EU project supports living labs to demonstrate sustainable urban mobility

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Body:

The EU-funded CIVITAS ECCENTRIC project is supporting five “living labs” in which initiatives are being tested that will demonstrate the potential benefits of different actions for delivering sustainable urban mobility.

Delivering sustainability and combatting air pollution are at the core of current European policies,
as is the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Transport in European urban areas is responsible for much of the poor air quality in cities and a significant percentage of their greenhouse gas emissions. In this context, the EU-funded CIVITAS ECCENTRIC program was born. It aims to set up five "living labs" to test initiatives that help to support innovative freight logistics and a more sustainable mobility system in suburban areas.

The project is implemented in five European cities: the Swedish capital Stockholm, Turku in neighbouring Finland, the Spanish capital Madrid, Munich (Germany) and the Bulgarian city of Ruse. It aims to demonstrate the potential and replicability of integrated and inclusive urban planning approaches, innovative policies and emerging technologies. The "living labs" serve as testing grounds for cleaner technologies, new regulations, services and partnerships between the public and private sectors. The cities are aiming to tackle the challenges in various ways:

- The Municipality of Stockholm is working with different companies to implement solutions, such as mobility-as-a-service (MaaS) and peer-to-peer car sharing. This is done to raise awareness and promote 'car-light' lifestyles, thus reducing traffic congestion and emissions.
- Madrid’s main goal is to reduce the overall number of vehicles entering its business centres and, as a long-term goal, to reduce air pollution. This is done through smart parking management in peripheral business areas that prioritise clean and high occupancy vehicles.
- In Munich, a scheme is being developed that aims to implement a sustainable and affordable e-trike sharing scheme for residents with reduced mobility. Munich has also introduced the use of cargo bikes to replace delivery trucks for smaller packages with the aim of reducing the amount of car and truck deliveries by 5%.

CIVITAS ECCENTRIC, which continues until the end of August 2020, will demonstrate living examples of how small projects can deliver significant results and serve as a basis for other European cities to improve their transport policies.

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