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### **New Good Practice Guide for Forwarding Agents, Logistics Companies and Urban Planners**

Urban freight transport has a direct bearing on the efficiency of the economy: it contributes to the competitiveness of industry in the region concerned and is a major employer in its own right. The future success of town and city centres, which face increasingly severe competition, notably from out-of-town retail parks, depends on how effectively they can cope with problems of congestion, pollution and noise. It is therefore important to take account of commercial interests and the environmental lobby as far as urban logistics is concerned. The BESTUFS Good Practice Guide, which was published in August 2007, is a useful tool.

**It is available in 17 European languages. The guide spans 84 pages packed with many examples of successful solutions in European cities and is especially intended to give guidance to urban planners and freight transport or logistics companies. BESTUFS project experts have produced the good practice guide within the BESTUFS project (BEST Urban Freight Solutions) which is coordinated by Karlsruhe-based PTV AG and funded by the European Commission (DG Energy and Transport). The main objective is to identify, describe and disseminate best practices, success criteria and bottlenecks of urban freight transport solutions and to make the results easily available to the public. As a result, BESTUFS can help optimise urban freight transport and reduce environmental pollution.**

Examples of successful solution in numerous European cities have been collected within the BESTUFS project and published in English. The so-called Best Practice Handbooks cover different topics and are the basis for the Good Practice Guide. The best practice guide will help to develop measures which may be implemented to improve the flows of goods in urban areas and to reduce the environmental impact of the operation. Three subjects are addressed in the guide: Part I focuses on goods vehicle access and loading approaches in urban areas, part II presents principal issues involved in last mile solutions and part III examines the issues associated with urban consolidation centres.

“Our experts from many different European countries came up with a wealth of good ideas on how to optimise urban freight transport. The Good Practice Guide shows how other cities can introduce these

solutions and also benefit from improved urban conditions,” says Claudia Eichhorn, BESTUFS project manager at PTV Germany. “Of course, the issues were not solved overnight. Forwarding agents, logistics companies and urban planners had to join forces to develop appropriate measures.”

### Joint working between public and private sectors

There are various examples of public-private partnerships, such as freight quality partnerships (FQPs) in the UK. FQPs are a means for urban authorities, businesses, freight operators, environmental groups, the local community and other interested stakeholders to work together to address specific freight transport problems. They provide a forum to achieve best practices in environmentally sensitive, economic, safe and efficient freight transport. The Best Practice Guide describes in detail the action points for setting up an FQP and maintaining momentum in an FQP.

The advantage of these partnerships is that the two different groups who are capable of implementing changes to the urban freight system come together, namely: urban authorities and freight transport companies. Both groups can implement numerous initiatives. Cities, for instance, can introduce policy measures that force or encourage companies to change their actions. Strategies available include improvements in signage and information provision, vehicle access and loading/unloading regulations, traffic management schemes, infrastructure developments, and road pricing. Instances of company-led initiatives include: increasing the vehicle load factor through the consolidation of urban freight, making deliveries before or after normal freight delivery hours, the use of routeing and scheduling software, improvements in the fuel efficiency of vehicles, in-cab communications systems, and improvements in collection and delivery systems -just to mention a few examples. These measures also provide numerous economic advantages - from operating in a more environmentally or socially efficient manner, either through improved economic efficiency or through being able to enhance market share as a result of their environmental stance.

### Successful solutions in European cities

Many European cities have successfully introduced new strategies in order to reduce urban freight transport. Loading zones, for example, were introduced in Aalborg’s narrow pedestrianised area. Each of the loading zones can accommodate several vehicles and allow other vehicles to pass, easing traffic congestion during the early morning delivery window. Local shopkeepers agreed to wait until 11.00 am before placing showcases in the streets and rolling out sunblinds.

The PIEK (“peak noise”) programme in the Netherlands focuses on improved conditions for night deliveries which refers to the deliveries to shops made in the evening, early morning or during the night. Typical times are between 10.00 pm and 6.00 am, when the city is usually quiet and inactive. In several cities, such as Barcelona and Dublin, successful experiences with trials on night delivery were made replacing a higher number of vehicles operating during day time by a fewer number of vehicles operating

during night time. Noise disturbance from delivery activity must be avoided in order to increase the acceptance of night time transport operations.

