

The Great Shift: The Future of Mobility and New Urbanism

A Study on Trends and Current Topics | Berlin | March 2021

Overview

This study introduces the latest topics and ongoing discussion in the field of Mobility & New Urbanism. They have been uncovered with the help of FirstSignals® – a methodology developed by pressrelations for early detection of emerging trends.

All individual topics form these thematic clusters of trends:

1. [Micromobility, Microtransit and Short-Range Logistics](#)
2. [Software & In-Car Technologies](#)
3. [New Strategies for Automotive Sales](#)
4. [Mobility & Sustainability](#)
5. [Mobility Platforms](#)
6. [New Concepts for Air Mobility](#)
7. [E-mobility & Battery Technology](#)
8. [Autonomous Driving](#)
9. [New Urbanism](#)
10. [Mobility & New Spatial Developments](#)

Selection criteria for individual topics:

Trending Topic: highly relevant and popular in the media. The topic is the central point of the discourse surrounding the field of mobility of the future; it is tightly interwoven with the major societal and economic topics such as the climate crisis, e-mobility, sustainability, AI and digitalization.

New Perspective: the topic is highly multifaceted and offers an entirely new perspective. As a result, it opens up broad opportunities for expert discussions within the fields of economics, politics, and public life, and has the potential to attain a higher degree of relevance within the topical spectrum of the mobility sector.

New Topic: the topic is brand-new and has a high potential to become a trend after being picked up by prominent opinion leaders. It can potentially bring about big changes within the mobility industry or have an equal degree of impact on multiple aspects of the industry.

Analysis

The analysis of a single cluster of trends is comprised of three parts:

01. Each **individual topic** receives editorial treatment before being presented.

02. **Insights Overview** offers an editorial classification by relevance of the current trending topics within a cluster.

03. A **Measurement of Media Awareness** is an evaluation of individual topics of the past twelve months and a comparison of English-language (U.K., U.S.A.) and German-language (Germany, Austria, Switzerland) media sources.

(Basis: around 15,000 online media sources including largest media, excluding low-quality, high-volume news distribution platforms)

Each language area has roughly the same number of media sources for better comparability.

The data for each topic cluster is presented as a topic benchmark and draws a comparison of media resonance between the German-language and English-language media sources.

Topic identification, topic selection, and editorial classification are based on evaluation of only articles with strong, solid content from the past six months in the following media:

.....
German:

Frankfurter Allgemeine
ZEITUNG FÜR DEUTSCHLAND

DER SPIEGEL

Süddeutsche Zeitung

DIE ZEIT

Handelsblatt

t:n

.....
English:

FINANCIAL
TIMES

The New York Times

Forbes

WIRED

The
Economist

Detailed examination of individual topics is based on a **Measurement of Media Awareness** of ten **leading, 'long-term' topics** which have been dominating the discourse within the mobility industry for years and which display a certain degree of lag in the media news cycle. These include such topics as **e-mobility, autonomous driving, smart cities, and sustainability, among others, in connection with the mobility sector.** The aim is to provide an overview of the general thematic environment in the media in regard to Mobility & Urbanism.

Management Summary

Management Summary – Editorial Classification of Trending Topics



01 Micromobility: parcel services have reached the so-called 'last mile' of their capacity. They clog the cities and create most emissions on the last miles of delivery. New environmentally friendly and autonomous concepts are urgently needed. Most popular in the media: delivery robots and delivery drones.



02 Software & In-Car Technology: German car makers are set to lose the software war against Google. Along with Bosch & Co., new players such as Nvidia and Intel subsidiary Mobileye are becoming established in the Mobility high-tech segment. Once the car is just a 'device', premium features will be defined by innovative interiors and in-car technology.



03 New Strategies for Automotive Sales: in the future, money will be earned with software services. A luxurious second 'living room' will be a premium feature. It will be marketed as a fashion item – in pop-up stores and lounges at prime locations. Mass market models will be sold – or leased and shared – online or via agency models. Car dealerships will be obsolete.



04 Mobility & Sustainability: without an alternative to lithium – the proverbial 'new oil' – without green hydrogen, which dominates the headlines, especially in the English-speaking world (44,000 articles in twelve months), and without synthetic fuels (at least for trucks, ships, and airplanes), the mobility sector will not become sustainable or carbon neutral.



