



Strategies to manage barriers in policy formation and implementation of road pricing packages



Claus Hedegaard Sørensen ^{a,*}, Karolina Isaksson ^b, James Macmillen ^c, Jonas Åkerman ^d, Florian Kressler ^e

^a Technical University of Denmark (DTU), Bygningstorvet 116B, DK 2800 Kgs. Lyngby, Denmark

^b Swedish National Road and Transport Research Institute (VTI), SE-581 95 Linköping, Sweden

^c Transport Studies Unit, University of Oxford, South Parks Road, Oxford OX1 3QY, UK

^d Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), SE-100 44 Stockholm, Sweden

^e AustriaTech Ltd., Donau-City-Strasse 1, 1220 Vienna, Austria

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Available online 26 November 2013

Keywords:

Policy packaging
Road pricing
Congestion charging
Barrier management
Strategy
Policy-making

ABSTRACT

In the transport policy domain, as in other highly-contested spheres of public policy, it is commonplace for certain policy measures to emerge as promising only to then remain unimplemented. Road pricing is one example of a theoretically well-developed transport policy measure that has proven notoriously difficult to decide and implement. There are however lessons to learn from practice on how to manage barriers to policy formation and implementation also within this field. Drawing on the congestion charging schemes implemented in London in 2003 and Stockholm in 2006, and the Swiss Heavy Vehicle Fee scheme implemented in 2001, this paper identifies a selection of strategies which appear to have supported the policymakers' capacity to implement effective road pricing schemes. Together, these three examples offer a sound empirical basis from which to infer a set of strategies for the formulation and implementation of politically-contentious road pricing packages—addressing issues of measure combination, flexibility, legitimacy, communication, timing and organisational dynamics. While acknowledging the primacy of broader external and contextual issues, the conclusion is that taking inspiration from the strategies identified in this paper may increase the likelihood of successful policy package processes.

© 2013 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

In Europe, a number of road pricing initiatives have been implemented during the last decade. These include congestion charging schemes in cities such as London, Stockholm and Milan (Hamilton, 2012), and heavy vehicle fees in Switzerland, Germany, Austria, and the Czech Republic (OPTIC, 2011). In parallel, there have been several instances where public authorities at a range of jurisdictional scales have managed to get prospective road pricing schemes onto the political agenda, but have not succeeded in attaining political decisions. Manchester, Edinburgh, and Copenhagen are examples of cities where different proposals have been drafted, but for various reasons no success was achieved in providing congestion charging, while the Netherlands and Sweden are examples of countries which have not succeeded in introducing a distance-based heavy vehicle fee.¹

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +45 45 25 65 28; fax: +45 45 93 65 33.

E-mail addresses: chs@transport.dtu.dk (C.H. Sørensen), karolina.isaksson@vti.se (K. Isaksson), james.macmillen@ouce.ox.ac.uk (J. Macmillen), jonas.akerman@abe.kth.se (J. Åkerman), Florian.Kressler@austriatech.at (F. Kressler).

¹ In Sweden, there has been a distance-based heavy vehicle tax before, affecting diesel-driven vehicles. It was abolished when Sweden joined the EU in 1993 (Kågeson and Sundberg, 2006).

From the general policy implementation literature (Lowi, 1985) it can be noted that road user pricing represents a type of policy measure which radically shifts distributions of costs and benefits, and is hence value-laden and politically-charged. In the academic literature on road pricing, there exists a rich body of knowledge regarding the particular difficulties surrounding redistributive policy measures, particularly with regard to acceptance limitations. A fundamental insight, which is closely linked to the statements of Lowi (1985) is that the imposition of a charge on previously 'free' road space will always be controversial since it is essentially a redistribution of resources (Gullberg and Isaksson, 2009). Furthermore, citizens may consider pricing measures to be an invasion of their private sphere, or just see it as a measure which is simply 'too extreme'. Another reason for resistance may be a lack of belief as to the effectiveness of the policy (Jones, 1998; Whittles, 2003) or a concern about potentially negative consequences in terms of equity (Whittles, 2003). In addition, given that road pricing schemes are typically 'packaged' with other measures (Ieromonachou and Warren, 2008; May and Roberts, 1995), extraordinarily complex project management issues arise involving multiple actors and agencies.

