

TAXIS / SMART
MOBILITY

**BEST PRACTICES
BOOKLET**



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INTRODUCTION

Taxis 4 Smart Mobility (T4SM) is a **coalition of like-minded, innovative, and socially responsible taxi organisations** engaged in the development of sustainable cities, peri-urban and rural areas by greening their taxi fleets and embracing technological innovations. Our members operate in and represent the taxi industry of Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland.

Thanks to its wide membership across Europe, the members of our coalition have an excellent understanding of the taxi business. T4SM aims to become the European voice of the taxi industry in the development of sustainable and smart mobility. We aim to ensure that the taxi industry continues to be regulated under local and national legislation, in line with the subsidiarity principle, as the circumstances under which it operates are context-specific to local areas – from Europe’s smallest village to its biggest metropolises. Moreover, we aim to ensure mobility to everyone, anytime in the most sustainable way.

The taxi (or on-demand mobility) sector works together with local authorities to improve infrastructures, air quality, and the liveability of cities. The sector also supports the advancement of the working conditions and social protection of taxi drivers. Taxis have a long-lasting history of being an inseparable part of cities, whether big or small, metropolitan or rural, and not only assisting people in getting around but also collaborating with the local authorities and public transport systems across Europe.

We call on the European Commission to pay close attention to the many different geographies, transport infrastructures, and cultures across Europe. Therefore, the taxi business and the mobility sector cannot be regulated with a one-size-fits-all approach.

The taxi sector is a crucial player in the public transport chain. We are an essential relay when parts of the public transport system (e.g. buses, metros, trams, or trains) no longer meet the needs of a specific population or when the responsiveness of a fleet must be active to compensate for the interruption of public transport such as in the event of strikes, bad weather, terrorist attacks or a pandemic.

In this booklet, we will share some of the best and proudest examples of the work of our members that substantiate our position. As we are constantly expanding our membership, these examples generally reflect the work of our members and are not exhaustive.

TAXIS IN THE TIMES OF COVID-19



With the COVID-19 pandemic spreading at an unprecedented speed across Europe in 2020, it became clear that urban and rural transports need to become safer and more reliable for essential trips. Since confinement measures differed across Europe, the same set of guidelines for safer transport could not have been implemented and applied in the same way in two different places. Due to the nature of the service, taxis quickly became one of the safest options for those who needed to go to work, shop for groceries, or see a doctor. The members of T4SM believe that the taxi industry has a social responsibility towards society and the cities in which they operate.

Transporting medical staff



GERMANY – Munich:
Taxi drivers volunteer to transport medical staff



During the lockdown in spring 2020, taxis of the city of Munich supported the fight against COVID-19 by offering free rides to medical staff. The only prerequisite to benefit from this initiative was to present proof of work in the healthcare sector. The initiative was mainly supported voluntarily by the taxi drivers who provided this service in their free time and the costs were borne by the taxi companies themselves. Thousands of rides were provided to medical staff, thus contributing to safely fighting the pandemic.



THE NETHERLANDS – Eindhoven:
Special taxis for COVID-19 patients

The taxi company Van Gerwen, in Eindhoven, the Netherlands, has been providing a 'corona taxi' service, helping COVID-19 patients to the hospital or elsewhere, as some do not have transportation means or family members to help with this necessity. Customers are taken to their destination with specially adapted taxis. The vehicles have been equipped with protective plexiglass, and the drivers wear medical masks and gloves. After each ride, the car is thoroughly disinfected and aired for at least half an hour. The cars run alongside the taxis that can be ordered by everyone and are not used for other customers.



Making taxis safer



AUSTRIA:
'Safe taxi'



In spring 2020, Taxi 40100 Vienna, a T4SM member, started offering a service on its app called 'safe taxi' allowing the users to opt for a taxi that has a partition wall installed for their ride. Taxi 40100 drivers made sure to wear a mask and use disinfectant gel. As for the passengers, they were asked to wear a mask and sit in the right rear seat, to comply with social distancing requirements. The safety of drivers and passengers is at the heart of the taxi industry's activities. The 'safe taxi' option was implemented in the Taxi.eu app and made available across multiple cities, becoming one of its most popular services.



