

Catching a ride on Brazil's sustainable transport revolution

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Some of the most innovative sustainable transport initiatives are being driven by the world's emerging economies. An EU-funded project is making sure that European industry can learn and prosper from these developments.

"Europe-Brazil cooperation projects are often aimed at delivering advanced technology from Europe to Brazil," explains VIAJEO PLUS (<http://viajeoplus.eu/>) coordinator Yanying Li, Senior Manager at ERTICO - ITS Europe, an umbrella organisation promoting 'intelligent transport'. "This initiative is a two-way learning project. Brazil has demonstrated strong innovation and fast adoption of new solutions on urban mobility."



(http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/sites/horizon2020/files/styles/h2020_large/public/newsroom/fotolia_73878557_subscription_s_10591_7.jpg?itok=VZ84V_Ww)

A two-way street

A notable example is the country's Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). Developing an understanding of the policy trends and technological developments happening in Brazil, says Li, is vital if European industry is to compete in the Brazilian market and maintain its global competitiveness. The VIAJEO PLUS project, which began in May 2013, is working on this through the exchange of knowledge and sharing of good practices and innovations in sustainable urban mobility.

The mission is to benchmark outstanding solutions for innovative and green urban mobility in Europe, Latin America, China and Singapore, and facilitate the uptake of these solutions across different cities in these regions.

"The project team has already carried out a number of case studies of innovative urban mobility solutions implemented in Brazilian cities, such as BRT for big events in Rio de Janeiro, BRT overtaking lanes in Curitiba and flexible cycling lanes in Sao Paulo," says Li. "Such case studies have helped to identify implementation challenges as well as benefits to the overall transport in the host cities. This has helped European policy-makers and researchers to gain a sound understanding of such systems, which could lead to their eventual implementation."

The project has also organised city showcases in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo, which were attended by European policy-makers, researchers and industry representatives. They were able to experience Brazilian transport for themselves, meet their Brazilian counterparts and establish prospective business opportunities for business in Latin America.

By April 2016, the project will have developed executive plans for implementing new transport solutions, created a new web-based 'Virtual Best Solution' book to facilitate wider uptake across more cities and regions, and put in place a 'twinning cities' programme to allow city representatives to experience innovative solutions for future implementation. The project will also develop recommendations on priorities for future cooperation in transport research.

Cities of the future

Cities face ever-increasing demands on their transportation systems, especially in developing regions with growing car ownership and rapid urban migration. Even more than heavy infrastructure investment, strategic mobility management is becoming the most important tool for meeting this demand.

“A new economic world order is emerging at extraordinary speed,” Li points out. “Today’s emerging markets will soon be industrialised countries. In order to sustain European transport’s leading position on the global stage, European industry needs to forge new relationships. This project will help European industry to better understand global trends in the sustainable transport sector and learn from Brazil their needs and their innovations.”

See also:

CORDIS (http://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/109827_en.html)

 (<http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/print/1994>)

 (<http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/printpdf/1994>)