current drafting of two new research proposals with

European partners (Fifth Framework Programme:
- "MINTS" - Impact of key developments in society on transport policies (36 months). With TRL-London, TNO Delft, TIS Lisbon, UCL London, University of Stuttgart, University of Gdansk, etc
- "DECLARE" - Best practices in *decision making* in local and regional transport schemes (30 months). With TRL London, TNO Delft, University of Newcastle, and Finnish, Italian and Greek partners.
- publication of results in a range of technical journals, both Belgian (Flemish) (Planologisch Nieuws, etc) as European/international (European Planning Studies, Journal of Planning Education and Research, etc);

Other opportunities.

- inclusion of information about the project on the KUL-ISRO website, with links to the project website;
- possible valorisation of research results in teaching activities, in particular the post-graduate program in transport planning, established by KUL-ISRO, universities in Brussels, Ghent, Antwerp and TNO-Delft (the Netherlands);

4. RESEARCH PARTNERS AND NETWORKING/CO-OPERATION.

4.1. Presentation of the teams.

Scale and composition.

Institute for Regional Planning KULeuven (ISRO).

The Institute for Urban and Regional Planning (ISRO) is part of the Department of Architecture and Regional Planning of the Leuven University, Belgium. The Research Unit 'Planning and Development' of ISRO is a multidisciplinary unit of planners, economists, sociologists, geographers and engineers focusing on 'space' an 'mobility'. ISRO has structural links with *Grounds for GIS* (Gfg), a research unit within the Faculty of Agriculture, specialising in statistical analysis and GIS-applications in spatial and transportation planning.

Personnel.

ISRO

Louis Albrechts	Professor
Jef Van den Broeck	Professor
Hajo Beeckman	research assistant
Annie Collaer	administration
Griet Lievois	research assistant
Raf Suttels	graphics and logistics
Kristine Verachtert	research assistant
Veerle Verhasselt	research assistant

Through GfG

Tony Dufays	research assistant
Jan Jermei	research assistant
Karel Maesen	research assistant
Thérèse Steenberghen	research assistant
Christophe Vandevoort	research assistant
Jos Van Orshoven	lecturer
Nathalie Wens	research assistant

Langzaam Verkeer.

Since its creation in 1982 *Langzaam Verkeer* supports innovative transport programmes and projects, using a coherent approach that is at the same time sustainable, social and feasible. The multidisciplinary staff of *Langzaam Verkeer* works in three departments, each of them with specific expertise:

- the department of planning and design
- the department of education and communication
- the department of research and policy advise

The **research department** employs eight people (7 researchers and 1 office manager) with the following backgrounds: engineer, planner, graduates in public administrations, political sciences, sociology, psychology and economics.

Studies have been commissioned by:

- municipalities
- non-profit organisations and action groups
- companies and organisations
- regional development agencies
- the Department of Environment and Infrastructure of the Flemish Community
- public transport companies
- the Belgian Institute for Road Safety
- the King Baudoin Foundation
- the Science Department of the Federal Government
- European research and demonstration programmes

Means.

Institute for Regional Planning KULeuven (ISRO).

Available means through:

- fixed financial resources from Leuven University
- financing of research projects through 'Leuven Research and Development (LRD, University)
- financing of research projects through OSTC, Regional and Municipal authorities, the Flemish Transport Foundation, European Commission, etc...

Langzaam Verkeer.

Information not available.

Main activities.

Institute for Regional Planning KULeuven (ISRO).

ISRO laid the scientific and methodological foundation of the *structure planning approach*, by now the official approach for all structure planning in Flanders. Through its commitment in several projects of fundamental research and its active participation in international research projects the research unit takes into account the most recent viewpoints and approaches in its projects.

The more fundamental research studies socio-economic and cultural processes that shape to a large extent the built environment and mobility patterns. More and more attention is given to the creation of conditions and of innovative methods to increase the feasibility of policy proposals. From this solid basis (spatial) structure plans on different scale levels are designed, advice is provided on mobility, international comparative studies are conducted on planning systems, research is undertaken in regional and local development, and in urban

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exclusion. Main users of the ISRO services are European, regional, provincial, municipal governments, (public) transport firms, consultancy firms, and international institutes.

Recent key projects: Structure plan for Flanders (Flemish Government, Province, municipality) - Transport Plan for Flanders (Flemish Government) - Basic mobility/transport poverty - Sustainable transport - MHAL (transborder project: Flanders, Wallony, Netherlands, Germany) - Local and regional development projects - Compendium European Planning Systems (E.U.) - Transport Plan for Flanders - Methodologies and models for effectiveness in public participation in transportation planning (mobility research program - Belgian federal government) - KUL-ISRO is currently a consortium member of TRANSPLUS, a 5th Framework Program related project.

Langzaam Verkeer.

