



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, ECONOMICS AND LAW

A Critique on Best Practices for City Logistics

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Introduction and Background

- Many city logistics projects have been carried out over the past 20 years;
- A few of them fail completely while others achieve some successes but at a modest or rather niche level with limited impacts.
- If the measure of success is the more widespread application of projects in a variety of contexts, then it is evident that relatively few have been scaled up and transferred to other cities.

Problematisation

- There is institutional reluctance to discuss failure.
- This leads to projects being framed in a way that will result in success rather than setting sufficiently demanding and ambitious targets.
- Hence, the idea of failure is absent in Best Practices reports.

Best Practices

What do we mean by '*Best Practices*'?

Best practices are **methods** or **practices** that have been generally accepted as **superior to alternatives** because:

- a) they produce better results than the alternatives or
- b) they have become the norm, for example, complying with rules and regulations or policies.



Figure 1. What is a Best Practice

Best Practices in City Logistics

What do we mean by '*Best Practices*' in city logistics?

In city logistics the best practices are **guides featuring case studies** from across the world. These feature details about the **design of the policies** and their **implementation**, **supporting actions**, the **results of the measures** and **key considerations**.



Figure 2. Bestfact, Best Practice Factory for Freight Transport



Figure 3. SUGAR, Sustainable Urban Goods Logistics Achieved by Regional and Local Policies

Best Practices in City Logistics

- **TURBLOG**, <https://trimis.ec.europa.eu/project/transferability-urban-logistics-concepts-and-practices-world-wide-perspective>
- **BESTUFS I**, <http://www.bestufs.net/bestufs1.html>
- **BESTUGS II**, <http://www.bestufs.net/bestufs2.html>
- **BESTFACT**, <http://www.bestfact.net/>
- **CITYLOG**, <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/233756>
- **CIVITAS**, <https://civitas.eu/>
- **SUGAR**, <http://www.sugarlogistics.eu/>
- **SUMP**, <https://www.eltis.org/resources/training/urban-freight-transport-city-logistics-and-sump-prosperity-training-material>
- **SULP**, <https://www.eltis.org/resources/tools/planning-sustainable-urban-logistics>
- **NCFRP Report 33**- Improving Freight System performance in metropolitan Areas: A Planning guide

Urban Freight Initiatives



Figure 2. Urban freight initiatives.

Figure 4. NCFRP REPORT 33 – figure 2

Failures

According to Oxford Dictionary failures is defined as a “*lack of success in doing or achieving something*”

In city logistics, this should not be viewed as a setback but as a great steppingstone to implementing sustainable, scalable and transferable projects.



Figure 5. Failure Is An Option -- If We Learn From It. Forbes.com

What Is The Reality?

In medicine, medical **trial failures** and **obstacles** are accepted scientifically as many times they either lead or form the results.

BUT

in the business areas **project failures** and/or **trial failures** are essentially seen as wholly negative.

Prior to The Study

An assessment of a range of projects and guides concerning best practices has been performed as a means to extract more information about the features of why the projects do not get copied, become scalable and transferable.

Research Design (1)

The overall design of the study is based on:

- Twenty semi-structured interviews with experts and relevant stakeholder groups:
 - city authorities/local governors,
 - policy makers,
 - urban transport administration,
 - city cooperation organizations,
 - property owners,
 - Swedish transport administration,
 - haulage organization.
- Two workshops after the interviews are analysed.

Research Design (2)

During the workshops we will present to the stakeholders:

- the results of the assessment of a range of projects and guides concerning best practices.
- the results of the interviews.

By discussion and through co-creation achieve a common understanding of the reasons for success and failure and the keys to improved development paths.

Research Design (3)

Aim to perform semi-structured interviews with experts from different fields that have studied or dealt with failure and success in order to evaluate and validate the outcomes of the workshops.

As a final step, we will collect the results and host another round of workshops with the stakeholders to discuss them and draw outcomes and conclusions.

Research Design (4)

Questions to be addressed during the workshops will include:

- *what does scalability and transferability mean for city logistics?*
- *how does scalability and transferability affect city logistics?*
- *can a project be successful if it is not scalable or transferable?*
- *why do the projects left alone/stopped after the end of the implementation process/pilot tests?*
- *what are the reasons or the barriers for the lack of scalability and transferability?*

Expected Outcomes (1)

By detecting and analysing the features preventing projects becoming scalable and transferable, we can:

- identify **how to design** and **manage** projects so that the project's contribution to improving the city logistics system is enhanced.

Expected Outcomes (2)

The outcomes of the study are expected:

- to provide guidance to city logistics projects and the stakeholders within projects
- to better integrate and consider challenges and unexpected opportunities in early stages of implementation process in order to avoid risks and become scalable and transferable.



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Thank You!

Any views and comments expressed in the presentation are those of the authors of the paper.





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