05 Mobility Platforms: the number of platforms keeps growing at an annual rate of 20%, but there is still no integrated door-to-door concept and most solutions are limited to the inner city. Without fully-integrated mobility services there is no environmental protection. Moreover, excluding rural areas from the MaaS (Mobility as a Service) infrastructure can have explosive social consequences.



06 New Concepts for Air Mobility: delivery drones and air taxis dominate the headlines. Commercial air taxis for distances of up to 100km will soon become reality. Technology and business models are already viable, but remain a niche market in the traffic and transportation segment. Airbus is convinced that they will be able to achieve carbon neutral flying on a large scale by 2030.



07 E-Mobility and Battery Technology: the e-mobility market is on the verge of a major breakthrough in 2021. E-pickups and Charging Infrastructure receive most attention in the media. In just a few years, solid state batteries overcome the biggest hurdle of e-mobility – range anxiety. And now, the next biggest stumbling block is the lack of wallboxes in cities.



08 Autonomous Driving: the idea of autonomous driving was practically buried at CES 2020. However, recent leaps in technology – with LIDAR being the key technology – have moved it back to the top of the list in 2021. And timely efforts in drafting concrete legislation could make Germany a leader in this field. The technological advancements have also reached the shipping industry: the first robot-operated ships already set sail in late 2020.



09 New Urbanism: Smart Cities are by far the most popular topic in the media, but it is becoming increasingly controversial. New concepts of sustainable cities, such as Tactical Urbanism (Berlin), 15-Minute City (Paris) or inclusive city planning (Vienna), are usually the ones that are being realized – with new materials that help fight climate change and air pollution.



10 New Spatial Developments: digitalization and telemigration bridge a thousand-year old divide between urban and rural areas, for example, by bringing the idyll and micro-homes to the cities and gentrification of idyllic vacation areas to the countryside. On a global scale, companies like Airbnb and – surprise, surprise – the aviation industry would be the ones to gain the most from this trend.

Top 10 Leading ‘Long-Term’ Topics in the Past Twelve Months

Leading Topics

Electromobility
Autonomous Driving (in general)
Mobility & Sustainability
Autonomous Driving (Level 4–5)
Alternative Drives
Mobility as a Service (MaaS)
Car Sharing
Smart Cities
Mobility & Digitalization/AI
Mobility & Software

The Top 10 ranking of the leading, ‘long-term’ topics ranges from 472,000 articles (first place – Electromobility) to 4,900 articles (tenth place – Autonomous Driving [Level 4–5]) across both languages combined. Autonomous Driving (in general) and Sustainability in Connection with Mobility take the second and third places with 354,000 and 347,000 articles, respectively.

The topic of [Mobility in Connection with Sustainability](#) dominated the **German-language media** coverage in the past twelve months – 239,000 articles. It was followed by [Electromobility](#) and [Autonomous Driving](#) with approximately 182,000 and 61,000 articles respectively.

In the **English-language media**, [Autonomous Driving](#) and [Electromobility](#) received a comparable amount of coverage – about 290,000 articles each. They were followed by [Sustainability and Mobility](#) with 108,000 reports. [Smart Cities](#) was significantly more popular in the English-language media – 28,000 vs. 6,300 articles.

So was [Mobility as a Service](#) with almost five times the amount of reports compared to the German-language media – 76,800 vs. 6,300 articles.

Noteworthy:

[Mobility in Connection with AI, software and digitalization](#) is at the bottom of the top 10 ranking in both German- and English-language areas with 9,000 and 20,000 articles, respectively.

At the same time, this does not imply that the media is ignoring this topic. On the contrary, when this subject is being covered, it is often the focus of high-quality editorial articles and reports.

In general, English-language media gives much more attention to technology-related topics.