The main activities of the research department are:

1. *Policy advice*: explorative and supportive studies and evaluations for ministries and administrations.
2. *Policy-oriented and theoretical research in the following fields*: mobility management, traffic safety and -liveability, public and collective transport, cyclists and pedestrians, legal frameworks, public involvement, sustainable mobility, travel behaviour, economic and social impact of mobility.
3. *Transfer of knowledge* through publications, lectures, participation in training courses for mobility experts,…

Research is carried out through literature surveys, explorative and comparative research, research on effects and attitudes, surveys, data gathering and processing, market screening and feasibility studies and GIS (geographical information systems) applications.

Production.

Institute for Regional Planning KULeuven (ISRO).

See Annex A.: publications and activities 1996-2000.

Langzaam Verkeer.

See Annex B.: some publications and activities.

Strategy.

Institute for Regional Planning KULeuven (ISRO).

ISRO is a multidisciplinary unit of planners, economists sociologists, geographers and engineers focusing on 'space' and 'mobility'. As space is influenced by and shaped through all kinds of socio-economic activities and power relations the research unit mainly focuses on these interrelations between space, the socio-economic activities, mobility and power structures.

The interaction between fundamental and applied research allows approaching these relations in a scientific way. Fundamental research provides the theoretical framework for applied research. Applied research influences, stimulates and questions the development of a theoretical framework. Much attention is given to mobility and sustainable development.

ISRO plays a key role in specialised teaching activities concerning spatial and transportation planning:

- post-graduate program in spatial planning, established by ISRO and the University of Ghent.
- post-graduate program in transportation planning, established by KUL-ISRO, universities of Brussels, Ghent, Antwerp and TNO-Delft (the Netherlands);

Langzaam Verkeer.

Langzaam Verkeer vzw is a non-profit research and educational organisation. It has a multi-disciplinary staff of about twenty people, and is subdivided in three different departments (*see above*).

The main topics of research are traffic safety, mobility management and transport demand management, traffic calming, public transport, para-transit, transport data collection and vulnerable road users. A growing part of the research efforts are taking place within international networks.

The organisation is working for local, regional and national authorities, public transport companies, regional development agencies, etc. Thanks to its experience in making municipal transport plans, it is very familiar with strategies for public involvement in transport projects. On January 1st 1999, Langzaam Verkeer was working on mobility plans in more than 40 Belgian municipalities. Besides the development and implementation of local mobility plans, the organisation also claims expertise in applied mobility management. It has produced mobility plans for various Belgian companies, schools and industrial estates, as well as various mobility campaigns. The organisation has intensively participated in projects to improve the environment of and access to railway stations. In all of them, communication and collaboration with actors involved was crucial.

The organisation focuses on the research into new products, the development <u>and</u> the dissemination of the results <u>and</u> implementation. Products here are new concepts, new ideas and new approaches in the field of transport and mobility, which are applicable at all policy levels.

Experience in networking and consortia.

Institute for Regional Planning KULeuven (ISRO).

Recent/current partners in networks and consortia.

- European Urban and Regional Research Network.
- Regional Studies Association
- Past-President AESOP
- Editor European Planning Studies
- Socrates network (University of Wales, Cardiff; University of Aveiro;Universidad del Pais Vasco, Bilbao; University of Reggio Calabria; University of Aegean, Université des Sciences et Techniques de Lille I; Università degli Studi della Basilicata, Potenza; La Sapienza, Rome; University of Oxford)
- European Consortia for Fifth Framework Program (London, Newcastle, Lisbon, Delft, Stuttgart, Vienna, Rome, Lille, Paris, etc...)
- Scientific Committee Regions of Europe
- Vlaamse Stichting Verkeerskunde/Flemish Transport Foundation
- Corresponding member 'Deutsche Akademie für Raumforschung und Landesplanung
- Universities of Ghent, Antwerp, Brussels (teaching activities)
- networks with Belgian consultancy firms (Langzaam Verkeer, Studiegroep Omgeving,..)

A few examples of recent consortia through project research.

Structure Plan for Flanders **-** assignment: Ministry of the Flemish Community - period: 1993-1997(various subcontractors e.g. university departments, public agencies and private

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consultants under co-ordination of ISRO).

Transport Plan for Flanders - assignment: Ministry of the Flemish Community - partners: TNO (NL), U.F.S.I.A., K.R.I., GfG, C.E.S., BwK, Langzaam Verkeer - period: 1999-2000.

Transport Planning, Land use and Sustainability ('Transplus') - assignment: European Commission, 5th Framework Program, Key action 'Cities for tomorrow', Task 4.1.1. (proposal EVK4-1999-00101) - partners: ISIS (I), TIS (P), TNO (NL), TRL (UK), TUW (A), IVV (D), STA (I), SOCIALDATA (D), CERTU (F), CETE (F), UCL (UK), TTR (UK), LV (B) and ILS (D) - period: 2000-2003.

