

Agreements for shared mobility: the Politecnico di Milano experience

2016

 University
Politecnico di Milano
Country
Italy

Location 

Size 

Mobility Organizational Structure 

 Summary

 Aims

 Stakeholders

Encourage the whole population to leave at home private cars, both by showing them the available alternatives and providing them economic, environmental and social advantages when using sustainable means of transport.

 Background

Shared mobility is fairly common in Milan and, in 2017, the latest mobility survey carried out by our Institution revealed that 75% of both our students and personnel were aware about this kind of services. Nevertheless, the percentages of people actually using car or bike sharing services were much lower, only 17% of students and 20% of personnel. Moreover, 40% of the students and 27% of the personnel declared they would use the bicycle more if they could take advantage of discounted prices for the bike-sharing service.

This led to the idea of promoting this kind of sustainable mobility as an opportunity to reduce traffic and pollution, both very big issues in Milan, working in accordance to the framework of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (in particular, SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities).

Meanwhile, our main campus is currently undergoing a renewal process, thanks to the Renzo Piano and ViViPolimi projects, and parking spaces are going to be reduced to further discourage the use of private cars.



Description

The activity was launched in 2016 when, during the European Mobility Week 2016, we held a technical round table with stakeholders in the mobility field. Among the participants, we invited the Mobility Councillor for the Metropolitan City of Milan, the mobility managers of several Universities in Milan and all the companies working on public transport or shared mobility in the area. During this meeting we laid the foundations for the agreements between our University and the shared mobility stakeholders, which were finalized a year later.

In September 2017, we signed the first agreements with 6 different car/scooter sharing companies to provide our population discounts and other benefits for the academic year 2017/18. These agreements included also awareness raising projects and other activities: several promotional events were organized, for example during the European Mobility Week and the Sustainable Development Festival. During such events, each company was invited to present its service and its fleet, allowing people from the University and citizens to gain information and try their hand at driving such vehicles. Moreover, a help desk managed by Politecnico staff was always present to provide information on the project's goal and the importance of sustainable behaviours.

In the framework of these agreements, one of the companies also launched a call for ideas to engage students directly in the design of parking areas for shared cars. This company also provided the University with one of its electric cars to be used solely for staff missions and duty travels, avoiding the use of traditional combustion vehicles and proving a great opportunity to have more people trying for free what is like to drive a full electric car.

During 2018, our University was also strongly engaged in the testing phase of a hybrid free-floating bike sharing, developed by a Politecnico start-up born in 2013. Thanks to the support of the University (Design Department and Sustainability Office), the company was able to design the service model and then validate the solution, through the setup of a pilot project structured in two phases. The first one, exclusively dedicated to Politecnico community, involved about 150 people selected from over 600 candidacies, with a fleet of about 30 bikes. The second phase saw the deployment of about 300 bikes and was open to the public but the University community still played a crucial role, representing the most active

target. During the testing phase, a bike ride was also arranged to bring people to a park nearby the Politecnico main campus, thus promoting the service while also having people spend time in the open air and discovering how enjoyable adopting more sustainable ways of life could be. For the current academic year, the contracts with the first 6 companies were renewed and 10 more were signed, including a wider variety of means of transport. Currently, the agreements consist of 6 car sharing, 1 bike sharing, 4 scooter sharing and 5 bus/shuttle services. This selection was based on the intention of teaching people to choose the most effective mean of transport for each trip, instead of always relying on private cars. Moreover, our aim is to help behavioural change not only when people need to get to work/school but also in their private life, which means travelling in a sustainable way also when going to the airport or to a different city for leisure, for example.

Of course, the awareness raising campaign is still underway: new events are planned for the next editions of the Sustainable Development Festival and the European Mobility Week and more initiatives will be organized throughout the year. All information about the project is being spread on institutional websites, social medias, newsletters and notice boards. We already presented our work during conferences and other events held by external institutions and in the framework of the Italian University Network for Sustainable Development (mobility working group).



Indicators

Data on the agreements:

- N. of companies under agreement: 6 until September 2018, currently 16.
- Percentage of companies under agreement among all the players available in Milan as of December 2018: 76%*.
- N. of registered users: 5043 after the first year of agreements, 2570 more registrations in the last 3 months.
- N. of active users in the last 3 months: 2908.

Data on the awareness raising campaign (since Sept. 2017):

- N. of events organized to promote shared mobility: 8 events, held at both the two Politecnico campuses in Milan.
- Total n. of events on sustainable mobility: 28.
- Total n. of events on various sustainability topics: 50.
- Percentage of events on shared mobility over the total n. of events organized on sustainable mobility: 29%.
- Percentage of events on sustainable mobility over the total n. of events organized by the Sustainability Office: 56%.
- N. of participations to external events in which we presented our mobility management policies: 6; during 5 of them we also presented our initiatives on shared mobility.

Data on the electric car available for duty travels (9 months):

- The car was rented 90 times for a total travel time of 670 hours and total travel distance of 2.730 km.
- CO2 emissions avoided thanks to the electric car: 453 kgCO2.
- CO2 emissions that could be avoided if all duty travels were made by electric car: 140 tCO2/year ca.

Data on the testing phase of the hybrid bike-sharing:

- N. of candidates to the testing phase: 623.
- N. of people actively involved in the testing phase: 147.
- N. of bikes deployed: 32.
- N. of rents: 425.

*regarding bus services, we accounted for bus sharing and airport shuttle services.



Results



Expense & Financing

All agreements were free of charge for the Institution, we gave visibility to the services and provided potential users in exchange for the various advantages described above.

Conclusions and Lessons learnt

The initiative was highly appreciated by all Politecnico members that made use of the service and we expect even more people to take advantage of this opportunity in the future. The impact of this initiative will be assessed in spring after our customary mobility survey, when it will be possible to measure how many people changed their habits in commuting to the University, compared to the previous editions. One of the best ways to engage the population has been the chance to try driving electric vehicles, which was very important for getting rid of the “fear of the new” and of the widespread belief that they are difficult to use. They are still pretty uncommon on the market but discovering how easy it is to drive electric cars could lead more people to take them into consideration when buying a new one.

The availability of an electric car for the duty travels of the personnel was also highly appreciated by the users. Upon the expiry of the agreement period of 9 months many employees wrote emails asking for the renewal of the agreement, finding such car better than the ones usually provided by the University.

For what concerns the University involvement in the testing phase of the hybrid bike sharing service, two main results were obtained. It demonstrated that the University community needs and is highly disposed to adopt mobility solutions to optimize transit that are alternative to private vehicles and that complement public transports. On the other hand, the presence of hybrid bikes into the campus area and the possibility to actively take part to the experimentation helped sensitize people on the topic in an effective and engaging way. We are open to new agreements if more companies stepping into the market will be interested and we're going to continue with the awareness raising campaign.

 Pictures

 Links

 Contact person