



Thriving STREETS



Designing mobility for attractive cities

Mobility is at the crossroads of various urban policy: Thriving Streets is connecting mobility with economic prosperity, accessibility, inclusion, participation and health to encourage a change towards more resilient and attractive cities. As an URBACT Action Planning Network, this project aims to improve sustainable local policies through integrated action planning and an organised process of exchange and learning among cities across Europe. It is a network of ten cities working together to improve sustainable mobility in urban areas from an economic and social perspective.



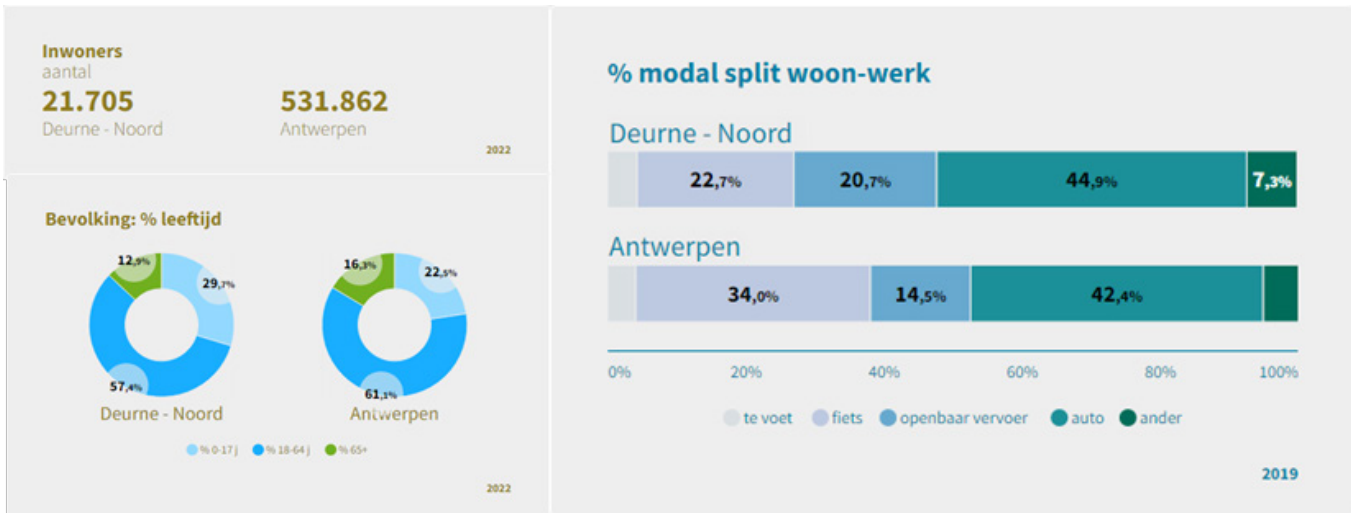
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TOWARDS A DYNAMIC CENTER FOR DEURNE

City context

- Population: 531.862 000 inhabitants (District of Deurne: 80 000)
- Second-largest city of Belgium; Daily urban system +/- 1.000.000 people
- Economic profile: Second-largest seaport in Europe;
- Also known for diamond industry, fashion industry and tourism.
- Geography of the area: Antwerp consists of 9 districts, each with particular characteristics.
- The city is flatland divided by the Schelde river which flows through the city.





Challenge

The Integrated Action Plan focuses on the Deurne district. This neighbourhood was built with a strong emphasis on serving cars and without a distinct centre. Specific challenges include:

- Local shops suffer due to the gradual decay of retail in the last decade, several shops are vacant – the area offers little shopping pleasure.
- Car dominance is still present, a significant part of street surface is occupied by (long-term) parking cars; roads are wide and straight encouraging fast driving, creating unsafe environment for cyclists and pedestrians.
- No public space for youth to hang out, green areas are difficult to access for pedestrians.



Ambition

Turning the intervention area – the Frank Craeybeckxlaan and the Te Couwelaarlei street into a dynamic “heart” of the district.

Small scale actions

A complex temporary intervention was implemented at the intersection of the two selected street, including a road diet (narrowing the street, adjustments to include more cornering), the creation of 3 pop-up squares and the introduction of 30 km/h speed limit, making the public space more liveable and the street more pedestrian-friendly.





Action plan

Our objectives:

1. **Reinforce the local retail cluster**
Increasing commercial concentration, supporting B2B actions organised by the local retailer association.
2. **Reduce the dominance of cars in the streetscape**
Increasing the off-street parking offer, providing infrastructure for other mobility options (e. g. protected bike lanes)

3. **Improve the public domain as a heart for the district**
Increasing the rate of public spaces accessible for and usable by pedestrians through implementing innovative street design solutions.

Lesson learnt

- The intense dialogue with local retailers during the temporary intervention showed that many shop owners have a negative view of their own neighborhood and how it is evolving. Therefore, it's important to properly support positive actions in the neighborhood, so that not only customers are convinced of the potential of the neighborhood, but also the retailers themselves.
- The experience with the temporary intervention has demonstrated that regular and structured consultation with retailers is necessary. When dialogue only starts in response to decisions, you get an energy-consuming conflict instead of an enriching cooperation.
- After a long preliminary phase, people expect more... also a thorough transformation of the public space.
- The transnational exchanges stimulated to look at our strategies from different perspectives and improved the learnings of our experiences; they also provided a lot of inspiration.

The city of **Antwerp** is a partner of the **Thriving Streets network**