Interreg IIC/NWMA-program: EURBANET - assignment: Interreg IIC/NWMA - partners: OTB T.U.Delft (NL), University Glasgow (UK), Institut für Landes- und Stadtentwicklungsforschung des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen Dortmund (D), Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen (NL) - period: 4-1999 – 8-2001.

Corridesign - assignment: NWMA + Mobiliteitscel - partners: O.T.B., T.U. Delft (Nl), University College London (U.K.), University of Central England (U.K.), London School of Economics (U.K.), University Essen (D), IFRESI (F) - period: 01.2000- 11.2001.

Research on methods for integrated territorial development ('onderzoek naar een methodiek voor Geïntegreerd Gebiedsgericht Beleid') - assignment: Ministry of the Flemish Community, Environmental Department - University of Nijmegen (NL) - period: 02.1999 - 11.1999.

Compendium of spatial planning systems and policies - assignment: European Commission - DG XVI - period: 1995-1997 (in co-operation with various European partners).

Basic mobility and transport poverty - assignment: Ministry of the Flemish Community and public transport firm 'De Lijn' - partners: GfG, De Lijn, Langzaam Verkeer - period: 1996-1998.

Langzaam Verkeer.

The research department has lead or joined (inter)national consortiums (in programmes such as: OSTC, EC 4th & 5th framework programme, EU-programmes SAVE and LIFE...).

For more information: see sections above.

4.2. Positioning and meaning of the project.

Personnel.

Institute for Regional Planning KULeuven (ISRO).

Louis Albrechts is Professor of Planning at Catholic University of Leuven (since 1978) and Editor of several European Planning Studies. He is awarded (Highly commended) for Regional Planning. (European Urban and Regional planning awards 1997/1998 of E.U. & E.C.T.P). He has been involved in 90 research projects funded by local, regional, national, international institutions and foundations, and he works currently as Consultant to the European Commission, the Flemish Government, Provinces, Cities, Regional Authorities. Responsible for the Spatial Structure Plan for Flanders (region of 6 million inhabitants 1992-1996). Co-ordinator of the Transport plan for Flanders (1999-2000). In his long-standing academic career published 9 books as author/co-author; 56 chapters/contributions to books; more than 50 articles in 25 journals; over 90 reports on national and international research.

Hajo Beeckman has a degree in Political Science from the University of Ghent (1995) and a Degree in Spatial Planning from the University of Leuven (1997). For a period he worked at the European Parliament. He is presently in force as Research Assistant to the Department of Regional planning of the University of Leuven. Full-time co-operation in following projects: 'In

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pursuit of effective public involvement in transportation and traffic planning' (Belgian federal government) and Transport, Land use and Sustainability ('Transplus') (EU 5th Framework Program).

Langzaam Verkeer.

Jos Zuallaert - senior consultant, co-ordinator of Langzaam Verkeer.
Ignace Pollet - research assistant.

Links between project and other team activities.
Contribution of the current project to the team.

Institute for Regional Planning KULeuven (ISRO).

Link with some other team activities.

other team activities/projects	substantial link
Transport Planning, Land use and Sustainability ('Transplus') - assignment: European Commission, 5th Framework Program, Key action 'Cities for tomorrow', Task 4.1.1.	stakeholder participation in integrated transport and land-use planning policy cycles (Therese Steenberghen, Hajo Beeckman and Louis Albrechts)
Integrated Territorial Development	stakeholder participation in issues of spatial, and environmental planning and housing policies (Louis Albrechts, Jef Vandenbroeck, Kristine Verachtert)
Transport Plan for Flanders	indicating responsibilities for stakeholders in different mobility markets - formulation of framework for decision-making (2001-2010) (Therese Steenberghen, Louis Albrechts)

Contribution of the current project to the team.

The ISRO team is defining some paths for new research, which can build upon the added value of the current project, or in which certain components of the current project are very useful for analysis or synthesis. For ISRO these efforts have already lead to the drafting of two *Fifth Framework* research proposals, together with European partners. The first proposal is aimed at an analysis of societal developments influencing transport policies in Europe, the second one focuses on best practices in *decision making* in local and regional transport schemes (*also see above*).

There is continuous relationship between findings in the current research project and activities of the two department professors (Prof. Albrechts and Prof. Vandenbroeck) (teaching activities, publications, valorization of research elements in other ongoing projects, etc).

Langzaam Verkeer.

