

The Parma Freight Survey

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Survey and analysis of data from face-to-face interviews with shops and businesses in the traffic restricted zone, central Parma, Italy.

Since existing freight data was 10 years old, the Municipality of Parma, together with local stakeholders, designed a new survey to support the city's Integrated Action Plan on Urban Freight. The survey aimed to:

- estimate the number of city centre freight deliveries
- increase the Municipality's knowledge of the supply methods and processes used by retailers and businesses
- identify the range of retailers' local supply problems.



Better understanding of logistics inside the restricted traffic zone



Direct businesses engagement



Low cost survey



Stakeholder involved in survey design and analysing results

Scope of works

Parma's Freight TAILS local freight stakeholders, in the Freight TAILS URBACT Local Group, discussed and agreed the survey questions and methodology. 358 organisations were identified to be interviewed.

City officers and a trainee from the University of Parma conducted interviews with the retailers and businesses in November 2017. A hand-held device allowed responses to be entered directly into the online 'Survey Monkey' tool.

While not all targeted participants were willing to respond, 182 agreed to answer the survey questions. The overall response rate of 53% exceeded expectations and provided a rich source of data to inform the proposed action plan.

Outcomes

The survey provided high-quality local freight data. Example findings include:

- 84% of the deliveries take place between Monday and Friday
- 1 in 3 deliveries occur between 08:00 and 12:00
- 78% of shops use mainly couriers to receive their goods
- Although the average number of weekly deliveries is 7 per shop, the number can vary widely, depending on the type of goods sold. A clothes shop may receive less than 4, while 30-40 deliveries a week may be required by groceries, bars and restaurants.

This data is now providing a common foundation for integrated logistics planning in Parma.

Lessons learnt

The survey was a useful and relatively simple tool to collect data for local freight planning. Lessons learnt included:

- Using Survey Monkey shortened the duration of the survey and eased the paper work, saving time and money.
- Using face-to-face interviews, keeping the survey short, being flexible with retailers and avoiding busy times; increased the response rate.
- As municipal staff with the help of a trainee carried out the survey, there was no need to tender it out, saving both time and money.
- Findings demonstrated that the logistics needs of food and non-food sectors are completely different. The survey gave the Municipality a better understanding of these needs.

Future of the project

The Municipality plans to repeat the same survey in November 2019 to monitor their freight plan. Future approaches could be to work with local municipal police to undertake a new qualitative survey of the types of vehicles entering the city centre.



Stakeholder involvement in the survey design and methodology essential to maximise the overall response rate



Quick and simple face-to-face interviews and being flexible with respondents also helped response rate.



Data collection doesn't need to be expensive



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[Integrated Action Plan for Urban Logistics in Parma](#)

Creating more sustainable cities by collaborating with partners to reduce the impact of urban freight movements

Freight TAILS consists of 10 European cities and is led by Cross River Partnership, a public-private regeneration delivery agency based in London (UK).