Research has revealed that many loading and unloading activities exceed the noise standards of 60 and 65 dB(A) proposed during the evening and night. A law was set up to address noise nuisance. It states that the noise emission generated when loading and unloading goods must comply with strict noise emission standards. The Dutch government supports the PIEK programme to help develop techniques and equipment for the market to meet the noise standards. Promising solutions include optimum loading/unloading locations, quiet distribution vehicles up to and exceeding 7.5 tonnes, quiet transport-refrigeration installations, quiet on-board forklifts, noise reduction of rolling containers, pallet trucks and hand pallet trucks, noise reduction to shopping trolleys, and electric propulsion or a combination of electric propulsion with diesel or gas propulsion.

Kiala's collection point service in Belgium, Luxembourg, France and soon in the UK aims to improve last-mile deliveries. Parcels are stored in a locker at a nearby Kiala collection point, where customers collect their own goods, making them responsible for the final distribution leg. Collection points result in fewer delivery locations and improved drop density.

In Bordeaux, for example, local collection and distribution points have been installed to reduce traffic. In so-called ELPs (Espace de livraison de proximité) goods are unloaded from incoming vehicles and can be loaded onto trolleys, electric vehicles and bicycles for the final distribution leg.

Since 2003, Petite Reine in Paris has been using tricycles with electrical assistance for the delivery of food, flowers, parcels, etc. to customers throughout the city. The use of tricycles has saved 156,248 vehicle kilometres (standard diesel fuel), which is equal to 43.3 toe (tonnes oil equivalent) of energy consumption, 112 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>, 1.43 tonnes of CO, and 280 kg of Nox.

### **European cities of all sizes need to act**

Experience has shown that the most active cities implementing freight transport innovations tend to be the country capitals or the largest metropolises. These conurbations have the resources to access support for innovative transport solutions, to participate in city networks and to exchange knowledge and experiences with each other. An important objective of BESTUFS and the Good Practice Guide is to reach also small and medium sized cities since they are comparatively isolated from a European perspective.

It is not unusual for local representatives to experience foreign language problems which limits their opportunities to learn from other European cities' experiences. This guide has therefore been translated and printed in 17 European languages and thus complements the rich material in English made available by BESTUFS ([www.bestufs.net](http://www.bestufs.net)).

"It was a real challenge to publish the guide in 17 languages and distribute the guide in the different language versions at the same time," says Claudia Eichhorn, who was in charge of the ambitious translation project. "But I think, it was worth it because all parties involved have access to the information in their language - a basis to quickly find solutions which help improve freight transport in European cities."

## Background information about BESTUFS

PTV AG is in charge of the coordination of the EU-funded BESTUFS project (BEST Urban Freight Solutions). The European Co-ordination Action, which has a budget of EUR4.35m, is active from 2000 until 2008. The main objective is to identify, describe and disseminate best practices, success criteria and bottlenecks of urban freight transport solutions. Furthermore, BESTUFS aims to maintain and expand an open European network between urban freight experts, user groups, associations, researchers, ongoing projects, the relevant European Commission Directorates and representatives of national, regional and local transport administrations and transport operators. The project team organises regular workshops and conferences all over Europe and reports about interesting urban commercial transport related developments, demonstrations and events on European, national, regional and local level. BESTUFS has received considerable attention from both practitioners and researchers. All results are publicly available at [www.bestufs.net](http://www.bestufs.net).

The BESTUFS consortium consists of the following companies: PTV (coordinator, Germany), NEWRAIL (Great Britain), NEA (The Netherlands), RappTrans (Switzerland), Transman (Hungary), CDV (Czech Republic), LET-ISH (France) and the University of Westminster (Great Britain).

The Good Practice Guide on Urban Freight Transport is available in English, German, Bulgarian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Finnish, French, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese, Slovene, Spanish and Swedish.

## Images



(Bestufs-Titel\_D.jpg) BESTUFS Good Practice Guide on Urban Freight Transport



(Bestufs\_Map\_Europe\_4C.tif) European countries covered by BESTUFS

# Background report



(Bestufs\_Map\_Worldwide\_4C.tif) Non-European countries covered by BESTUFS



(Urban-Delivery.jpg) Narrow streets often jammed with lorries



(ELP\_Bordeaux.tif) ELP (Espace de livraison de proximité) – local collection points in Bordeaux for more eco-friendly last-mile deliveries



(Nachtbelieferung\_4C) Night deliveries help to reduce congestion in inner city areas