For Langzaam Verkeer, a research project on public Involvement in Mobility Planning is a logical and very useful element within the entirety of its activities.
Since 1986, its *education department* has been recognised by the Ministry of Culture in its role of mobility education. It continuously receives questions from various institutions and organisations for information and facilitation about transport related issues. It organises well over 200 educational activities and services a year, together with and for partners in the wide socio-cultural domain. Its documentation centre is accessible for the public. In addition, Langzaam Verkeer is involved in the continuous educational cycles of the *Vlaamse Stichting Verkeerskunde* and develops numerous workshops, conferences and publications. Finally, the education department is responsible for various campaigns with regard to alternative

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modes of transport. It is evident that advanced know-how on public involvement could enhance the effectiveness of those activities, services and campaigns in a very significant way.

The planning department of Langzaam Verkeer develops mobility plans, commissioned by local and regional authorities. As a general rule and, indeed, a quality label, communication with the public is an integral part of its planning processes. For facilitating these moments of communication, the assistance of the education department is usually called in.

In conclusion: it makes Langzaam Verkeer a provider of useful background information *and* a first-rate client of the research outcome of the current project.

4.3. Network of scientific collaboration.

The "official" partners.

- for detailed information on the two teams involved in the project, *see sections above*.
- the Institute for Regional Planning and *Langzaam Verkeer* decided to jointly draft the proposal for the current research project because the theoretical expertise of ISRO on planning issues and the practical experience of *Langzaam Verkeer* with transport projects would enable the teams to construct a network in which both partners are truly complementary. ISRO mainly concentrates on the elaboration of the inclusive planning approach, while *Langzaam Verkeer* further develops the empirical counterpart, i.e. the *profiles* of public involvement. Both approaches have been developed in close concert with each other and are mutually reinforcing.
- the network allowed *Langzaam Verkeer* to frame its practical expertise within the barriers and opportunities of relevant planning and social theory, while ISRO learned to fine-tune some of its theoretical conceptions to daily life constraints and implications. In addition, the project has enabled both teams to build new research networks, in which input from the current research is needed, and which will cause interesting minor or major shifts towards less investigated working domains within the scientific discipline and beyond (*please also see next section*).

Non-official partners and potential users.

Type of partner	Action	Origin of contact
future research partners.	- ongoing European project (Transplus) (see above) - two draft proposals for European project (see above)	Delphi survey and existing networks Delphi survey and existing networks
supporting partners	- possible future co-operation on relevant issues with Prof. Reuter (Stuttgart), Prof. Hillier (Perth, Australia), ir. K. Langer (Stuttgart), G. Vigar (Newcastle), etc....	Delphi survey and case studies
dissemination/use of results	- policy networks Regional Flemish administration (see above) - use of manual with local authorities and consultants (see above)	user panel

Nature of network relations and exchanges.

Intermediary objects and exchange support.

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- continuous exchange of texts and preliminary findings in order to mutually fine-tune conclusions;
- mainly exchange through email.

Network mechanisms.

- monthly *formal* meetings in order to co-ordinate and time separate and joint research actions;
- frequent informal meetings between research assistants for more detailed arrangements, operational issues and *brainstorm* sessions;
- two team co-ordinators meet frequently on several other occasions (e.g. ongoing draft *Transport Plan for Flanders*).

Organisation.

Organisational dimension of delegation of tasks, etc.

Division of work in terms of specialisation of the two teams, resulting in complementarity and use of comparative advantages. ISRO is solely responsible for the co-ordination of the research project, the development of the theoretical framework, three case studies and the Delphi survey. Langzaam Verkeer is solely responsible for carrying out two case studies, testing research results in ongoing transport project and the organisation of panel meetings. All other tasks are being carried out jointly.

Mechanisms for co-ordination of work.

See section above: formal meetings and informal *brainstorm* sessions.

5. BALANCE AND PERSPECTIVES.

Outcome and balance of the project.

Two major valuable outcomes with potentials towards the near future: adaptation and refinement of a strategic planning approach (inclusive approach) and a policy framework for stakeholder involvement, adapted to the Belgian context (*profiles* of public involvement).

Balance. Vast amount of empirical results will allow to upload the framework of *profiles* and to consult on current and future policy approaches.

Perspectives of the project.

Perspectives in terms of dissemination and use of results.

See sections above.

Perspectives in terms of future research.

- continued fine-tuning and adaptation of *profiles* of public involvement based on future empirical research;
- planning approach and profiles (or separate building stones within them) are exploitable in other domains of planning (e.g. within research conducted by the ISRO team together with departments of *public administration* at the Ghent and Leuven University);
- *for more information on future research: see sections above.*

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Outcome and balance of PODO

- PODO was an extremely valuable exercise in interdisciplinarity within the various domains of sustainable transport issues;
- we suggest to aim towards more integration between research projects focusing on *hard* and *soft* issues within the domain (e.g. research on transport economics issues or technical transport management *as opposed to* issues of communication, inclusion and decision-making in transportation planning. The recent PODO I-*support actions* on 'scientific communication' and 'interdisciplinarity' have been interesting points of departure in this context.

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