FRANCE:
Hygiene Charter



In May 2020, a French member of our coalition, G7, collaborated with the government and the Health Department and created a Charter for its drivers to help them safe-proof their vehicles. The Charter was accompanied by a checklist for drivers which included instructions for operating their vehicles during COVID-19. It provided training videos, instructions on how to wear a mask, and more.



The taxi business serving the people



AUSTRIA – Vienna:
Taxi voucher for elderly



As the lockdown began in March 2020 and with the strict measures to ban physical contact, the local government of Vienna allocated € 15m to offer senior residents a € 50 taxi voucher. Every resident of Vienna over 65 years old was able to apply for a taxi voucher, which helped to minimise the risk of infection through possible contact on buses and trains while going grocery shopping or to the doctor. The vouchers were issued through a T4SM member, Taxi 40100. Over 100 000 residents of Vienna applied for the vouchers, bringing the total value to around 5.5 million euros.



GERMANY – Berlin:
'Shopping trip' taxi

In April 2020, Taxi Berlin started offering shopping trips with an electronic order list in its app. Anyone who was ill or worried about shopping due to the risk of infection could request a delivery. Users of the application were offered the 'shopping trip' in addition to the taxi, XXL, Business and Green options, underlined by the motto 'You shop, we deliver'. This option was also made available on the Taxi.eu app.



ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY



Countries across Europe are starting their journeys towards climate neutrality and reducing emissions in transport. Our members have been investing time and resources in greening their fleets and looking for innovative ways to contribute to this goal. Admittedly, there is still a lack of business incentives, which is slowing down the green transition. Nonetheless, over the years, our members have become trusted partners of local authorities ranging from collaborating on joint zero- and low-emission vehicle procurement projects to installing technologies to rethink urban mobility planning. Benefiting from tailor-made local legislation, the taxi sector has been able to achieve significant emission reductions and continues to advance in this domain.

Fleet greening

FRANCE – Paris



G7, the largest taxi company in France and a T4SM member, has been going green for years and in particular through its G7 Green project. Launched in 2007, the G7 Green is the first fleet of environmentally responsible taxi vehicles in France. With 3,500 hybrid and electric cars, this fleet represents 40% of the total G7 fleet. This type of taxi can be ordered just like a regular taxi - on the same app or at the call centre. Besides, there is no price difference between a “green” and an “ordinary” taxi, which makes it fully accessible to anyone who wishes to use such services. Moreover, G7 is the first company to provide its subscribers with the carbon footprint of their journey (i.e. the GHG emissions generated by a taxi ride).



GERMANY – Munich



The Münchner Taxi Zentrum (MTZ), a T4SM member and a member of the Taxi.eu platform, operates a fully eco-certified fleet with over 80 hybrid and natural gas vehicles since 2011. In July 2018 it cooperated with local authorities in Munich and Jaguar and expanded its fleet to include 10 fully electric vehicles (e-taxis), thereby committing to lead the future transition of the transport system. One of MTZ’s main goals is to help the German city of Munich reverse the congestion and pollution problems it faces. Applying an optimal and modern approach with the shortest travel distances, minimum waiting time, and the possibility of pooling vehicles, the mobility system guarantees the residents of Munich a greener and more comfortable way to move around the city.

Together with expanding their electric vehicle fleet, the dedicated charging infrastructure has been set up at the MTZ headquarters for the smooth two-shift operation of the taxis.

The fleet of electric taxis was partially funded by the E-Mobil initiative of the city of Munich, which subsidizes each kilometer traveled with passengers with 0.2 €. The city of Munich has released 2 million euros for the deployment of the fleet of electric taxis.



