



Call for Participants - Connective Cities Virtual Dialogue Event

Covid-19 and Urban Mobility

Impacts of the pandemic and prospects for a more resilient and sustainable post-pandemic future

In cooperation with the City of Wiesbaden, UN-Habitat and UCLG, on 19th, 20th and 22nd July 2021

Connective Cities, the City of Wiesbaden, UN-Habitat and UCLG are pleased to invite municipal actors to the **virtual dialogue event on Covid-19 and urban mobility** taking place on 19th, 20th and 22nd July 2021.

The event is aimed at German and international municipal actors from municipal administrations, municipal enterprises, civil society, business and academia who are working on the impacts of Covid-19 on urban mobility and looking for innovative solutions for a post-pandemic future.

Connective Cities is organising this dialogue event in collaboration with the City of Wiesbaden, Germany, which has proposed the topic of sustainable urban logistics. Wiesbaden has been integrating a concept for sustainable urban logistics in their city since 2019 and is eager to share its own experiences in launching activities in this field and to put the topic into context with the Covid-19 pandemic and perspectives for a more sustainable urban future.

Factsheet: The dialogue event at a glance

Date	19 th , 20 th and 22 nd July 2021
Duration	3 online sessions of 3.5 hours each, including breaks, 13:30 – 17:00 CEST
Language	English (Translation into more languages can be provided on demand)
Thematic focus	The event will focus on the following aspects of urban mobility and the Covid-19 pandemic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable urban logistics (City of Wiesbaden, Germany) • Cycling/bicycle traffic • Local public transport
Expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • German and international practitioners will present their experiences relating to urban mobility during and beyond the Covid-19 pandemic and share their knowledge; • German and international experts will share and discuss the challenges they have faced on the topic.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day 1: To share and discuss examples and good practices from German and international municipalities; • Day 2: To exchange ideas for solutions through peer-to-peer consultation on identified challenges; • Day 3: To jointly develop project ideas for further cooperation in response to these challenges.
Criteria for participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical perspective and first-hand experience with municipal strategies and projects on mobility-related issues in the pandemic and in planning for a post-pandemic future; • Presentation of a local practice example; • Willingness to engage in an exchange on current needs and challenges in this thematic area.
City delegations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideally, a city is represented by two participants; • At least one of the two participants should represent a relevant department of the municipality; the second participant may represent other relevant urban actors from civil society, the private sector or academia.

Background

The Covid-19 pandemic does not simply affect cities around the world, it affects them in a wide variety of areas and topics. One area in which the pandemic has led to fundamental changes is urban mobility. These impacts can be divided into short-term effects during the crisis, especially during lockdowns, and long-term changes in the way urban mobility and traffic will operate in the future, which go beyond the recovery of mobility after lockdowns.

When the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared COVID-19 a global pandemic in March 2020, one of the main responses of governments worldwide was to limit circulation. In the midst of this crisis, municipalities still had to guarantee the mobility of essential workers and goods. Moreover, there have been modal split changes since the beginning of the pandemic, as people have been changing their regular means of transportation out of safety and hygiene considerations. Means of transportation which allow for physical distancing, such as walking, cycling and private cars, are now favoured whereas there is a decline in the use of public transport and shared transport. As for freight and logistics, lockdown restrictions further contribute to the rise in e-commerce and delivery services, making last mile freight distribution an essential service (Lozzi et al., COVID-19 and Urban Mobility: Impacts and Perspectives, 2020). Having experienced reduced traffic and less pollution during lockdowns, the motivation to promote more sustainable urban mobility has grown in many local governments. Investing in measures such as active mobility infrastructure, safer and more accessible public transport as well as low-emission transport options is in accordance with the imperative aim of economic recovery, as infrastructure investments may lead to job creation and private investment in diverse economic sectors (OECD, Cities Policy Responses, 2020).

Now, roughly one year since the pandemic has shown its impacts in almost all parts of the world, cities are still adapting to the ever-changing realities of the pandemic. Nevertheless, urban actors worldwide have found pragmatic and innovative solutions to the newly presented challenges. Bearing in mind the proverb “Necessity is the mother of invention”, the Covid-19 pandemic has the potential to drive innovative measures in urban mobility which can change our cities for the better. Without disregarding the severe economic impacts of the pandemic and the efforts for economic recovery they require, positive trends developed during the pandemic can lead to more sustainable, resource-efficient and low-emission, safe and inclusive cities in the long term.

