



BICYCLE RESEARCH REPORT NO. 25

June 1992

EUROPEAN OPINION POLL ON ACCESS TO CITY CENTRES by UITP and Socialdata

Opinion poll shows clear anti-car majority throughout Europe

The Key Facts

An opinion poll held throughout Europe has shown that a clear majority of the public are in favour of priority for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. Yet politicians and planners under-estimate public opinion, wrongly assuming that the majority want car-orientated traffic planning.

Contents

The poll was commissioned by UITP (International Union of Public Transport) and the EC, and evaluated by the Socialdata Institute in Munich. For the first time the views of the public on mobility were sought and compared with those of politicians and planners. Data from East and West Germany were treated separately.

A majority of people in all countries agree that public transport and the use of bicycles should be encouraged, if necessary at the expense of private motorists. In only 4 out of 12 EC countries did a majority believe that motor traffic levels were still tolerable - in Denmark, Ireland, Great Britain and the former West Germany - see Fig 1.

However, not all the various solutions to traffic problems suggested met with equal approval. Only in Greece and East Germany was a majority optimistic about technical progress - see Fig 2. Nowhere is the bicycle seen as the prime alternative to the car.

Walking was seen as the most important in Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, Great Britain, France, the Netherlands and Italy, public transport in the other countries (including West and East Germany). But in Denmark, the Netherlands and Ireland at least, bicycles are seen as more important than public transport - see Fig 3/5.

Although the public everywhere gives almost exactly the same priority to environment-friendly transport, the politicians and planners believe that most people still want traffic planning and policies to favour cars - see Fig 6.



Source European Opinion Poll and Access to City Centres; study of International Union of Public Transport and European Community. Brussels and Munich, January 1992.

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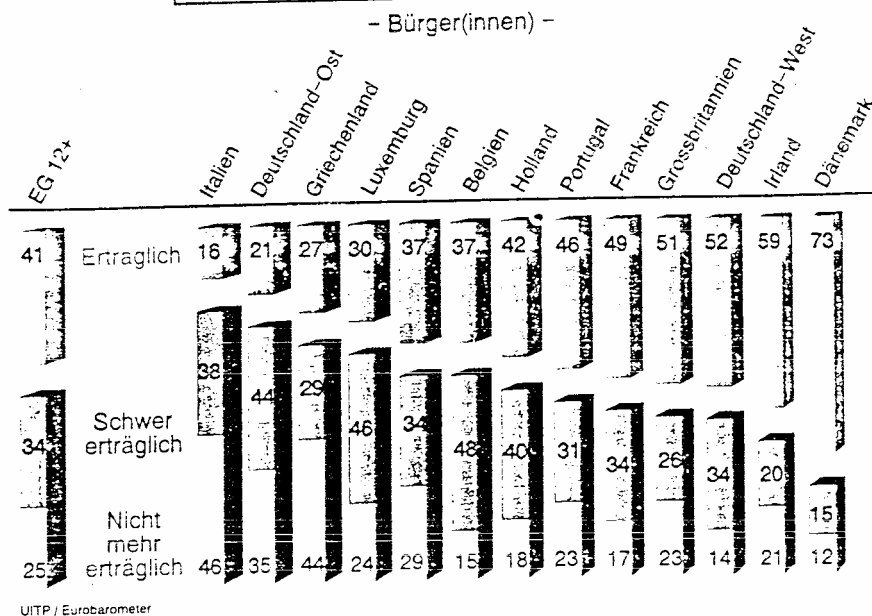


FOLGEN DES AUTO-VERKEHRS



Fig 1

4 out of 10 people in the EC (41%) think the effects of road traffic are (still) tolerable, about 1/3 (34% think they are only just tolerable, and 1 in 4 thinks they are now intolerable. There are considerable discrepancies between individual countries.



LÖSUNG DES VERKEHRSPROBLEMS DURCH TECHNISCHEM FORTSCHRITT



Fig 2

Could the present traffic problems be solved by new technology? Opinions on this question are almost equally divided in the EC - 41% for, 43% against. In only 2 countries was a majority optimistic about technological progress.