Top 10 Leading ‘Long-Term’ Topics in the Past Twelve Months

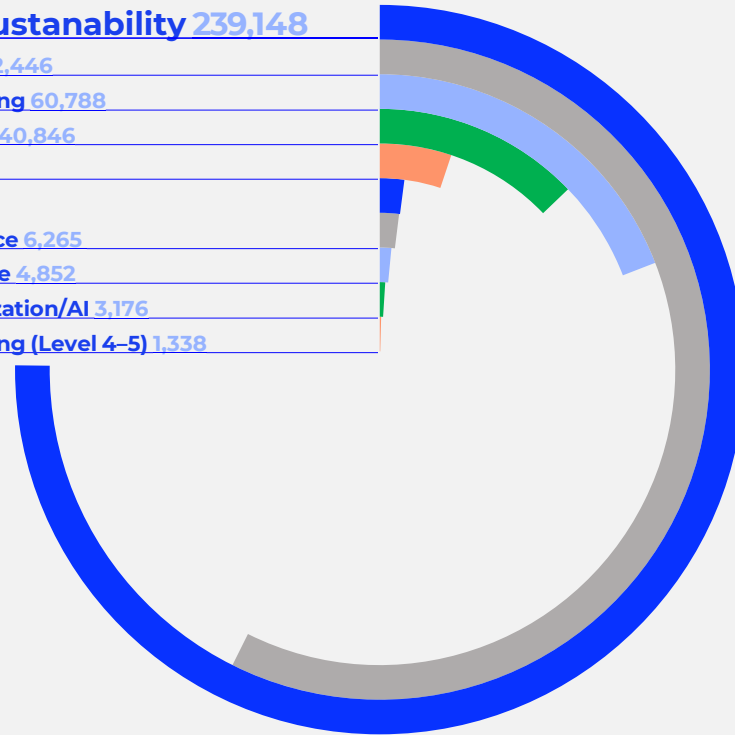
Leading topics in total by number of articles

1. **Electromobility**
472,000
2. **Autonomous Driving (in general)**
354,000
3. **Mobility & Sustainability**
347,000
4. **Autonomous Driving (Level 4–5)**
167,000
5. **Alternative Drives**
121,000
6. **Mobility as a Service**
82,000
7. **Car Sharing**
36,000
8. **Smart Cities**
34,000
9. **Mobility & Digitalization/AI**
20,000
10. **Mobility & Software**
10,000

German-Language Media

Mobility & Sustainability 239,148

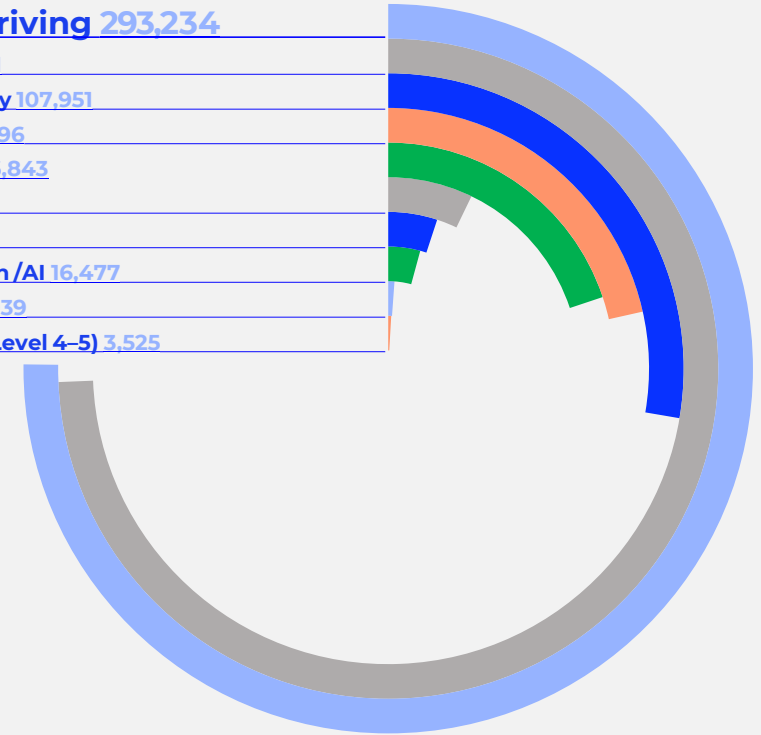
- Electromobility 182,446
- Autonomous Driving 60,788
- Alternative Drives 40,846
- Car Sharing 16,006
- Smart Cities 6,343
- Mobility as a Service 6,265
- Mobility & Software 4,852
- Mobility & Digitalization/AI 3,176
- Autonomous Driving (Level 4–5) 1,338



English-Language Media

Autonomous Driving 293,234

- Electromobility 289,981
- Mobility & Sustainability 107,951
- Alternative Drives 80,096
- Mobility as a Service 76,843
- Smart Cities 27,922
- Car Sharing 19,708
- Mobility & Digitalization/AI 16,477
- Mobility & Software 6,039
- Autonomous Driving (Level 4–5) 3,525



Legend

The evaluation is based on a media panel of approximately **15,000 online media sources in German and in English**. Low-quality, high-volume news distribution platforms are excluded.