Vehicles from the MTZ's e-taxi fleet



AUSTRIA – Vienna



Taxi 40100, a T4SM member and the main taxi dispatch centre in Austria, is constantly working on greening its fleet.

The company takes very seriously its responsibility not only to its customers, partners, and employees but also to the environment. To match its ambition, 54% of Taxi 40100's fleet of 2,000 vehicles is now composed of hybrid and electric cars (**Green Taxi**¹), and their number is increasing. The company tracks the carbon footprint of its employees and will issue trip receipts with carbon footprints (i.e. the CO₂ emissions exerted during the ride) from 2021 on.

Green Taxi can be ordered via the app or by calling the dispatch centre. The taxi is sent automatically using the shortest and fastest route, which avoids wasting driving distance and minimises waiting time for customers. The prices for a Green Taxi are the same compared to the regular fleet of Taxi 40100.

Taxi 40100 has been climate neutral for several years. It is offsetting its CO₂ emissions by financially contributing to hydroelectric and wind power plant projects in Brazil, India, and Mali.²

¹ <https://www.taxi40100.at/taxi40100/greentaxi/>

² https://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20200803_OTS0007/bereits-ueber-50-prozent-der-flotte-von-taxi-40100-ist-green-bild



A vehicle of the Taxi 40100's Green Taxi fleet



THE NETHERLANDS – The Hague

The taxi industry in the Netherlands, represented by T4SM member **Koninklijk Nederlands Vervoer**, has been active in greening their fleets and reducing CO₂ emissions. The first fleet of hydrogen taxis in the Netherlands, owned by Noot Personenvervoer and developed by Toyota, was deployed in The Hague on 1 June 2019. Noot Personenvervoer is one of the largest passenger carriers in the Netherlands with 1,200 taxis, small buses, and coaches. Cars are used as part of the 'social transport'³ under the Social Support Act for those unable to use public transport, allowing around 6,800 people to enjoy the system every year. As of 1 October 2020,⁴ the fleet has reached a milestone of 1.5 million kilometers and has since been expanded to 40 vehicles.

In line with the best practices that the T4SM members are already implementing, we are calling on the European Commission to provide more financial support to taxi companies to green their fleets. Read our Manifesto for more information.

³ <https://ai-mobiliteit.nl/ai-mobiliteit/download/common/aim-rapport-kerncijfers-zorgvervoer-2017.pdf>

⁴ <https://powerlinks.news/netherlands/pr/hydrogen-powered-taxi-fleet-covered-1-5-million-kms>

INNOVATION & DATA

The taxi industry recognises the importance of data in building more efficient services for citizens and improving various aspects of mobility. The members of T4SM are therefore open to sharing with the local authorities their so-called ‘cold’ or ‘raw’ data. Such data would help to analyse and understand mobility models and in turn improve air quality and traffic congestion. However, the limited capability of authorities to read the data hinders its efficiency and diminishes the need to collect it in the first place.

It is therefore important that EU policy helps the local and national authorities in developing tools for reading the data shared by the mobility sector. At the same time, data sharing must remain voluntary and ensure the protection of competitiveness and non-discrimination of the mobility sector players. Obligating businesses to share their data would put a strain on them. It would divert the resources from greening the fleets and innovating, to looking for ways to collect and share data in a way readable for the authorities.



GERMANY – Berlin [Taxi inclusion in MaaS]

 Since June 2019, Taxi Berlin has been participating in a pilot project of the Jelbi mobility app in Berlin, Germany. The app brought several means of transport to a single platform - the local public transport, taxis, bikes, cars, and ride-sharing. The main objective of the app is to help users find the fastest way from point A to point B, relying on several types of transport. Besides buses and trains, it includes also rent bicycles, electric scooters, and rental cars. All linked transport modes can be booked and paid for directly in the app. Now Jelbi is at the heart of Berlin’s public transport authority’s BVG smart mobility strategy #Berlinsteigtum. It is the biggest Mobility as a Service (MaaS) in the world as it connects every shared mobility offer in the German capital into a single market as an attractive alternative to private cars.

