

Controversial policies: growing support after implementation

STRC
Monte Verità, Ascona, Switzerland
15-17 May 2024



Bert van Wee

Van Wee, B., J.A. Annema, S. van Barneveld (2023), Controversial policies: growing support after implementation. A discussion paper. Transport Policy 139 79-86



Switzerland (input conference):

- **Reallocating road space to active modes, including (e)bikes**
- **Lower speeds for motorized traffic in cities**
- **Mobility pricing (road, rail)**
-



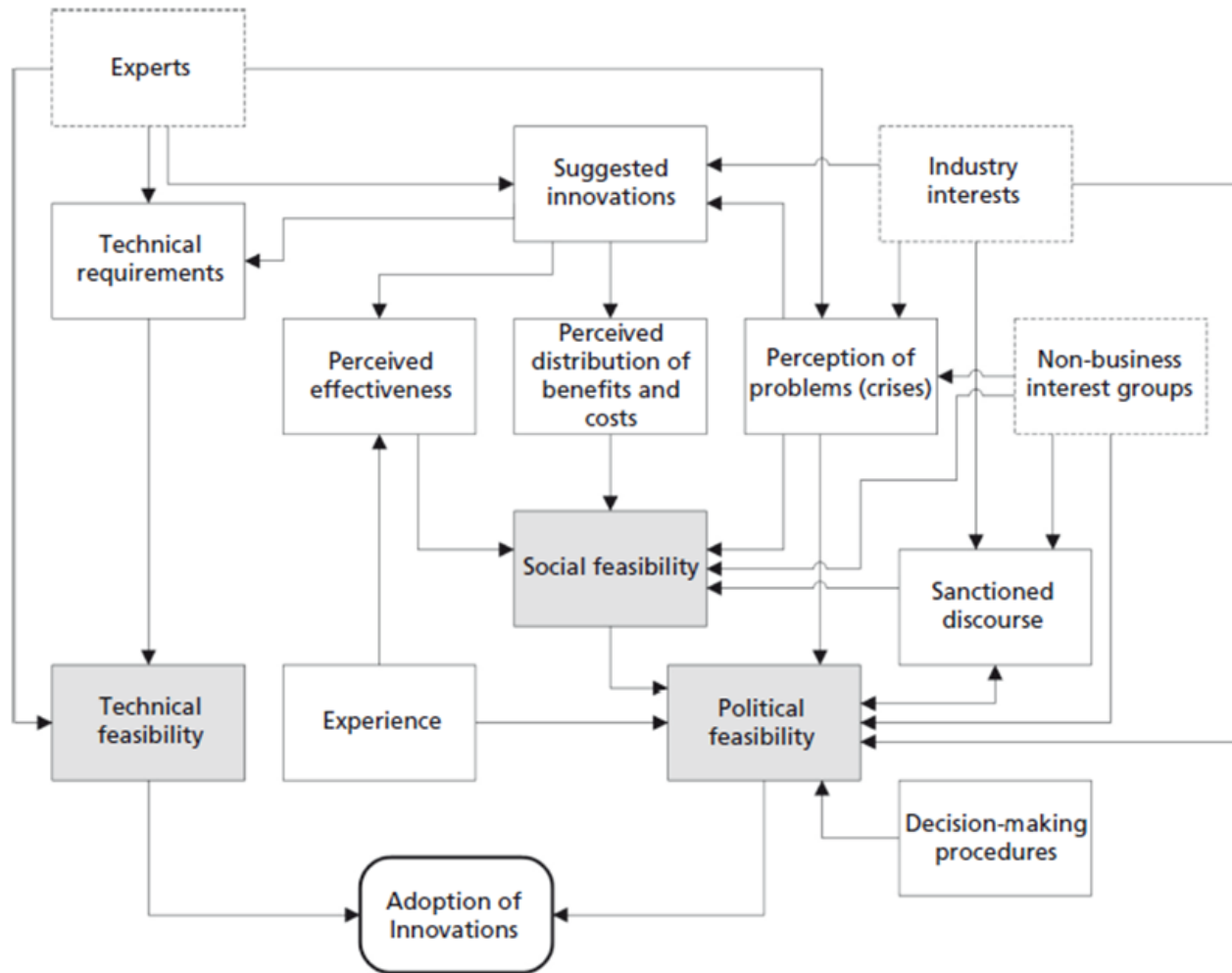




Policy option: how to choose?

- **Welfare economists think (hope/advise):
welfare - costs, benefits**
- **Political economics (public choice theory):
(re) elected**
- **Support of public (and other actors) needed**





Legend: Active agents Requisites for adoption Factors

Source: Feitelson and Salomon (2004).

Which support?

- **Before implementation or (also) after?**
- **Controversial measures (at least: affecting position of the car): increasing support after implementation**

How does support change over time?