In 2020, the international city platform Connective Cities started its series of online events on Covid-19 related topics in cooperation with committed municipal stakeholders. In 2021, Connective Cities will continue offering a series of events to support municipal actors to exchange experiences in dealing with this challenging situation. The dialogue event on urban mobility is part of this series.

Thematic focus of the dialogue event

In order to discuss the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on urban mobility and the prospects for a post-pandemic future, the Connective Cities dialogue event will focus on three specific subtopics:

- **Sustainable urban logistics:** With growing e-commerce and an increasing number of delivered goods in cities, the pandemic has highlighted the essential role of urban logistics. Municipalities and municipal companies can regulate and plan how freight movement is managed within the city. Setting up and managing inner-city micro hubs, using emission-free modes of freight transportation and

contactless deliveries are just a few examples of moving towards more eco-friendly and safer urban logistics.

- **Bicycle traffic:** Urban space is scarce and cycling has become more and more important in city planning in recent years and decades. The pandemic has underlined the claim for a more bike-friendly city, with cities worldwide implementing initiatives to relieve public transportation and foster active travel. The pandemic can be an opportunity to rethink urban space and the role of cycling for urban mobility.
- **Local public transport:** Local transit companies around the world have to face unprecedented low numbers of passengers and consequently severe revenue losses due to restrictions imposed by the pandemic. It has become a necessity for urban transport agencies to rethink financing models and to take measures to regain trust and uphold the attractiveness of their services to customers.

If your city is currently working on or wishes to work on different aspects of urban mobility and Covid-19 and you would like to actively participate in the event, please do not hesitate to contact us!

Objectives of a Connective Cities dialogue event

The main objective of a dialogue event is to facilitate the exchange of experiences and mutual learning based on **good practice examples** of municipal actors with different local conditions. The focus is mainly on pragmatic solutions and approaches that can be applied or adapted to different regional contexts. The dialogue event will also provide a space for **in-depth discussion of current challenges** around the theme of mobility and will support the **joint development of innovative solutions for sustainable urban development**. This event is the first step of what is called a “Connective Cities learning process”. Ideally, the project ideas developed within the framework of the dialogue event will be further **implemented in the respective municipalities** or within existing or new thematic municipal partnerships. Connective Cities supports the learning processes through follow-up activities such as project planning workshops or expert missions. The last step of a learning process is to support a municipality with advice on external or third party financing to enable the implementation of projects resulting from this learning experience.

Target group

The virtual dialogue event will be a **highly interactive workshop** with municipal actors, including representatives of civil society, academia and business. Ideally, municipal practitioners involved in **urban planning or municipal transport** will be able to discuss in detail the projects and ideas implemented or planned in their municipality.

Around two third of the participants will be presenting urban mobility projects that deal with adjusting to the pandemic or take into account a post-Covid-19 outlook. The rest of the participants are expected to come from municipalities that are currently not implementing urban mobility projects but want to use this opportunity to develop project ideas with the support of other peers in the field of adapting to the current impacts and long-term consequences of the pandemic.

Participation and contact

If you wish to participate and actively contribute to the dialogue event with a good practice or project example of your organisation, we warmly invite you to apply for a participant spot at the event. To do so, **please send us an email** with your name, function and organisation, as well as with a brief description of the municipal practice you would like to present. We welcome **delegations of two experts** working

respectively on the topic, one of the participants may also represent relevant actors from civil society, private sector or academia. The event is limited to a **maximum of 35 participants**.

In order to apply for participation and in case of questions, please contact us:



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Connective Cities at a glance

The international community of practice Connective Cities has been bringing together urban actors from city administrations, civil society, academia and the private sector since 2013. Connective Cities is a cooperation project between the Association of German Cities (Deutscher Städtetag), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), and Engagement Global with its Service Agency Communities in One World. For more information, please visit: www.connective-cities.net

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