

To: Transport & Health Policy Makers, & Practitioners
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Subject: Essential Evidence 4 Scotland No 5 Critical success conditions of collaborative methods in transport planning

Top line: In the development and delivery of transport planning projects, dedicated management of the multi-actor network, a high diversity of actors, as well as an extensive use of knowledge integration methods in combination with a high network density are critical success conditions.

Many researchers consider transport as a critical factor for urban sustainability. It causes negative local effects such as pollution and uses 30% of the primary energy in the EU. Its infrastructure demands much scarce urban space. However, urban residents consume fewer resources than peri-urban residents. Thus, urban transport can also be seen as a potential driver of sustainable development. Against this background, the requirements for transport planning have changed in recent decades, such that it has to acknowledge the interactions between transport solutions and sustainable urban development.

The planning process takes place in a multi-actor network. The power of participating actors also requires a shift from a scientific to a communicative rationality. In order to derive critical success conditions (CSCs) and so learn about the benefits of different collaborative planning methods and approaches, researchers have used a comparison of methods, processes and instruments of collaborative planning,¹ applied in different cultural and political contexts in five cities.^{2, 3} In addition, for this CSC transport study, the researchers selected efficiency, effectiveness, and relevance as performance indicators, all of which are frequently used criteria for the evaluation of planning projects.

The results regarding CSCs were not sufficient to predict a project's outcome, but necessary to orientate the project towards its overall goals. The most relevant CSCs in the areas investigated and for the set of five transport planning cases considered were: an integration of the project into the standard planning procedure; a dedicated network management team; a high diversity of involved participants; and the inclusion of representatives from municipal administration, the business associations, and the public. These results correspond with the literature. This includes that the municipal city administration can be very important not least because it could have negative impacts on transport projects performance.

These insights lead to the proposition that, in multi-actor planning projects, performance is, to a certain degree, dependent on the process of interaction and communication, as well as on the methods chosen for knowledge exchange. It seems that a mix of high and low involvement is the "golden mean" between lengthy and ineffective processes on the one side and overruling top-down planning on the other.

¹ Rough Set Analysis was used and is a method designed to help researchers in discovering patterns in data sets. It can suggest new hypotheses, and where to look for causal relationships.

² Walter, A., Scholz, R. 2007. Critical success conditions of collaborative methods: a comparative evaluation of transport planning projects, *Transportation*, 34: pp. 195-212.

³ Gothenburg, Sweden; London, UK; Milwaukee; USA; Tokyo, Japan; and Mexico City, Mexico.