The taxi sector, as part of the public transport system, works tirelessly to continue being part of the urban mobility of tomorrow and to help cities and their inhabitants optimise taxi trips and contribute to a more sustainable environment. The taxi industry is committed to collaborating with local authorities to help improve mobility services in cities and peri-urban areas.

GERMANY – Munich Umparken Schwabing-West

 In the summer of 2020, a pilot project of the initiative Umparken Schwabing-West took place in the Schwabing-West area of Munich. The project followed 7 households in Munich, where for 4 weeks, residents gave up their private cars and instead took advantage of the public transport. Participants received an individual and extensive mobility package which included various forms of mobility options, including taxis. The goal of this project was to gain knowledge of the opportunities and challenges of multimodal mobility to transform the mobility of the future. Interestingly, the spaces left vacant due to the cars not being parked there were temporarily transformed into recreation spaces.





AUSTRIA – Linz:
AST-App (Call-Shared-Taxi Day & Night)



Anruf-Sammel-Taxi (Call-Shared-Taxi) is a service by CC Taxicenter GmbH in collaboration with the local public transport Linz AG Linien. At a fixed price, it allows customers to book a taxi following a schedule that you share with other passengers. The automatic GPS positioning determines the location and the customer can then select the preferred departure point. Before you place your order and after the departure time and destination are selected, the AST fare, journey time, and distance are displayed. This service is offered during both day and night time. Such an option is also integrated into the Taxi.eu app. More information can be found [here](https://www.linzag.at/portal/de/privatkunden/unterwegs/anruf_sammel_taxi)⁵.

⁵ https://www.linzag.at/portal/de/privatkunden/unterwegs/anruf_sammel_taxi



FRANCE - MaaS
Alpha Taxis/SNCF

Alpha Taxis uses new technology by participating in a Mobility as a Service (MaaS) project with the SNCF (French train company), via one of its partners. This allows customers to be able to choose their transport provider in complete transparency. Thanks to the price estimator, they can have an idea of the price of the journey in advance. In such a way the customer can choose their mode of transport according to the price displayed and be aware of the service. Moreover, the customer can pay for the service via the mobile application.



MaaS in the NETHERLANDS

The taxi sector in the Netherlands is actively involved in the development and acceleration of Mobility as a Service (MaaS). With their participation in the MaaS-Lab (an initiative of KNV), taxi companies are working towards a public-private partnership for a uniform set of agreements that enables companies and organisations to give each other access to their data and work together in the MaaS value chain within a level-playing field.

In line with the best practices that the T4SM members are already implementing, we are calling on the European Commission to help the local authorities develop suitable tools for data processing and to ensure that the principle of the voluntary data sharing is upheld. Read our Manifesto for more information.



SOCIAL ISSUES

Social protection

Traditionally, the taxi sector has always been subject to local regulation, from operations and safety to the social protection of the taxi drivers. These regulations adapt to the reality of the sector locally and are embraced by the T4SM members. There are different ways the taxi sector is organised across Europe, granting to the cultures and traditions of the Member States. Most often, the taxi drivers are owners and drivers in a contract with the dispatch centres. This allows them to work under an umbrella of a well-known brand, providing credibility to the service and ensuring safety to the passengers. As the drivers are considered 'employees' under the national labour laws, they receive a statutory wage and a level of social protection in terms of healthcare and retirement guarantees. The drivers working in the taxi sector, even though mostly independent, are usually long-term workers, which effectively decreases unemployment in the sector. In comparison, the drivers working in the ride-hailing mobility sector are short-term workers, which creates an unemployment problem in the long-term.

