

Case study Bremen

**Impact equivalent to €200 mio invest in parking garages!
Relief by 10,000 private cars: reclaiming street space
through promotion of car sharing in Bremen**

City of Bremen, Germany

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The Northern German city of Bremen (570,000 inhabitants) is known as cycling city and as well as a leading city to promote car sharing. Already as early as 1995, the first joint pilot promotion of public transport and car sharing took place under the title ‘a neighbourhood with fewer cars’. With on-street car sharing station (‘mobil.punkt’), Bremen took the initiative to integrate car sharing on-street into densely built up urban neighbourhoods and their narrow streets. The 2009 unanimously adopted car sharing action plan became a blueprint for many other cities. It set the target of quadrupling the number of car sharing users in Bremen to 20,000 by the year 2020 – but more important to having replaced at least 6,000 private cars by using the service of car sharing: use it – don’t own it.

Key measures of the car sharing action plan were

- Dense network of car sharing stations -where necessary on public street space
- Integration in new developments – revision of the old-fashioned parking requirements towards mobility management
- Joint offer and promotion with public transport
- Integration into fleet management of companies and administration
- Information and awareness.

As it was quite advanced and a world-leading example of urban sustainability the City of Bremen was selected to present its sharing approach in an own pavilion in the 2010 World Exposition in Shanghai/China – which had the theme “Better City – Better Life”.

The network of stations in Bremen grew to about 150 over the city. A 2017 survey presented some key insights of the success of the (privately operated) Bremen car sharing scheme. From the viewpoint of users, there are the three most important aspects of car sharing:

1. Easy handling (which is in ‘the hands of car sharing operators – modern technology provides convenient access, efficiency and billing)
2. Reliability (which shows the advantages of station-based car sharing vs pure free floating: the option of making reservations in advance gives a level of reliability. Still, spontaneous use is also possible)
3. Short distance to the stations as access points (Here, the municipalities play a crucial role -as they can create dedicated car sharing stations in the neighbourhoods).

For cities like Bremen, the location of (larger) car sharing stations at public transport stops was not perceived as really important – but also here, the satisfaction level of users was very high – as it is with the top expectations.



Graphs: integration into the urban neighbourhoods, also new developments (photos: Glotz-Richter)

By spring 2021, the number of 20,000 users was achieved – but more important, the number of cars being replaced by using car sharing was about 8,000. Every car sharing car in Bremen replaces about 16 private cars – either being given up or not being purchased.

By 2024, the impact of car sharing in Bremen is equivalent to having 10,000 cars being taken from the streets – end to end more than 50 kilometres street space. If you wanted to achieve the same impact by neighbourhood parking garages, it would request an investment of about €200 million. Over the last 25 years, the City of Bremen has spent a good million Euro for car sharing stations and promotional activities – which shows the extreme high efficiency of investing in car sharing – and of understanding customers' needs.

Some lessons learnt:

- Car sharing is not an experiment but needs to be provided as reliable service
- It is more important to have a network of smaller car sharing stations being spread over the urban neighbourhoods than having some few large stations
- Station-based car sharing offers a higher level of (requested) reliability – some free-floating car sharing may be added. But the reliability of station-based car sharing comes first if you want to offer a real alternative to owning a car
- Electrification of car sharing is a challenge but necessary. Currently, you need mixed fleets of conventional cars and e-cars if you want to convince car owners to give up their conventional car. In that way, car sharing is a learning field to get more and more used to e-cars. If these potential car sharing customers hesitate because of pure e-car fleets, you may have lost them for the next 8 – 10 years and they go around only with a fossil fuel burning car.
- Integration of mobility management in new developments and reducing individual car parking is a major tool of affordable housing – when dependence on a car for daily trips is low

Links	https://share-north.eu/2021/05/mission-accomplished-20000-people-in-bremen-are-using-car-sharing-over-6000-cars-replaced-goals-of-the-carsharing-action-plan-achieved/ 2022 CoMo CaseStudy-Bremen EN.pdf (europa.eu) Bremen's fight for car sharing - Eurocities
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