

# URBAN AND URBAN-REGIONAL COMMUNICATION: IN SLOW MOTION – OR HOW ELSE?



A short teaser on traffic-related mobility developments in CEE

**WUA**  
Walloth Urban Advisors

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A Building and rebuilding urban and regional traffic infrastructure in CEE

# A lot has been done and is being done

## Developments in Iași, Romania, 2013



Construction works for a short tunnel under a busy intersection (left and center) and newly pedestrianized main downtown street (right).

# A lot more needs to be done

Impressions from Bucharest, Romania, 2017 and 2018



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Bucharest subway station (left) and suburban Bucharest railway stop (right).

B CEE will experience more challenges

# Current infrastructure planning is not future-proof – increase of traffic

Last-mile issues and increasing car ownership – news clips & statistics

**News** 12 Nov 2018 by SmartCitiesWorld news team

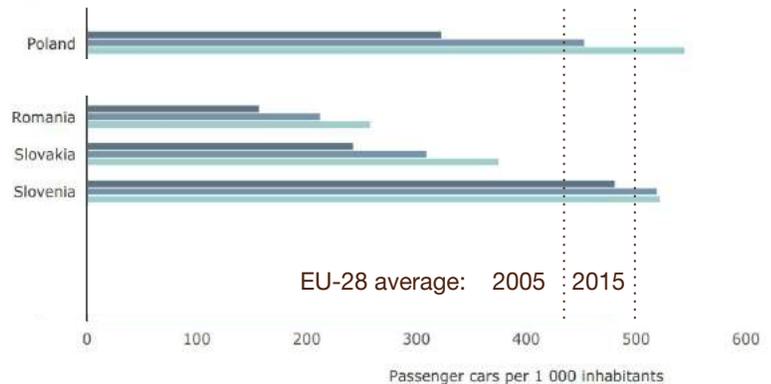
Scooters allow cities to offer an equitable last-mile solution to their residents due to their relative affordability

## Online shopping is terrible for the environment. It doesn't have to be.

The environmental impact of online shopping on Black Friday and Cyber Monday

By Miguel Jaller | Updated Nov 21, 2018, 3:14pm EST

Passenger cars per 1.000 inhabitants



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C Current top-down paradigms don't target the real issues

# Efforts are made for locally unfit developments

Examples from Iași, Romania, 2018



Is this a cycling lane, taking the full width of a narrow sidewalk (left), ending with a steep curb (right)?



# Main topics being discussed today draw attention away from the real mobility problems

Examples from Sofia, Bulgaria, 2017 and Šibenik, Croatia, 2018



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Sofia sidewalk left narrow for creating cycling lanes (left), Šibenik electric vehicle towed by a diesel truck (right).

D CEE cities and regions are losing precious time

# Even funded developments are costly

## Three reasons to worry

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- 1 No cultural fit of new traffic infrastructure

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  - 2 Development even of funded projects keeps precious local human resources busy

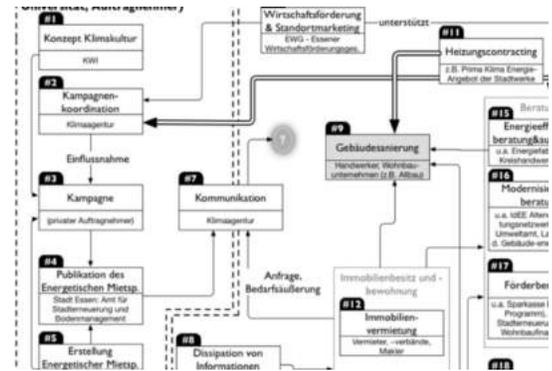
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  - 3 Unfit developments can slow growth since the native development paths are disrupted

# Effective ways of communication are key for any system – people will still want to meet

Three system science-based hypotheses against “slow motion”

1. **In person meetings:** Telecommunication is not enough for mankind, the dynamics of in-person meetings can not (yet) be substituted in cyberspace.
2. **Flows of people and goods:** Living systems require physical flows.
3. **More, not less throughput:** Increasing sophistication (roughly ~ complexity) of human society requires higher efficiency in creative problem solving, i.e., more and faster communication.



Excerpt of a change-agent analysis showing communication links that keep the system alive

E A lot is possible outside the narrow focus of current paradigms

# Urban operations excellence programs can yield immediate mobility improvements



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“Smart City”: low-hanging fruits first, then tech

- Simple **operational improvements**: observation (!), intelligence, action: enforce traffic laws (e.g., where people clog intersections), no changing of drivers of public transport during rush hours, no public works during rush hours, e.g., no garbage trucks on the road
- Unclogging flows with **improved organization and/or improved technology**: synchronized traffic lights, parking guidance system, (dynamic) priority for public transport, automated subways (higher frequencies), other (automated) vehicles.
- **Applying technology**: sensors, big data, AI.

# For the future, we may well want to start thinking outside the box again

Some examples of improved technology – not all is new



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Mexico-city ropeway (left), Elon Musk of The Boring Company (center), a flying car in Dubai (right).

F We'll be losing ground without better solutions – not just in CEE

# Europe as a museum, in slow motion, while others already implement efficient transport

 **Jaap Modder is at Piazza San Marco Venezia.**  
Nov 7 at 11:35 • Venice, Italy • 🌐

Venice nowadays is an open-air museum for the wealthy upper middle class Chinese who are allowed to visit Europe. As a matter of fact Europe as a whole is seen as a museum by the Chinese. And they're right.



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Sources / cited from: Dubai flying police motorcycle: CNN, Self-driving shuttle bus tested in Las Vegas: Keolis, Audi-Airbus drone-car concept: photo by Audi

# First never follows – So why should CEE cities follow Western European development paths?

Three steps towards sustainable, place-based mobility concepts



**Individuality:** Which type of place-to-be is a city or region fit for?

**System stability** and path dependency: Which is a suitable development schedule for this particular city or region?

**Disturbing the system:** It's okay to introduce new infrastructure here and there, even potentially disruptive elements, but always related to the local system and able to connect with existing routines.

So where are we heading? Can we have a more location-sensitive approach?



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