All various spellings and synonyms, including contextually closely related terms, of the presented topics and trends have been used for data collection. This ensures that every topic represents a **contextually consistent query cluster** of keywords.

Top 10 of Identified Trending Topics in the Past Twelve Months

Top 10 Trending Topics

Green Hydrogen
E-Pickups
Travel Bubble
LIDAR
E-Trucks
Software Services Business
Urban Exodus
Wallboxes
Delivery Robots
Urban Air Mobility

The Top 10 ranking of currently trending topics across both languages ranges from 60,000 articles (first place – Green Hydrogen in Connection with Mobility) to 10,000 articles (tenth place – Urban Air Mobility). The second and third places go to E-Pickups (37,000) and the Travel Bubble (24,000). This puts all of the Top 10 trending topics in the lower middle range of ‘long-term’ trending topics in terms of media coverage.

Green Hydrogen in Connection with Mobility dominated the **German-language media** in the past twelve months (15,900 articles). The topic is followed by **E-Pickups** with 7,800 articles.

Wallboxes take the top spot within Charging Infrastructure (7,100). They are followed by **E-Fuels** (4,900) and **LIDAR** (4,400) – a key technology of autonomous driving.

The first two places in the **English-language media** mirror their counterparts in the German-language media but with a much higher resonance (**Hydrogen** – 44,500, **E-Pickups** – 29,500). **Travel Bubble** follows in third place (23,800) and is practically missing from the discourse within the German-language area. By contrast, in the **English-language media** **E-Trucks** make it into the Top 5 (18,800) and are followed by **LIDAR** with 18,300 articles – significantly more than in the German-language media.

Noteworthy:

The English-language region takes the lead on **delivery drones** (8,400 articles) and **delivery robots** (10,780). Here, the media resonance is eight to ten times higher than in the German-language media.

Software Services Business areas, such as telematics, generate an almost six times higher media resonance in the English-language area.

The trend of **Urban Exodus** gets more exposure in the English-language media as well: with 9,900 articles, the topic receives three times the attention.

Urban Air Mobility, on the other hand, enjoys more coverage in the German-language media thanks to Lillium Jet and Volocopter and generates about 50% more articles (4,100).

Top 10 of Identified Trending Topics in the Past Twelve Months

Trending topics in total by number of articles

1. **Green Hydrogen**
60,000
2. **E-Pickups**
37,000
3. **Travel Bubble**
24,000
4. **LIDAR**
23,000
5. **E-Trucks**
22,000
6. **Software Services Business**
14,000
7. **Urban Exodus**
14,000
8. **Wallboxes**
12,000
9. **Delivery Robots**
1,000
10. **Urban Air Mobility**
10,000