Aims:

- (a) Give overview of empirical evidence
- (b) Discussing why such support could change over time, based on theoretical reflections
- (c) Discussing possible implications of changing policy support
- (d) Providing a research agenda



a) Empirical evidence

Table 1: an overview of literature on support for road pricing before and after implementation

Reference	Study area	Empirical findings	Explanation for changing support
Nilsson et al. (2016)	Gothenburg	Support increased after implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attitude changes • Experiences: easier than expected to use • Effects: less negative than expected
Börjesson et al. (2016)	Gothenburg	Support increased from 33 to 50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger benefits than expected, • Smaller down sided than expected • Benefits of accompanying measures, • Changes in attitudes • Reframing, loss aversion, status quo bias
Odeck and Bråthen (1997)	Oslo	1 year after opening respondents were less negative: from 65% negative and 28 % positive to 55 and 40% respectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More positive attitude after implementation because the tolls raised funds for road construction

Odeck and Bråthen (2002)	Bergen, Oslo, Trondheim	1 year after opening: percentage of negative users decrease from 50 to 34 % (Bergen, from 70 to 64% (Oslo), and 72 to 48% (Trondheim)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After the opening people have become more aware of the positive impacts of toll financing. Before the implementation people react only based to the expected economic burden.
Eliasson (2008)	Stockholm	Support increased from less than 30% before to nearly 70% after reintroduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underestimation of congestion related benefits before introduction • Positive effects on the urban environment • Self-selection effects
Schuitema et al. (2010)	Stockholm	support increased	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Wrong’ perceptions before implementation: People have developed more positive beliefs about the impact of pricing on congestion, pollution and parking • Increase in travel costs was lower than expected

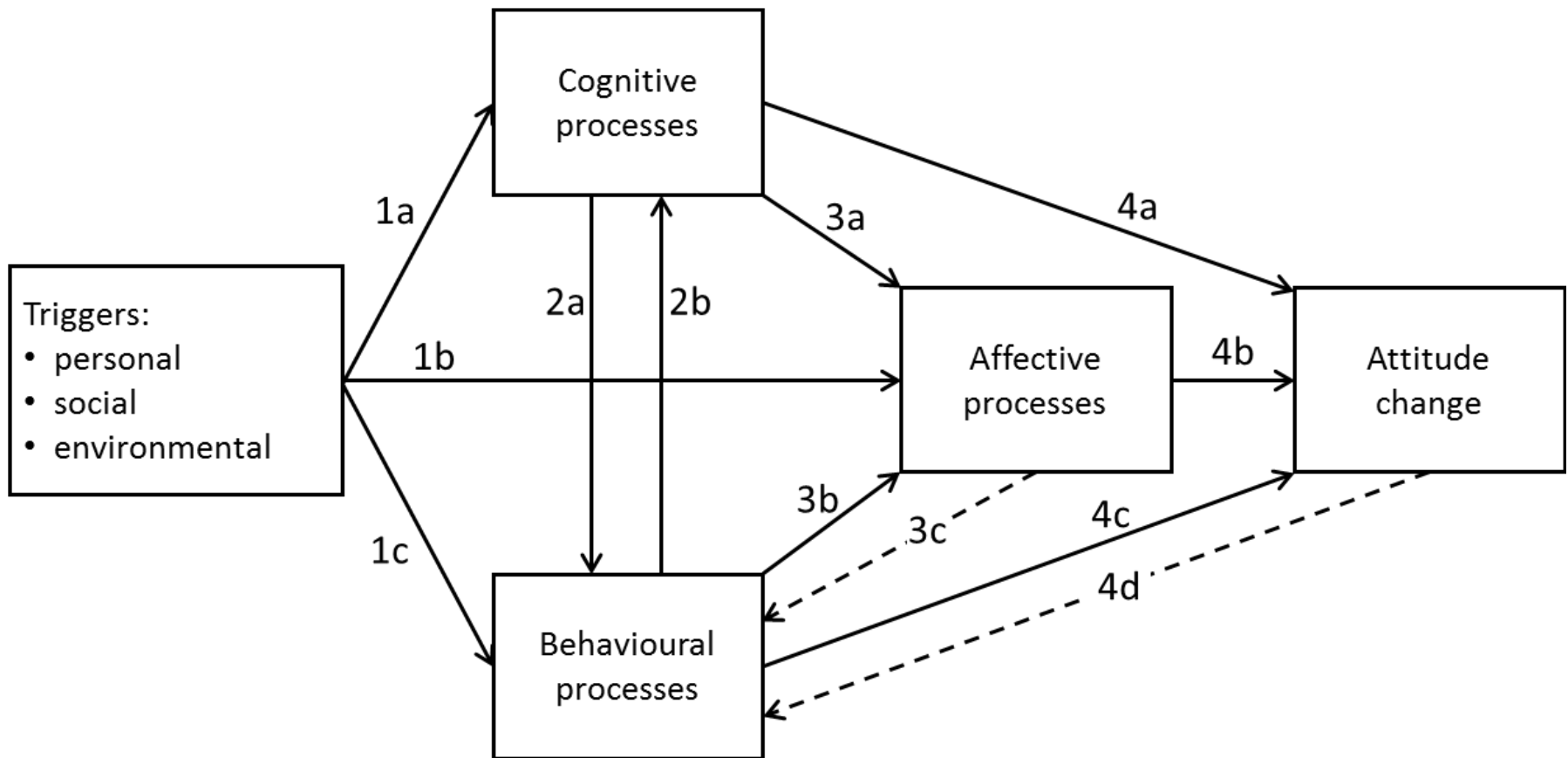
Winslott-Hiselius et al. (2009)	Stockholm	Support increased from 43% some months before the start of the trail to 54% some months after the introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experienced personal effects became more important after the introduction
Transport for London (2004)	London	Support increased from 39% before implementation (average of three months) to 53.5% after (average of four months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less people experienced effects compared to expectations • Effects on congestion higher than expected • Increased awareness of paying methods

