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Critical reflections on sustainable transport in Russian mega-cities

Based on the semi-structured interviews with elites, mass media discourse analysis and representative public survey in two mega-cities (Moscow and Kazan), the study provides insights on the post-soviet Russia's sustainable transport systems. The research showed that Russia's transport faces with certain challenges including high traffic congestion, low share of environmentally friendly transport, inadequate environmental friendly transport infrastructure and technical planning capacity, the scarce of parking slots that aggravating by constant increase of private vehicles, low public and state awareness towards the transport de-carbonization. The study portrayed both positive and negatives trends in the development of public transport systems in Russian mega-cities such as cancellation of trolleybuses and trams routes, on the one hand, and introduction the pilot electric buses in Moscow, new cycling trails, car-sharing programs - on the other. Majority of experts were skeptic towards the raise of electric cars in Russia due to unpleasant weather conditions, long distances, the lack of infrastructure and general economic incentives. The main strategies to increase the sustainability of Russia's transport system include the state regulation of the private vehicles usage, the increase of the accessibility of the public transportation, the further development of the cycling, walking and electric cars infrastructure and running public awareness campaigns.