German-Language Media

Green Hydrogen 15,875

E-Pickups 7,795

Wallboxes 7,104

E-Fuels 4,858

LIDAR 4,413

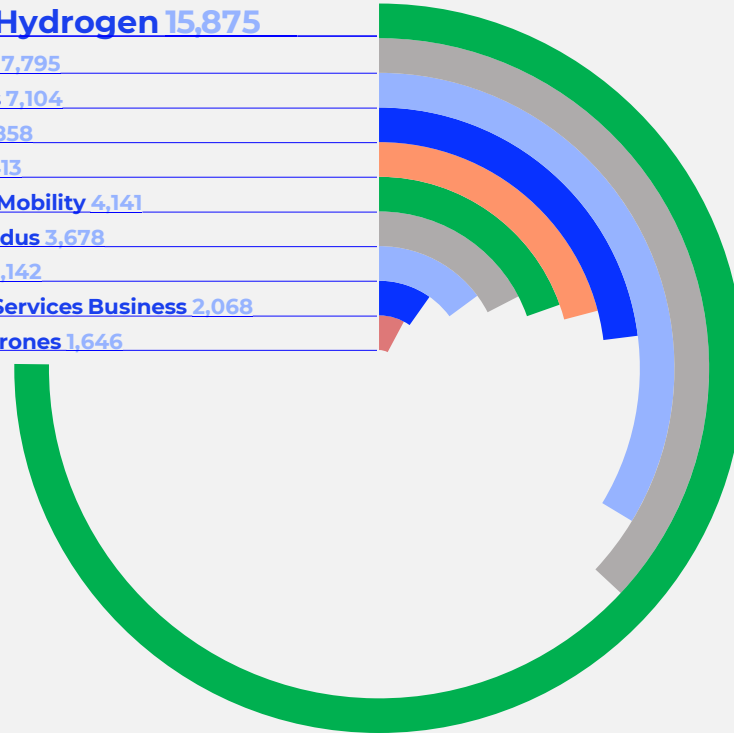
Urban Air Mobility 4,141

Urban Exodus 3,678

E-Trucks 3,142

Software Services Business 2,068

Delivery Drones 1,646



English-Language Media

Green Hydrogen 44,454

E-Pickups 29,493

Travel Bubble 23,837

E-Trucks 18,792

LIDAR 18,253

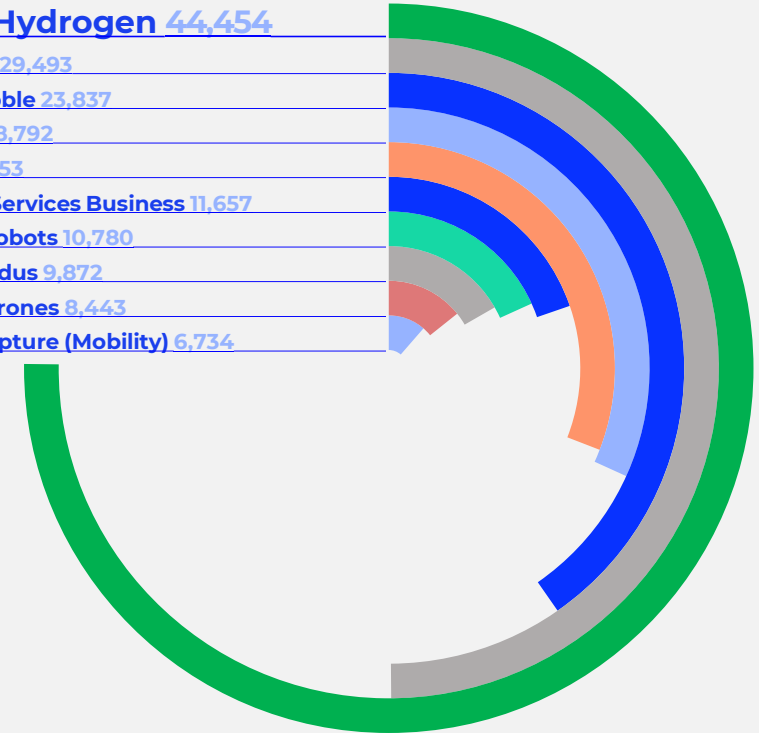
Software Services Business 11,657

Delivery Robots 10,780

Urban Exodus 9,872

Delivery Drones 8,443

Carbon Capture (Mobility) 6,734



Legend

The evaluation is based on a media panel of approximately **15,000 online media sources in German and English**. Low-quality, high-volume news distribution platforms are excluded.

All various spellings and synonyms, including contextually closely related terms, of the presented topics and trends have been used for data collection. This ensures that every topic represents a **contextually consistent query cluster** of keywords.

Contact

FirstSignals® – detect future trends before they become trends

FirstSignals® identifies new topics and trends. Experienced analysts evaluate on a daily basis high-quality editorial articles and opinion pieces from **top global media sources** based on new 'buzzwords'. Additionally, they evaluate a qualitative panel of top online media, which have established themselves as beacons of the industry with their excellent editorial teams. All media titles represent an editorial focus in the fields of economics, society, politics, and technology.

More information about FirstSignals® can be found here:

<https://www.pressrelations.com/de/firstsignals-trendanalyse#c2431>

Please email us at Shift-Mobility@Messe-Berlin.de

to access the **full report** 'The Great Shift: The Future of Mobility and New Urbanism'. Thank you!

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