

Fare-Free Public Transport International experiences

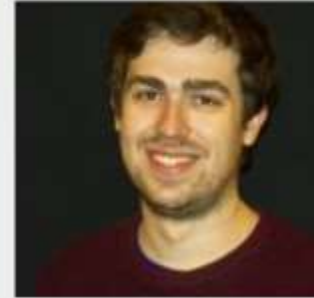
**From Low Fares to No Fares:
An Analysis of Economic, Operational, Socio-Spatial and Political Dynamics
of
Fare-Free Public Transport**



W. Kęłowski, PhD



M. Maciejewska, PhD



M. Gillard, PhD candidate



V. Van Acker, PhD



K. Boussauw, PhD

Monika Maciejewska

Postdoctoral fellow at COSMOPOLIS

Vrije Universiteit Brussel

monika.maciejewska@vub.be

FFPT – variety of practices and contexts

- Not a uniform policy
- An emerging issue in the public debate
- Growing popularity – ca. 275 cases
- Highly context dependent

- Variety in:



Spatial scales



Network complexity

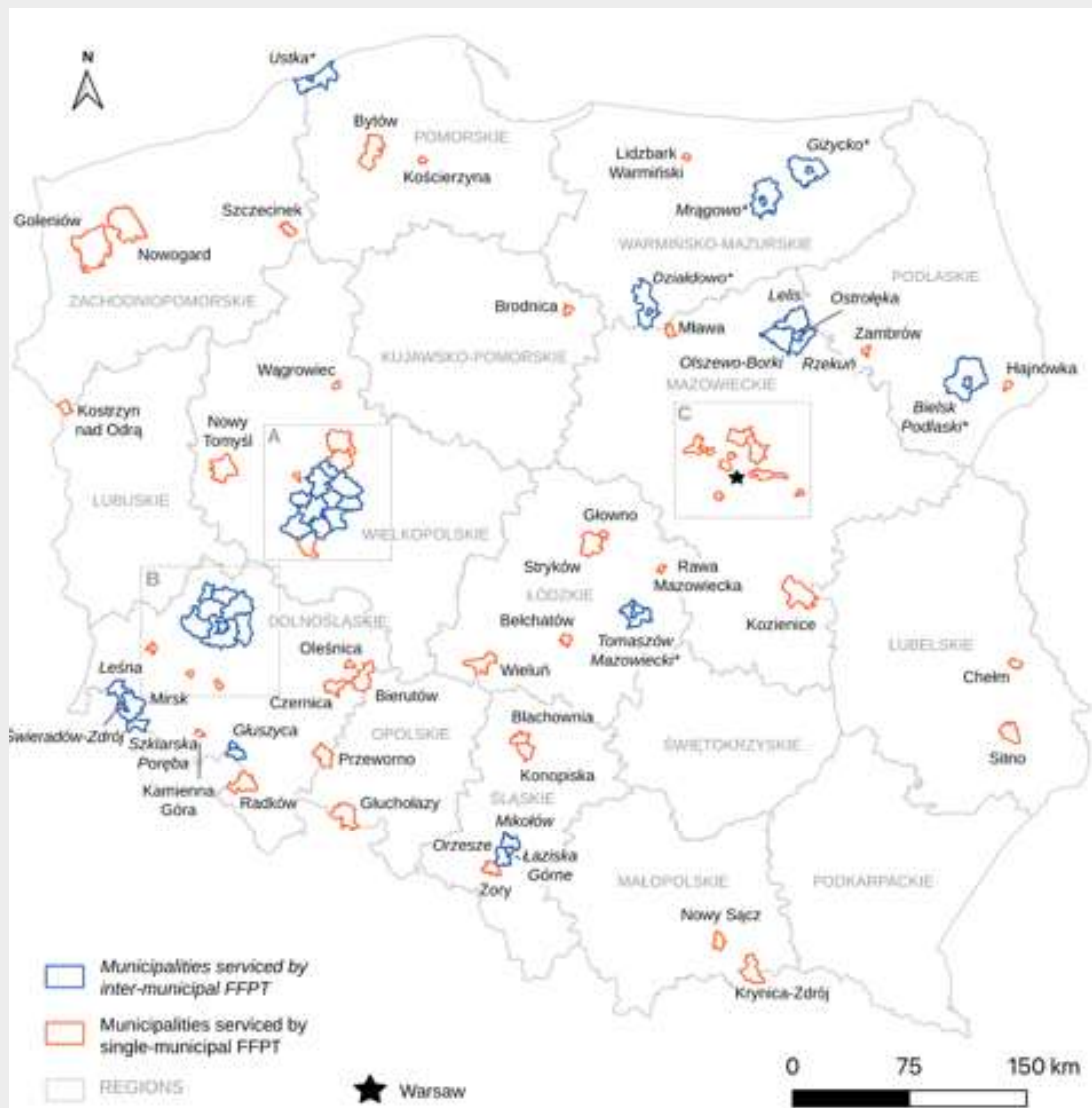


Population coverage



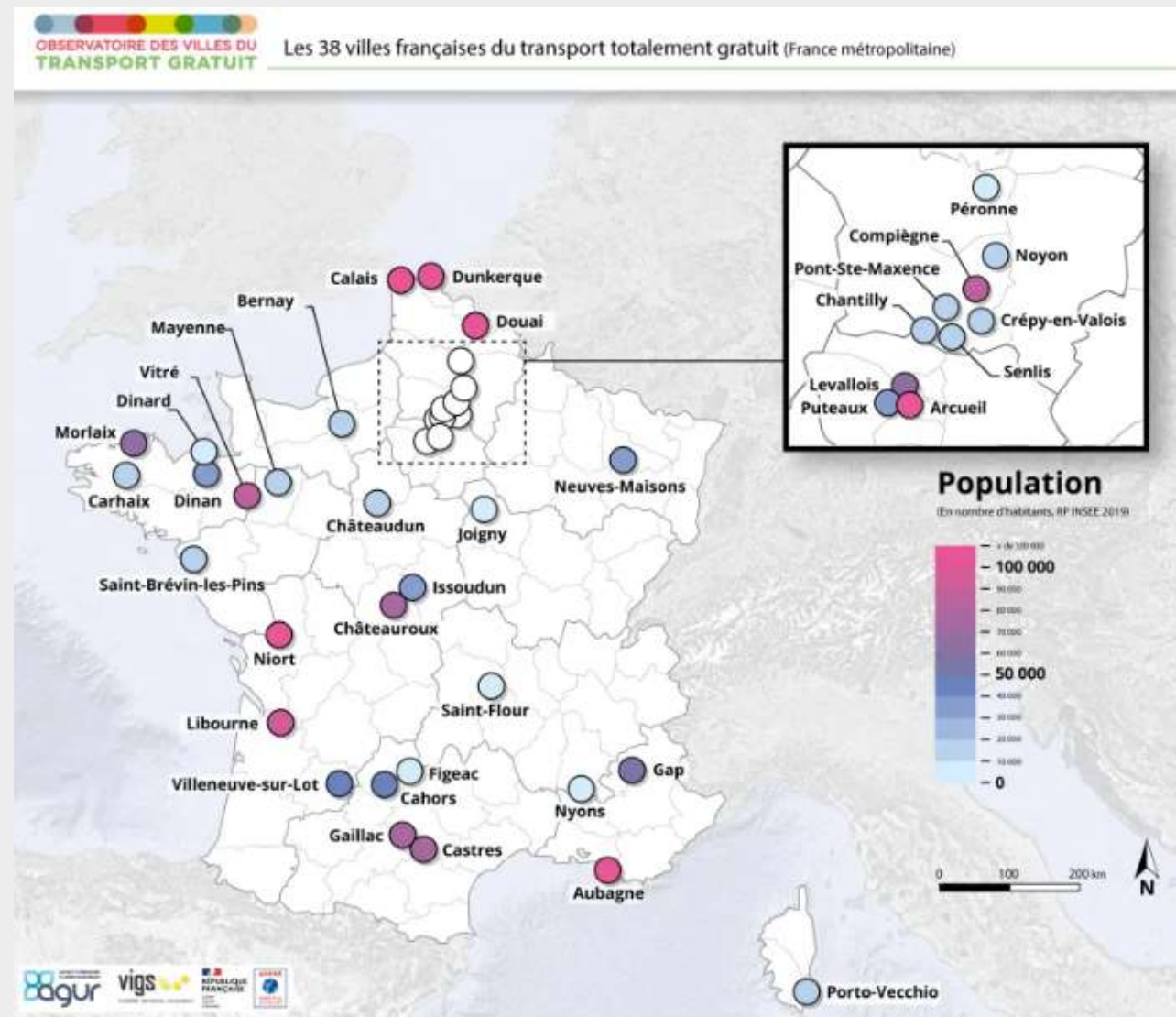
Modality