Nevertheless, as the experience of certain cities and nations in the last 1½ decade demonstrates, these difficulties can be managed and overcome. There does remain, however, a lack of more overarching analysis as to the reasons *why* some road pricing schemes are formulated and implemented successfully and others are not. Against this backdrop, and drawing on the congestion charging schemes recently implemented in Stockholm and London, and the Swiss Heavy Vehicle Fee scheme, this paper describes a selection of strategies which appear to have supported policymakers' capacity to implement effective road pricing schemes (OPTIC, 2011).²

The remainder of the paper proceeds through four sections. First, some definitional clarity to key concepts used in the paper and a brief outline of the epistemological underpinnings of the research is given. Second, each of the three examples is described, concentrating predominantly on the political nuances of each situation. Third, the core of the paper is devoted to a discussion of six emergent strategies for managing barriers, pertaining to: measure combination, flexibility, legitimacy, communication, timing and organisational dynamics. Finally, conclusions are offered.

2. Terminology and methodology

For the purposes of this paper, a policy package is defined as a "a combination of policy measures designed to address one or more policy objectives, created in order to improve the effectiveness of the individual policy measures, and implemented while minimising possible unintended effects, and/or facilitating interventions' legitimacy and feasibility in order to increase efficiency" (Givoni et al. (2013: 3). A policy package often consists of a primary measure and one or more secondary, ancillary measures (see Givoni, 2014). In this paper the focus is on policy packages with road pricing as a primary measure. Policy packages, as well as isolated policy interventions, may encounter various types of barriers that obstruct satisfactory formation and implementation. Within the transport literature such barriers have typically been interpreted as 'counter forces' (Andersson and Vedung, 2007: 6), 'institutional barriers' (Sørensen, 2003: 3) or treated simply as synonymous with lack of public acceptance (Jones, 1998; Langmyhr, 1999; Whittles, 2003). In accordance with much of the literature the concept of "barrier" is defined broadly as any factor impeding or hindering policy making of single measures or packages.

Barriers to policy formation and implementation can be managed in several different ways. A barrier management 'strategy' is defined as a conscious, deliberate action (or set of actions) undertaken in order to neutralize a barrier, which can be achieved by removing or circumventing barriers, and/or through counteracting their negative effects. Based on the general policy making literature as well as the literature on road pricing, some 'building blocks' which inform the barrier management strategies discussed later in the paper will be introduced. In essence, barriers arise as a product of policy context, content and process. Hence, the success of a policy making process is influenced by the context of the process, the content of the policy in question as well as the course of the process itself (Justen et al., 2014). In this paper, the focus is predominantly on content and process since these issues to some extent are manageable for the policymaker.

With regard to the packaging *content*, different combinations of policy measures can set in motion different types of barriers. There have been numerous academic efforts directed at developing a typological classification of policy measures (Vedung, 2003 – for an overview). Lowi (1985), for example, distinguishes between distributive (e.g. infrastructure) and redistributive (e.g. taxation) measures, with the former more likely met by public and political acceptance than the latter, as the latter imposes particular obligations on actors. From a policy packaging perspective, this typology stresses the need to add distributive or other (more acceptable) secondary, ancillary measures to packages with a particularly redistributive primary element, such as road pricing. This lesson is well-noted in the road pricing literature (Harrington et al., 2001; Jaensirisak et al., 2005; Langmyhr, 1999; Whittles, 2003).

In relation to the course of the policy packaging *process*, political and organisational theory provides many valuable insights. A policy making process is often chaotic, with stakeholders' interests and goals being marked by confusion and ambiguity. It is thus not possible to explain successful policy formation and/or implementation by referring to one single aspect (Ison and Rye, 2005). Some general reflections from the literature however point out issues of timing during the policy making process as crucial. A policy making process is highly dependent on temporal relations of different events, which makes

² The paper draws upon OPTIC (Optimal Policies for Transport in Combination, <http://optictoi.no/>), which was a research project under EU's seventh framework programme. The project included a deliverable focusing on barrier management concerning policy packaging in transport, which provides the main background for the paper (OPTIC, 2011). All authors of the paper also were authors of this OPTIC deliverable.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/311509>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/311509>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)