Conclusions:

- All studies: increase in support after implementation
- After implementation: all but one > 50% support
- Main explanation: attitude changes



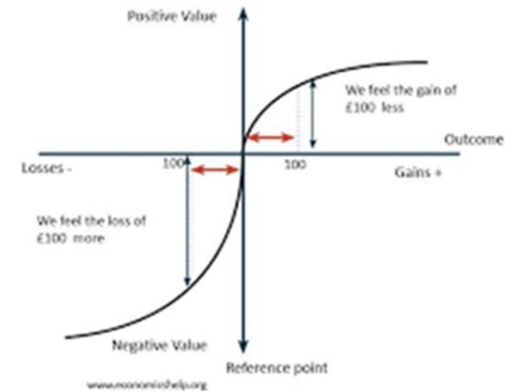
b) Why change in support?



Van Wee et al. (2019), partly based on Eagly and Chaiken, 1993)

In addition: Prospect Theory (Kahneman and Tversky, 1979)

- Reference point bias
 - Loss aversion
- (both might change after implementation)



In addition: Disadvantages more clear than advantages
(both might change after implementation)

In addition: Expected utility versus experienced utility
(de Vos et al., 2016)

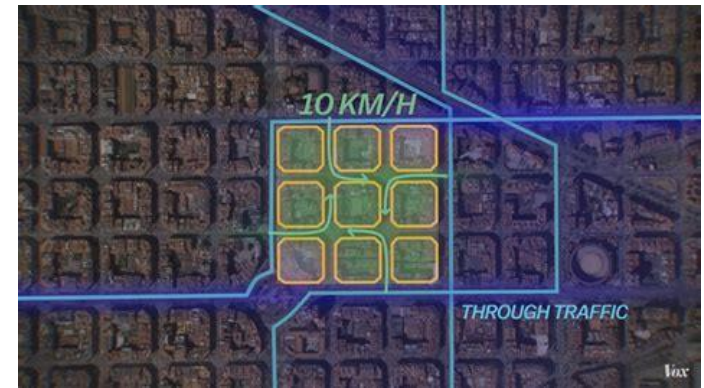
c1) Implications for policy and practice

- Politicians should know
- Communication very important (media, ...)
- Visualisations
- Show real world examples
- Controversial policies: part of package (London congestion pricing: metro)
- Compare controversial policies with alternatives (Odeck and Brathen, 1997)

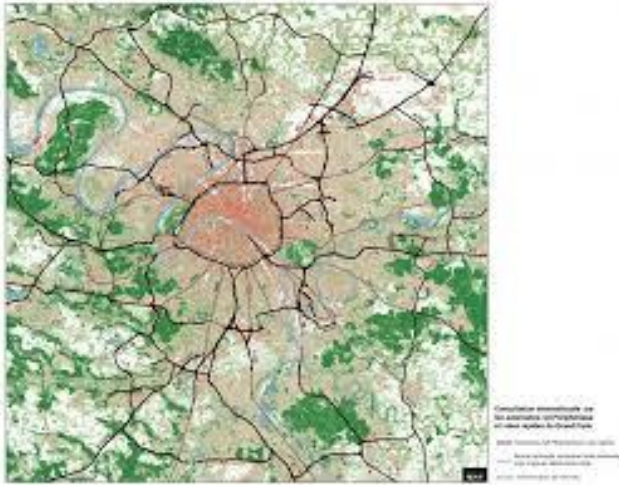


Implications

- Visionaire / Champion (Cervero, 1998)
- Introduce in phases.



Implications: discuss counterfactual











c2 - Implications for modelling and evaluation

- Mainstream transport models ignore attitude changes and consequently underestimate TB impacts of unconventional policies.
- CBA consequently underestimates the benefits (and BCR) of such policies.

Van Wee, B., Kroesen, M. (2022), Attitude changes, modelling travel behaviour, and ex ante project evaluations. *Transportation Research Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, 2022, 16, 100724

d) Future research

- Which policies are controversial, where, when, why, for whom?
- More before-and-after studies plus mechanisms for increasing/changing support
- Validation of model for attitude changes
- Effectiveness of interventions aiming to increase support
- Reduce reference point bias: ask about preferences of grandchildren



Questions?