

Environmentally Friendly Travelling in Europe - Summary by Dr. Heinz-Jörg Borkenstein -

Holidays and movement have nearly become synonyms. The fact that this movement is mostly motorised and a mass movement leads to the well-known problems. Is it possible to realise the vision of mobility and the continuously increasing tourism - an important economic factor - without having to tolerate most of the negative side-effects? Various possibilities are practised, tested and developed to achieve this: Mobility is a fundamental human need and infrastructure, of course for private and public transport, a basic prerequisite. When the tourist has reached his destination - and this is where he wants to and is meant to go - a new task is beginning: Soft tourism, intelligent concepts on site are the code words, and this means that the region should, if possible, be discovered by walking, cycling and with public short-distance transport, following the motto "mobile man discovers himself". Why is it so difficult to transport this idea into the real world?

The handicaps on the way to a sustainable and more environmentally friendly holiday and leisure traffic are manifold: the complexity of the transport policy tasks and their interconnection with economic, ecological and social concerns, a multitude of decision-makers, the heterogeneity of the different types of transport, a large number of actors and conflicts of interest with other political fields, the competition among day, short-term and holiday tourism, a high degree of emotionality. Added to this are issues of financing more environmentally compatible solutions or of the realisation of federal or EU law at local level. The creative ability of the transport policy as regards its influence on mobility (avoidance and shift of traffic) is limited: It is, in the last resort, the active human being, his routine actions and the possibility of influencing them which are the limiting factors.

Environmentally friendly travelling requires networked transport infrastructures and intelligent concepts in order to ensure mobility with as little traffic and as much environmental compatibility as possible. This means that the transport modes rail, inland waterway transport, cycling are strengthened, but also that traffic bottlenecks are eliminated, it requires an intermodal mobility management, intermodal travel chains, the strengthening of passenger rights, the financial support of the Laender and municipalities regarding short-distance passenger transport, incentives for more environmentally friendly traffic and concepts of the Federal Government, for example for the World Championship 2006, and a plan for a cycle path network. The concrete parameters have to be established at the



regional, national and European level, depending on the competency and taking into account subsidiarity. The Federal Government establishes important foundations and parameters through laws and financial aids and through the implementation of international (Alpine Convention!) and EU law. It gives incentives for more environmentally friendly solutions through research and model projects of "soft" measures and innovations and of border-crossing solutions and networks. At the federal level measures have to be prepared which have to be realised locally.

Of especial importance are custom-made regional concepts of an environmentally compatible tourism which at the same time secures mobility in the region, in particular since home-made traffic as a rule causes most of the environmental burden attributable to transport. This is the best approach to reconcile the different and often competing interests of the stakeholder groups with their individual objectives.