

## **GCRI INTERVIEW**

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### **What current trends in smart transportation are you recognizing in Germany?**

Intermodality, the use of different modes of transport, is an ever-growing trend. A great example is the app "Moovel" in the city of Stuttgart. It gives the user the opportunity to combine different forms of public transportation, such as car sharing, rental bikes, trains and taxis, when mapping out a route and offers the option to pay for one's commute right away.

However, this trend also creates a big challenge. The services these apps provide are regional only and cannot be used nationwide so far. Depending on the distance from someone's location to their destination, they might have to download several different apps in order to cover the entire trip, especially considering the mobility services at the destination itself.

Autonomous driving is on everyone's mind, and the legal issue here is currently the focal point. Data rights and data security are hot topics right now, and not only to insurers. Another pressing question is how to synchronize the different innovation cycles as well as the lifetime cycles of new mobility issues with the activities of city planners.

And last but not least, there is an emerging trend in Germany on researching light electric vehicles (LEV) and the concept of micro-mobility as a solution for the first-/last-mile problem. So far, mainly German automobile suppliers are working on those smaller, lighter vehicles although their potential is not proven yet. In Japan, a similar type of vehicle already has its own classification called "Key Cars".

### **Please describe your work with the Mobility Concepts and Infrastructure Competence team?**

We focus on sustainable mobility in connection with digitalization and the energy transition (in German "Energiewende"). We are taking the perspective of the end user and are looking at the mobility system holistically. We ask ourselves why

individuals still focus on the car as a main mode of transportation. But also, we analyze the inadequacies within the existing mobility system, the upcoming technology and trends and raise the question: with which innovative solutions could we overcome these difficulties and create a user friendly and accepted mobility service system? Furthermore, which conditions need to be created for this to change?

When it comes to the issue of mobility apps we are trying to answer the question of how we can close certain gaps in coverage. We also analyze existing mobility concepts with regards to their ecological and economic impacts. Our data can then provide decision-making criteria for whether electro mobility or other mobility solutions would be beneficial.

### **How do market requirements challenge the implementation of sustainable mobility?**

The biggest discrepancy I see is between mobility service providers, such as parking search apps and car-sharing apps, and different municipalities. While cities set targets for their local road traffic, such as reducing automobile emissions, mobility service providers might create proposals that do not always align very well with these goals. Communities think differently than the service providers. On the other hand, though, municipalities are not as quick to act as mobility services. Even if a city might want to support a special project, they cannot always guarantee support.

### **What implications does smart transportation have for rural communities?**

Although so far the supply of mobility to rural communities is basic and not always guaranteed, we are still seeing really positive consequences for these areas. Here, the one challenge is, among others, to satisfy extremely different user needs due to the demographic range within rural areas. For example, in some rural areas we speak of the so called trainee-taxi (Azubi-Taxi). Parents need to drive their 15 – 18 year old children to their trainee position because of a lack of alternative transportation. On the other hand, we have to face the mobility needs of the increasing number of older people (> 60 years) which is completely different to the one, mentioned before. Digitalization in the mobility sector could bring new solutions for both groups and will increasingly benefit those who live outside of cities and their more stable public transportation systems.

But to overcome the problems, it would be good, if more attention were given to the needs in rural areas. Just do a google experiment and search for “future of cities” and then “future of rural areas”. Look at the different figures and visions. The results are alarming!

## **How can commuters start today to be more sustainable in their travels?**

We always advise commuters to reflect on their needs and consider their typical transportation behavior over the course of a week or month. These observations can be entered in a mobility app to calculate the best use of public transport that is both efficient and environmentally friendly. Some German federal transportation networks use bulletin boards in order to learn what commuters need and how to better respond.

Companies are also increasingly working on corporate mobility management. Instead of the company car, there are now models in place with service bicycles or special tickets for public transportation that are sponsored by the company.