

Structural Accessibility for Urban Policy: the case of Greater Oporto

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There is a general recognition of the need for a holistic approach to urban planning and policy making. The lack of policy integration is jeopardizing the quality of life and the competitiveness of urban areas as well as their sustainable development. With regard to sustainable travel behaviour (one of the key features of urban sustainability) urban policy is believed to require an integrated approach to land use and transport planning. This paper presents the results of an integrated land use and transport policy approach for mobility management to the Greater Oporto region. This approach is based on the use of the Structural Accessibility Layer (SAL) - a design support tool for integrated land use and transport policies using the concept of structural accessibility to support policy design. The paper presents the results of analysis of the current accessibility conditions and of the resulting potential for sustainable mobility patterns. The SAL was further used in the design of policy recommendations. The results of this case study provide a baseline for the discussion of the role of the accessibility concept for urban policy in the context of sustainable development. Our research shows that the geographical representations of accessibility levels provide a new insight into mobility conditions for sustainability. In addition, the importance of the use of accessibility measures for urban policy is rendered clear, in the context of sustainable development.

Keywords: structural accessibility; urban policy; integrated approach; design support tool.