• FFPT in Poland



Source: Štraub, Kębtowski & Maciejewska, 2023

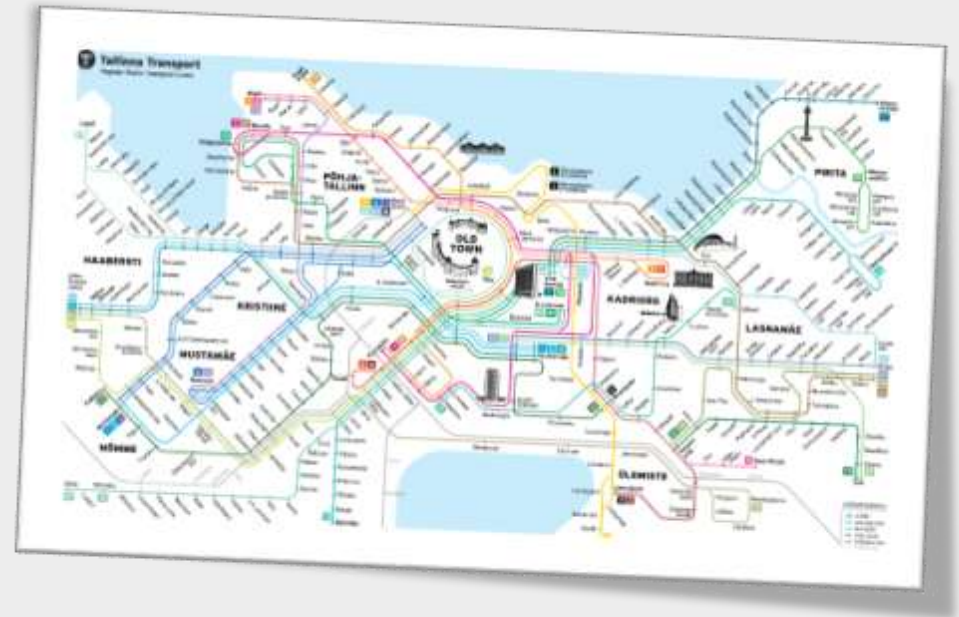
• FFPT in France



Source: Observatoire des villes du transport gratuit, 2022

Example - Tallinn

- Since 2013
- Ca. 400.000 inhabitants
- FFPT limited to residents
- Ticketing and residents' card system
- Various means of PT
- Particular context: many residents were not registered
- Funding: taxes



