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Editorial

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This issue of TOTS deals to a large degree with everyday mobility and mode choice issues. It starts with an analysis of travel habits of households in Sri Lanka. Gunathilaka et al., reflected by Vehicle Kilometres Travelled (VKT) and Personal Kilometres Travelled (PKT). Trips in a typical week, during holidays, at festival days and during vacations, travel modes and socio demographical data were asked for in the frame of surveys. Sampling and data aggregation were carried out in such a way that weighted VKT and PKT estimates could be obtained. The findings can efficiently be used for transport planning, policy making, emission calculations, energy consumption estimations and similar issues by the responsible transport and environmental agencies of the country.

In his article, N. Ali from Pakistan suggest a way how to evaluating sustainable urban transport by answering the question how one can identify smart mobility indicators that are connected to the three sustainability pillars, the economic, ecological and social dimensions. The author does not mention ecology, but accessibility, which actually is a social aspect rather than an ecological one. Ecology comes in indirectly, without being referred to explicitly, as the author speaks about, and hints to, the sustainability of the transport systems, with special focus on urban mobility. The article of Ali that is based on an extensive literature study produces a list of main indicators of sustainability referred to by different researchers in the field of urban transport systems. The idea is that the reviewed indicators are applied more objectively and accurately in order to achieve smart(er) urban mobility patterns.

However, in order to achieve sustainable transport patterns based on sustainable transport systems, many barriers need to be eliminated. S.H. Sajib diligently displays the short-comings of the inadequate public transport system in Dhaka, Bangladesh, as a case study. He shows that these short comings have a detrimental social impact on the people in Dhaka, especially for the low and middle-income communities. From livelihood to the urban communities' mobility, all life-related matters are directly or indirectly related to public transport. Sajib states that the transport system in this city is one of the worst in the world. He uses Vanclay's Social Impact Assessment in order to investigate the impact of the low-quality public transport system. In-depth interviews with 1800 respondents were carried out to this end. As the most sever social consequences, the author identifies severe traffic safety problems, the absence of protection for the more vulnerable groups, social isolation, reduced mobility, loss of social capital, cultural deprivation and inappropriate travel costs.

Ideas are needed that help to promote sustainable transport in general, and especially in cities. A. Escobar et al. present Intelligent Communication Technologies (ICT) that have the potential to enhance a development in the direction of more sustainable systems. In fact, they identified a number of projects at the forefront of the study of urban mobility. The authors argue, legitimately so, that taking these projects as models could be useful not only for the discussion concerning sustainable urban mobility, but also for developing and implementing sustainable systems with the help of ICT.

When speaking about sustainability, it is necessary to remind of the fact that many researchers also consider autonomous cars as a step in the right direction concerning "wished-for" future traffic systems. P. Zamecnik et al. studied the question how people in the Czech Republic speak about autonomous cars. Main topics and concerns regarding the issue of autonomous vehicles in the Czech population were identified with the help of a qualitative analysis of internet discussions on popular Czech news portals. Also, collections were performed over a longer period of time - from July 2014 to February 2020 – in order to address the changes in attitudes through time. The analysis revealed a general scepticism and a large number of concerns that, according to the authors, mainly stemmed mainly from insufficient knowledge of the topic. However, respondents also mention negative experience with elements of automation known so far. On the other hand, the loss of driving pleasure is a concern that is not related to experience but something that is expected, of course, when the car "drives" autonomously. The respondents also mention distrust of the manufacturers and legal and ethical questions. The interaction with VRUs and with drivers of conventional vehicles are also mentioned as potential problem areas. Moreover, the risk of hacker attacks is referred to as one larger-order problem. The article underlines that the aspects mentioned stem from Czech respondents and they discuss aspects that are comparable to what is known from other countries as well as aspects that are different, or special, for the Czech Republic.

The issue of traffic safety is only indirectly included in the articles discussed above, but it is there in all cases, as a part of the concept of sustainability and also as a concern connected to the discussion of autonomous vehicles. The last paper by D. Vankov from Australia deals with traffic safety directly, namely with the criteria to select a technology for a road safety behavioural change intervention. It refers to smartphones or virtual reality that could be attractive tools with the potential to trigger behavioural change. In fact, contemporary research quite frequently focusses on examining user experience and technology acceptance, as important steps in order to understand how novel technology could function when implemented in practice. However, as the author states, less is known about the actual effectiveness of novel technologies in practice. This limited knowledge represents a potential challenge to researchers when deciding which particular technology example to choose for their work. In reaction to this, Vankov proposes an informed approach to making that choice, particularly for road safety interventions, and he suggests criteria for initial technology impact evaluation, which should help to compare different technology examples.

To conclude, this issue of TOTS provides some examples of barriers to the development of sustainable transport systems and discusses ways how to overcome such problems in different respects. (Traffic) safety is thereby seen as on important ingredient in the concept of sustainability. But there are more, and probably even more important, characteristics of traffic systems than just traffic safety that constitute sustainable systems.