

CASE STUDY

PARMA (IT) – MERIDA (MEX)

IURC - LA



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Thematic Network(s): Urban & Regional Renewal – Urban Poverty

Thematic Cluster(s): Mobility & Transport

Cross-cutting challenge(s): Energy Transition & Climate Change

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PARMA – MERIDA

IURC – CASE STUDY

*Merida and Parma are exchanging best practices to improve urban mobility by promoting non-motorized modes of transportation, public transportation and changing people's behaviours and mobility choices. Through Parma's **Mobility Managers** programme, companies work with the support of the city, on home-to-work travel plans, identifying actions to promote the use of more sustainable modes of transportation by their workers.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Parma has a total of 196,518 inhabitants and is located in the Po Plain of the Emilia-Romagna region, featuring an intense human, agricultural, and industrial activity that are producing important levels of pollution, worsened by heavy road traffic and the geography of the plain. Thus, Parma is actively working to tackle issues related to pollution by promoting sustainable mobility and disincentivizing the use of private cars. The city possesses a unique institutional and legal framework which enables public-private partnership models and fosters close relationships with the academia and the business sector. These relationships allow the city to establish an open dialogue with its local community, thus promoting citizen participation. The Decree of Italy's Ministry of Environment dated 26-05-2021 stipulates that companies with at least 100 employees in municipalities with more than 50,000 inhabitants are required to identify a **company Mobility Manager (MM) and adopt a home-to-work travel plan (PSCL or Piano degli Spostamenti Casa-Lavoro)** for their employees. The programme in Parma has been a success, with a network of 39 companies involved which account for almost 38% of Parma's population. To date, 25 companies have drafted a PSCL, which include joint mobility actions with the city, such as improving biking infrastructure and providing employees with discounted tariffs in Parma's public transportation and car/bike sharing systems.

The partner city of **Merida** in Yucatan (pop. 995,129) faces several urban development challenges, such as sprawl and the absence of a comprehensive urban mobility regulatory framework, which hinders the municipality from being able to enact mitigating policies and projects at the local level. The city is looking at improving its urban governance structure and ability to work with the private sector to complement its strong capacity and experience in citizen participation processes. The current case study shows the main results and lessons learned from the Mobility Manager initiative in Parma, and the work carried out by the city of Merida in implementing a pilot involving academic institutions.

MAIN CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

Parma's main challenges are linked to poor air quality, worsened by the presence of intense human, agricultural and industrial activities, as well as high traffic and car-dependency. Merida's main problems are related to the rapid growth of the city that has resulted in fragmentation and patterns that hinder the provision of public services, including public transportation. Furthermore, the lack of a clear urban governance and regulatory framework hinders the possibility of coordination and implementation of mobility actions.

The Decree of Italy's Ministry of Environment dated 27.03.1998 and 26-05-2021 stipulates that companies with **at least 100 employees in municipalities with more than 50,000 inhabitants** are required to identify a company **Mobility Manager (MM)** and adopt a home-to-work travel plan (*PSCL* or *Piano degli Spostamenti Casa-Lavoro*) for their employees. Parma has had the figure of MM since 2002 and have always required companies to prepare the PSCL since then. The legal requirement and implementation of the network of Mobility Managers allows the city of Parma to identify and devise mobility actions with businesses and schools, aimed at reducing the use of private cars in work-related and educational trips that occur during peak daily traffic hours.



Mobility Manager conference, organized in Parma as part of the European Mobility Week. Source: Municipality of Parma

“The mobility manager is a key figure in the implementation of mobility management initiatives whose activity is aimed at promoting sustainable forms of mobility, from an environmental, economic and social point of view, and the consequent change in users' attitudes and habits”.

- Angela Chiari, Parma's Area Mobility Manager.



Questionario per la compilazione del Piano spostamento casa lavoro

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<https://www.comune.parma.it/mobilita/informativa-privacy-questionario-spostamento-casa-lavoro.aspx> ai sensi dell'art. 13 del Regolamento europeo n. 679/2016 *

Standardized survey on Google

The preparation of **PSCLs** requires that companies apply to collect data about employees' mobility habits and preferences, understanding the barriers and incentives to reduce car-dependency while promoting more sustainable modes of transportation. PSCLs are drawn up with the help of a "**Mobility Platform**" software, which is managed by "SCRAT srl". The rights to the platform are acquired by the Municipality on a yearly basis, thus enabling free access to the companies, while SCRAT provides support in the use of the IT tool through four training meetings during the year. The platform contributes to the **uniformity of language and facilitates data aggregation**.

There are different types of Mobility Managers. **Company Mobility Managers (CMM)** are designated by each company support the preparation and adoption of PSCLs. A **School Mobility Manager (SMM)** promotes sustainable mobility within each school. An **Area Mobility Manager (AMM)** focuses on studying user behaviour and transport demand at an aggregate level, coordinating with company and school mobility managers.

As part of the collaboration with Merida, **Parma's Area Mobility Manager** (Mrs. Angela Chiari), as well as other mobility experts, have been working closely with Merida's Institute of Municipal Planning (IMPLAN Merida) in the promotion of the role of Mobility Managers. In this regard, a delegation from Parma, including a CMM, had the opportunity to visit Merida in April 2022. Similarly, a team from Merida had the opportunity to meet the network of Mobility Managers during their visit to Parma in June of the same year.