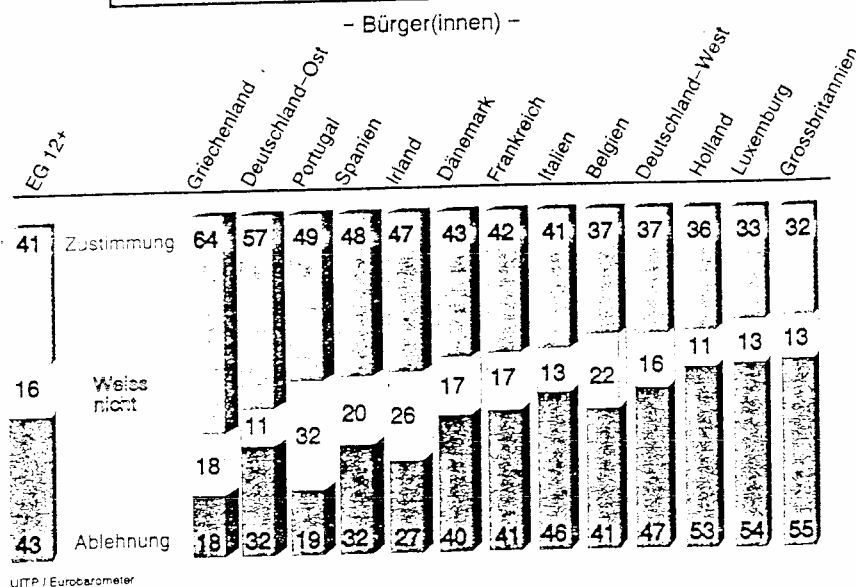




Fig 3

Where the planning needs of pedestrians and motorists conflict, there is also a clear preference. Pedestrians should have priority, even if this would involve disadvantages for the drivers.

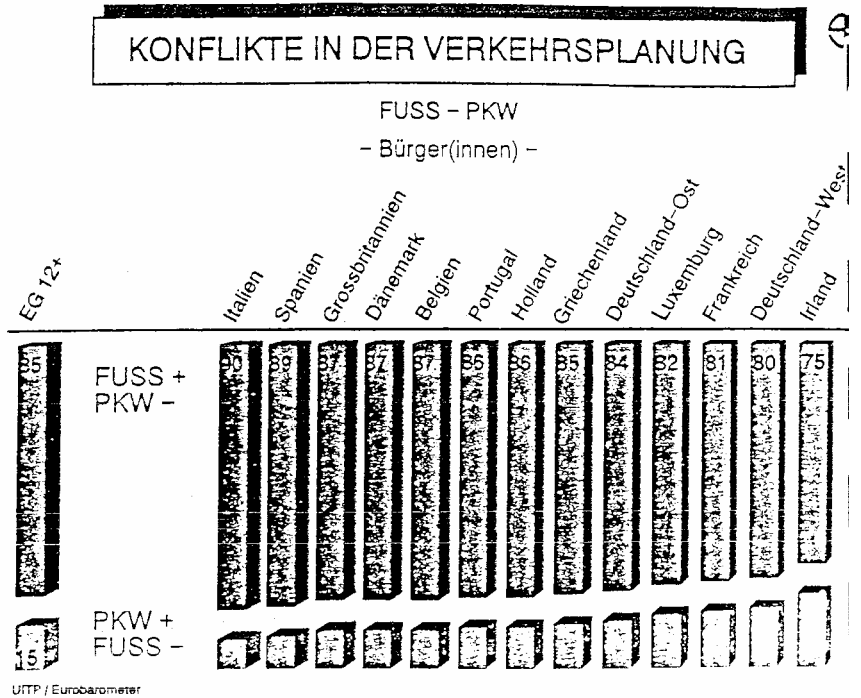
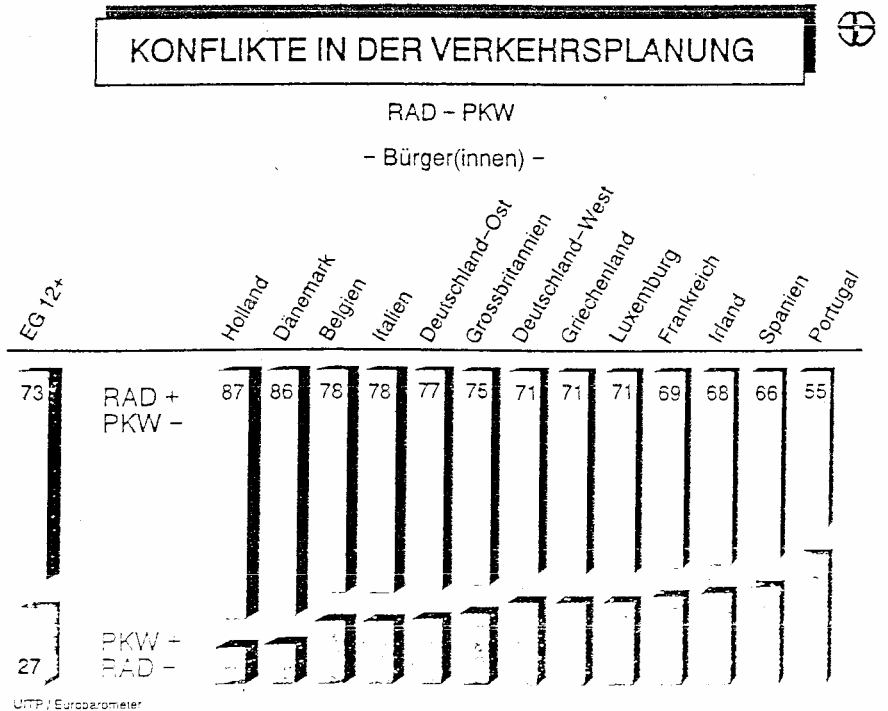


