

Towards a sustainable e-commerce society:

Creating an ecosystem of sustainable options for shops & consumers.





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The increasingly rapid climate change is urging us to rethink and adapt how we all work, live and consume. bpost group has done a great deal of that rethinking and is ready to take the lead. But everyone should jump on the bandwagon: both small and bigger (web)shops. And yes, they really can! How? By partnering up with business partners offering suitable eco-friendly delivery options and guiding

their customers towards conscious and well-considered choices. The recent pilot project for EcoZones in Mechelen has proven undoubtedly that providing the right options to consumers has a real impact: a total sustainability gain of 32%, unseen drops of CO₂ and fine particles emissions and a change of consumer behaviour have been observed.



EcoZones as part of the solution

In July 2020, bpost group launched its first Ecozone, a pilot project with the aim of reducing the impact on traffic and the climate of parcel and letter pick-ups and drop-offs in Mechelen. Despite the phenomenal increase in the number of parcels since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, bpost has been able to deliver all letters and parcels in the 2800 postcode area emission-free.

bpost implemented the required changes at operational level, creating a Microhub and a dense network of 57 pick-up points (49 sites with parcel lockers, 7 post points & the post office), and replacing all diesel

vehicles by electric cars or electric bikes equipped with an innovative trailer. These are used to deliver parcels, newspapers and letters to homes, pick-up points and post offices.

The MOBI research unit of the VUB monitored the sustainability impact of the Mechelen Ecozone with consideration for all aspects, including emissions, air pollution, noise pollution, distances covered, traffic problems and road wear and tear, and observed a total sustainability gain of 32% compared with the previous situation. This is essentially due to the reductions in

CO₂ (97%) and fine particles (77%).

The increased use of bikes has reduced the total distance covered by bpost vehicles in the city centre by 164km/day. The green fleet is also.

Important change of behaviour

The hybrid network of post offices, post points and parcel lockers ensures optimal service coverage and proximity, getting people to change their behaviour. In Mechelen, residents have gradually adapted their behaviour, thus making a big contribution to the success of this EcoZone project.

A bpost survey shows that the use of pick-up points has increased each month. There has been minimal use of cars to this end. 85% of Mechelen residents go to pick up their parcels on foot or by bike. Only a small number of respondents take the car and two in three car users combine the pick-up with other activities, such

as a trip to the supermarket, school or work. 81% of users covered less than 500m to get to a parcel locker station. All age categories are represented among users.

Based on these facts and figures, and the obvious positive impact on people and the environment, other EcoZones will be rolled out gradually throughout the country in 2021 (Leuven and Mons) and 2022.

Combining EcoZones with tailor-made delivery solutions for webshops should allow bpost to rapidly grow a more sustainable, environmental and consumer friendly society.

Dirk Tirez, CEO bpost group:



"At bpost, we are committed to economic, social and environmental sustainability. Economic, because we need to guarantee a long-term future for all our employees. Social, because there is a social lift. Training programmes will be set up for all staff working in the offices. Environmentally, we are in line with the Paris Agreement. The objective is to reduce CO2 emissions by more than 50% by 2030 compared to today, despite the growth in e-commerce activity.

We have demonstrated in Mechelen that it is possible to create circumstances in which all mail and all packages are delivered with zero CO2 emissions. We also already have invested significantly in making our fleet eco-friendly, using double-deck trailers, electric vehicles and where possible electric bikes or scooters."

