



Car sharing to reduce emissions and reclaim public space for people in Bremen

Free Hanseatic City of Bremen, Germany

IN A NUTSHELL

Since developing the world's first municipal car sharing action plan in 2009, Bremen has reached more than 22,000 active car sharing users. More than 7,000 users got rid of a car – freeing up road space for other uses. The city is also experiencing a reduction in GHG emissions and a modal shift towards sustainable transport.

Starting point & vision

Bremen is a city of active mobility where 25% of citizens regularly walk and another 25% cycle. These are Bremen's key transport modes to fight congestion and limit emission. However, car ownership is still a problem since it causes the overuse of street space. While the combination of walking, cycling and integrated public transport services is an alternative to using a car, Bremen's Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) also provides an alternative to owning a car.

Car sharing is a tool to reduce the number of private vehicles without limiting mobility. 80% of car sharing users in the city do not own a car. Bremen has been a frontrunner in promoting this practice for many years, featuring it as a key element of the city's SUMP which was awarded the SUMP Award in 2015. The measure supports low-emission and space-efficient mobility, aiming at shifting from motorized to non-motorized and public transport, and from car ownership to usership to reclaim street space.

City initiatives

Car sharing started in Bremen in 1990 as an environmental initiative and developed into a market-based operation. In 1998, Bremen created its first combined offer of public transport and car sharing (*Bremer Karte plus AutoCard*). In 2003, Bremen opened its first on-street car sharing stations (*mobil.punkt*), which was a novelty under German legislation.

Seeing the benefits for the city and its transport system, in 2009 the city of Bremen developed the world's first municipal car sharing action plan with subsequent policies and projects. It includes the following actions:

- Expansion of the network of *mobil.punkte* and *mobil.punktchen* (car sharing stations publicly available)
- Integration of car sharing in new housing developments



Car sharing station as part of multi-modal mobility mix in Bremen © Michael Glotz-Richter, Bremen

FREE HANSEATIC CITY OF BREMEN, GERMANY:



Bremen: UNESCO world heritage city centre
© Michael Glotz-Richter

Population: 569,352 (2019)	Area 325.56 km ²
Signatory to the Covenant of Mayors since: 2008	CO2 emission reduction target: -60% by 2030 (1990) and climate neutrality by 2038 Covenant of Mayors emission reduction target: 40% by 2030

- Integration of car sharing with public transport
- Integration of car sharing in the fleet management of companies and public institutions
- Extensive public relations

One of the main elements of success of Bremen's car sharing policy is its great investment in stakeholder participation in the planning of new mobility hubs. The development of this car sharing concept included the involvement of the boroughs, to perfectly embed the initiative into the SUMP; public companies such as public transport operators; and local private companies acting as the operators.

However, it was necessary to explain the implications to the population, which was achieved guiding them through the functioning, the cost and the practicalities of the project. The initiative has always been promoted through provider-neutral communication campaigns, in order to strictly highlight the advantages of car sharing for society as a whole. One of the main examples of this communication campaign is the development of the character Udo, a hero whose name also stands for "Use it. Don't own it."

Results

One target of Bremen's Car Sharing Action Plan was to achieve 20,000 active car sharing users by 2020 and have 5,000 less cars on the road. In 2022, Bremen reached its goal, with more than 22,000 car sharing users. User surveys conducted to draft the [final report](#) that was published in 2018 on the impact of car sharing in Bremen, show that the city would have 7,000 more vehicles on the streets without the car sharing services, which translates into the use of more than 35 kilometres of street space.

The surveys demonstrate that car sharing users tend to use sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport more often, which leads to **reduced GHG emissions**, and a reduced need for cars. In fact, 80% of Bremen's car sharing users don't have a car in their household. This has directly impacted the local urban economy, as car sharing users tend to shop more in the city's neighbourhoods and centre and much less in the peripheral shopping malls.

Next steps and replicability

Car sharing in Bremen is an initiative that has been shared with many cities to enhance its replicability through European projects such as the North Sea Interreg projects: CARE-North and SHARE-North,

The main success factors of Bremen's example are the reliability of the service and the proximity of car sharing stations. Municipalities increase the attractiveness by offering street space for car sharing stations. Thus, Bremen will further extend its network of stations as part of its street space management and its mobility management.

The Bremen Car Sharing Action Plan has served as the blueprint for the [City of Ghent](#) and inspired many others. Today, it is common to find *mobil.punkte* in the German cities of Aachen, Erlangen, Fürth, Kempten, Leer, Nuremberg and Rostock. The Bremen design has also been reproduced on [mobility hubs in Bergen, Norway](#).



CONTACT

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KEY FIGURES

21,000+ active car sharing users (2022)

6,000 cars replaced - equivalent to 30 km of street space

400+ cars available for sharing in **135+** stations

~ **1/3** of car sharing users not using private car



FINANCING THE PROJECT

- + **Financing sources for car sharing promotion and implementation of mobil.punkt stations on public street space include city financial resources, and the European projects below:**
 CiViTAS Vivaldi
 Moses (FP5)
 Momo (Intelligent Energy for Europe)
 CARE-North (Interreg North Sea)
 SHARE-North
- + **Total amount for stations and awareness activities:**
 €50,000 to €100,000 annually

USEFUL LINKS

- » [Final report 'Analysis of the impacts of car-sharing in Bremen, Germany'](#), Team Red Deutschland (2018)
- » [Share North project](#) (European project on shared mobility)
- » [Article on 20,000 car sharing users in Bremen](#), Share North (2021)
- » [UDO \(Use it - don't own it\) car sharing cinema commercial](#)
- » [Ghent and Milan win international car sharing awards](#)
- » [Shared Mobility: A Part of a Low Carbon Culture](#)
- » [Bergen - A City dedicated to mobility hubs, emissions reduction and transnational learning](#)