MOTIVATION - EXPECTATIONS

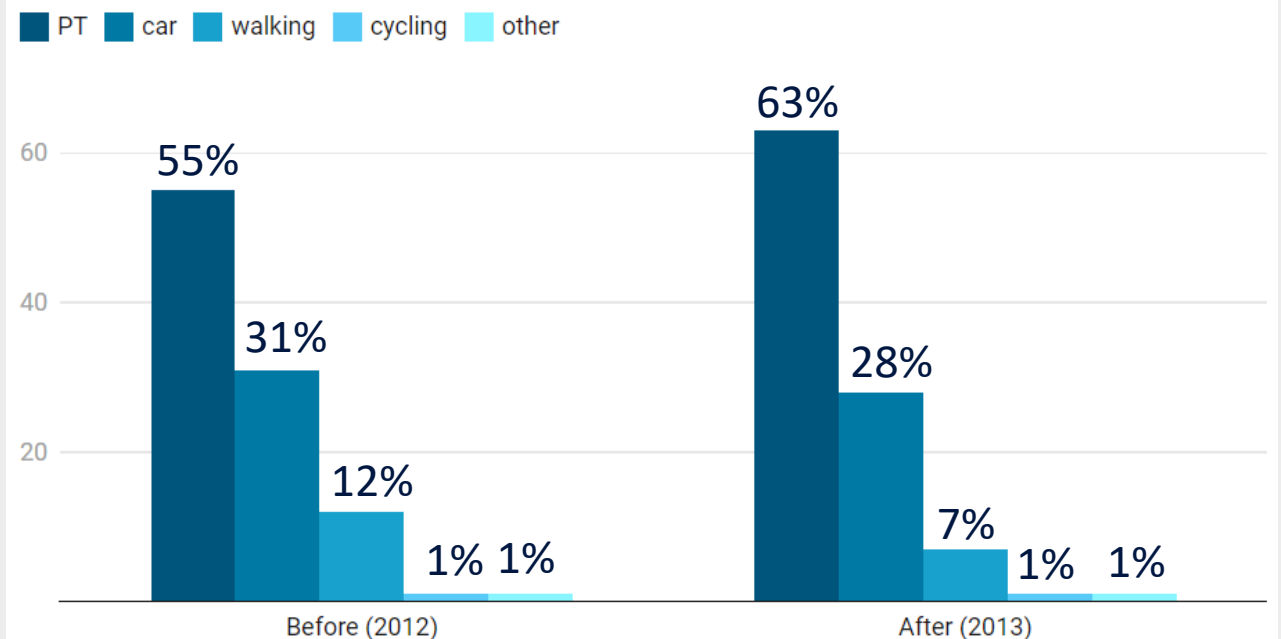
- To reduce air pollution – changing modal split
- To reduce traffic jams
- To increment the publicness of PT
- To help under-privileged social groups
- To improve social access to PT
- To improve the quality of life of local popularion
- To gain political support from local voters



IMPACT – what do we know?

- **Environmental impact**
 - FFPT may have an impact (albeit limited) on the modal shift from cars to PT
 - Limited contribution to transport decarbonization

Modal split before (2012) and after (2013) FFPT implementation in Tallinn



Adapted from Cats et al., 2017

IMPACT – what do we know?

- **Financial impact**
 - **Highly context-dependent**
 - Additional income generator (Tallinn)
 - Cheaper than ticketing system - simple PT networks
 - Small additional cost – from low fares to no fares
 - Usually covered by local budget



IMPACT – what do we know?

- Impact on operations
 - Higher demand – higher ridership
 - No evidence of lower quality service
 - FFPT frequently goes along with other interventions to improve PT
 - Little evidence of FFPT-related vandalism and insecurity



IMPACT – what do we know?

- **Social impact**
 - Meets invisible demand
 - Improves accessibility to PT and to opportunities
 - Mitigates inequalities and social exclusion
 - Rewards desired modal choice



PROBLEMS

- **Lack of data**
 - No cost-profit analysis
 - Conclusions drawn from general feelings
- **The difficulty in estimating the impact of this particular policy**
- **Not immune to electoral agendas**
 - Can be played to gain political support
 - Blind, not evidence-based decision