Fig 4

Planners should also give cyclists priority over cars - in all EC countries.



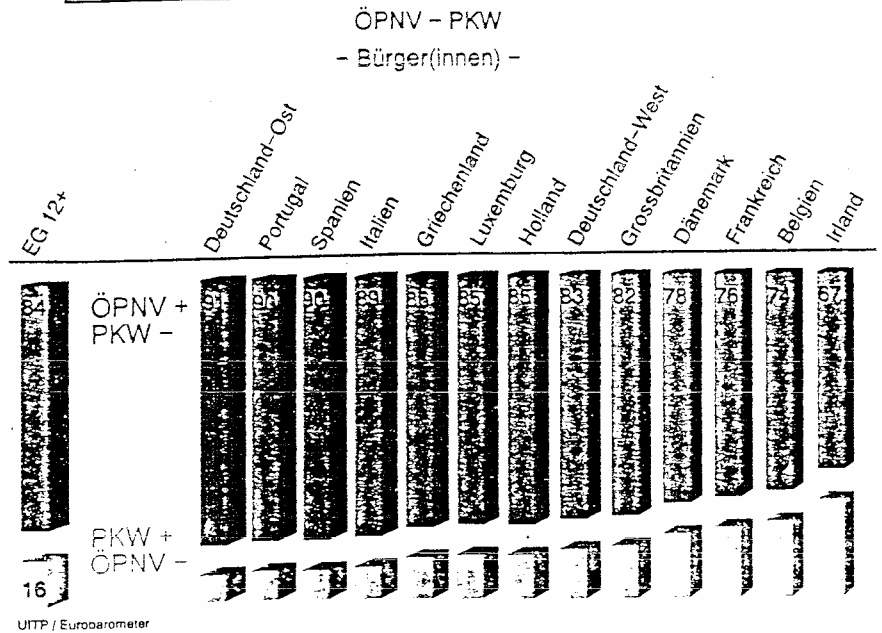


KONFLIKTE IN DER VERKEHRSPANUNG



Fig 5

In the conflict between public and private transport, a clear majority in all EC countries was in favour of priority for public transport.



KONFLIKTE IN DER VERKEHRSPANUNG

Fig 6

Although the public had practically all the same priorities, politicians and planners suppose that the majority would still prefer car-orientated traffic planning and policies.

