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ISPARK parking Turkey

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Description

Istanbul has major and growing parking problems. In 2005 the Greater Istanbul Municipality created a special parking organisation, ISPARK (Istanbul Parking Management Trade Inc.), to introduce on-street parking controls and a more structured parking policy in many of its busiest areas.

Background & Objectives

Istanbul is a city of 15 million people living at high densities in relatively small areas, with 2.5 million vehicles, 90 % of which have to park on-street, and economic growth of 10 % per year. Parking demand is intense as car ownership grows from its current level of around 150 per 1000 people. There is also very little off-street parking, and a tradition of "informal" control of on-street parking in areas of high demand. ISPARK now controls 51 off-street car parks with a total of 17,000 spaces, and 10,000 on-street spaces in 226 different locations. It was created to:

- offer a safe and friendly parking service,
- create a "parking culture" as part of urban culture,
- gradually improve the public perception and image of parking,
- create a full parking inventory,
- provide new parking at key interchange points,
- implement user friendly parking payment systems,
- increase off-street parking,
- encourage off-street parking facilities, and
- use parking as a tool to encourage public transport use.

Implementation

ISPARK is an arms length company regulated by the Greater Istanbul Municipality to manage parking on its behalf. Despite the lack of central and local government guidance and having to operate without an official parking strategy for the whole city, ISPARK has its own objectives and policies for its parking operations. At present ISPARK operates without legal enforcement capability. Some 1008 staff have been trained and employed, approx. 10% of whom worked previously in the "informal" sector. There is a clear ISPARK brand for staff uniforms, literature and signage, and clear pricing structures exist. In general there is an aim to move parking from on-street to off-street in order to create more space for moving traffic and pedestrians, so pricing aims to make off-street parking more attractive than on-street. Whilst sales and enforcement are currently manual, ISPARK is developing automatic parking payment by mobile phone. It is also constructing new off-street car parks although this is limited by high land prices, and build costs that vary between US$7,500 to US$12,000 per space.

Conclusions

An example of how ISPARK uses its car parks to manage public transport use is shown in the pricing structure in different parts of the city. At Sisli, one of Istanbul's key business locations in the European part of the city, on-street parking costs YTL4 (€2.30) per hour to stimulate parking turnover and use by shoppers and business visitors. In the more residential suburb of Bostanci on the Asian side, parking all day next to the ferry terminal (with frequent services to the European side) costs YTL3, thus acting as an incentive to park and ride.

In a city where history and land-use are not especially conducive to the control of parking, ISPARK is making significant progress in administering Istanbul's parking more rationally and in creating acceptance of parking management amongst motorists.

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