Meeting with school headmasters to promote sustainable mobility in schools. Source: Municipality of Parma

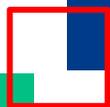
“Parma’s successful Mobility Manager initiative has oriented urban studies in Merida leading to envisage a similar mobility scheme for companies, schools, and public institutions”.

- **Edgardo Bolio**, Director of IMPLAN Merida.

As a result of the collaboration, the city of Merida aims to implement a **Mobility Manager** pilot with academic institutions, including collection of data through a standardized survey to better understand mobility habits and barriers for students. The Campus of Social Sciences of the Autonomous University of Yucatan with 7,000 students, have expressed interest in having a Mobility Manager and undertake a mobility survey. Similarly, the School of Architecture of the Mesoamerican University (135 students) have also shown interest in the initiative. To support the work of the pairing, IURC Latin America organized technical sessions with Parma's Mobility Managers during study visits in Merida and Parma. Furthermore, the standardized mobility survey was translated to Spanish and adapted to Merida's context.



Technical sessions with Mobility Managers during study visits in Merida and Parma, as part of IURC Latin America.



RESULTS AND IMPACT

At the beginning of the programme in Parma there were 12 companies involved which has grown to **39**, accounting for a total of **75,000** workers and university students. Together they represent about **38%** of the population of Parma. As of 2022, **25** companies have drafted a **PSCL**, with new guidelines provided by the Interministerial Decree of 12-05-2021. The companies and institutions that take part of the initiative include **large private corporations, utility companies, municipal agencies, medium sized enterprises, and important educational institutions.**

Network of Mobility Managers				
				
				
				
				

Some of the companies of Parma's Mobility Manager network



Bike to Work programme implemented at Barilla. Source: twitter.com/barillagroup

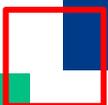
To support the implementation of PSCLs, companies sign Mobility Management agreements with the Municipality of Parma. The agreements provide a series of measures to incentivize and reward sustainable modes of transportation. The incentives include [direct payments for biking](#) as part of the Bike to Work programme and discounted tariffs for public transport (bus and train), Parma's Cycling Hub or [Cicletteria](#) (offering storage, repair and rental services) and bike and car sharing programmes. The Municipality can also invest in infrastructure, for example, building bike racks or electric charging stations or expanding existing bike lanes.

KEY FIGURES

39
companies

25
home-to-work
mobility plan

75,000
workers and students
accounted for 38% of
Parma's population



In Merida, the implementation of the pilot began in mid-May 2023. As early June, data have been collected from 92 students (out of 135) at the School of Architecture of Universidad Mesoamericana of San Agustin. One of the biggest challenges from implementing the survey was the difficulty of collecting information during the academic year. Nonetheless, the high response rate indicates a strong interest from students. Furthermore, the initial findings of the survey show a willingness of students to change mobility behaviour towards collective transport.



Participatory meeting in Merida. Source: IMPLAN Merida

Overall, working with Parma allowed the team in Merida to strengthen their capacities and knowledge of how to collect mobility data, how to work collaboratively with the private sector to understand mobility behaviour, what are the main drivers of mobility and thus, provide a set of incentives to promote more sustainable modes of transportation. The pilot had also set the basis for scaling up the programme, expanding it into more businesses, academic institutions, and governmental agencies.

For other cities that wish to implement mobility surveys, you can download Parma's questionnaire [here](#). In addition, the following [takeaway](#) provides more information in the role and skills of Mobility Managers, as well as the legal framework behind the initiative in Parma.

“Data gathering and interpretation is instrumental for decision making. The mobility survey, based on Parma experience, allows for characterization of users, perception of quality of modes of transportation, and reasons to changing mobility behavior”.

- **Edgardo Bolio**, Director of IMPLAN Merida

LESSONS LEARNED

A **regulatory framework** must enable the provision of incentives. In addition, greater resources are needed to promote behavioral changes and provide bigger incentives in the form of subsidies in the use of car sharing, biking to work or public transportation.

Besides good data and incentives, changing mobility decisions requires **identifying and removing barriers, clear communication** of benefits and better infrastructure.

Data aggregation and management of mobility data requires uniformity and standardization. Standardized surveys and software greatly contribute to this process.

Large companies and educational institutions account for a large proportion of trips. **Mobility Managers are very important because they can work with a substantial portion of the population**, thus reducing the use of private cars in work-related and educational trips that occur during peak daily traffic hours.

THE IURC PROGRAMME

The International Urban and Regional Cooperation (IURC) programme enables cities in different global regions to link up and share solutions to common problems. It is part of a long-term strategy by the European Union to foster sustainable urban development in cooperation with the public and private sectors, as well as representatives of research and innovation, community groups and citizens. Through engaging in IURC, cities will have the chance to share and exchange knowledge with their international counterparts, building a greener, more prosperous future.

The IURC programme is an opportunity for local governments to learn from each other, set ambitious targets, forge lasting partnerships, test new solutions, and boost their city's international profile. Its activities will support the achievement of policy objectives as well as major international agreements on urban development and climate change, such as the EU Urban Agenda, the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and the Paris Agreement.

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Links to related outputs:

Parma's Mobility Manager Takeaway https://www.iurc.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Parma_Mobility-Manager-Takeaway.pdf

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