In **Denmark**, some drivers are employees of taxi companies, and others are independent. Nevertheless, the drivers get a percentage of the turnover (49%) and a pension. There is a guaranteed monthly salary if minimum turnover is not achieved (€3200/month). The situation in the **Netherlands** is also different, as a general labour agreement (CAO) is negotiated to ensure better working conditions than the minimum requirements. Therefore the number of employees is much higher than the number of independent contractors when it comes to taxi drivers.

In line with the best practices that the T4SM members are already implementing, we call on the EU to ensure that, on national level and in line with national legislation, employed taxi drivers are guaranteed a minimum wage and that self-employed taxi drivers are guaranteed social protection.

Read our Manifesto for more information.



Alpha Taxis – FRANCE



Alpha Taxis is the first French cooperative group of associated taxis. Their business model - the cooperative society - is based on the effective association of drivers with capital and in decisions with equal rights and duties. An associate driver, co-responsible for the running of his company, is also a driver who is better able to listen to the expectations of his customers. The drivers have a spirit of solidarity which enables them to maintain a constant quality of service. They all adhere to cooperative values and a clear business ethics. Affiliation to the general social security system offers them the best social cover, in particular in the event of a work accident. However, at the tax level, they remain self-employed workers. It is a judicious compromise between the independence of the craft industry and the social coverage of the employee within a collective project.

Accessibility

Patient transport – France

80% of Alpha Taxis drivers are authorized to transport seated patients (taxis with CPAM agreements). Alpha taxis was the first Parisian company to train its drivers in this type of transport and to distribute commercial cards in Braille (written language for the blind). Solidarity commitments also results from various partnerships to ensure a more discreet transport of patients to hospitals. The group also participates in a system to transport people with reduced mobility (slight or heavier disability via TPMR Taxis) in partnership with the city of Paris.



France – Paris: transporting elderly in times of a heatwave



Alpha Taxis was chosen to transfer elderly people from their homes to refreshed places during the heatwave. Its drivers had already intervened during two heatwave plans, the last of which was in August 2016. Moreover, Alpha Taxis is the only company that provides transport for blood donors on behalf of the French Blood Establishment of Ile-de-France, thus facilitating the act of donating blood. The company also promotes blood donation to its passengers, drivers, and employees as part of a partnership with EFS Ile de France.

Taxiphone Assistance – Geneva

 Taxiphone assistance is a set of services adapted to different situations: people having difficulty moving around, taking care of children, or individuals accompanied by assistance dogs. Several drivers are equipped with special vehicles capable of taking care of people in wheelchairs. At no extra charge, this type of service is being increasingly requested. During COVID-19 lockdown, part of the activity was redirected towards the delivery of meals to homes. The implementation of advantageous transport packages with the University Hospital of Geneva (HUG) allows the business today to provide insurance.



CONCLUSION

As illustrated in this booklet, the taxi business truly is a sector that operates best on the local level. It is only on this level that the taxi sector can efficiently innovate, offer new services for the customers, and collaborate with the local authorities in improving the livability, air quality, and other aspects of various European urban, peri-urban and rural areas. Operating at the local level also allows the companies to share best practices and spread information faster among themselves. That allows each taxi service provider to adapt their services to the best of their ability and to adjust to their local context.

Nevertheless, the EU remains an important driving force when it comes to greening the taxi fleets. The EU must provide sufficient funding so that taxi companies can advance in this regard. Moreover, it is crucial to ensure technological neutrality at the EU level and send the right signal to car manufacturers to incentivise them and to provide more zero- and low-emission car models in the market.

Digital innovation and data sharing are important but sensitive matters. Many different interests need to be considered before a flexible regulatory framework can be put in place. T4SM believes that such a European framework should give the Member States enough room to adapt to the local realities. It is also of utmost importance to ensure that local authorities have the right tools to analyse the data and that the data sharing is voluntary.

Overall, the taxi sector continues to operate locally, not only providing a service to European citizens in cities and rural areas but also helping the local authorities tackle the COVID-19 crisis.



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www.taxis4smartmobility.com

