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**Title:** Touchpoints for e-mobility: Vehicle purchase process understanding for a more efficient promotion of electric vehicles

**Abstract:** Representing 25% of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (IEA, 2019), decarbonization of the transport sector is absolutely crucial to fulfil global climate goals. Electric vehicles (EV) are seen as the most promising technology to deliver on the targets, especially if matched by electricity generated from renewable resources. Consequently, EVs have been widely supported by governments globally. Despite their increasing commitments, mainly in the form of regulation and financial incentives (Holtmark, & Skonhoft, 2014; BFE, 2015; Zhang, & Qin, 2018; EC, 2019), the share of EVs remains very small, with only 2.2% of newly sold vehicles in 2018 being electric (Irle, 2019). As a result, alternative support measures are needed to more effectively promote their purchases. For that, however, the reasons for their remaining small share have to be understood. With dramatically falling technological barriers (namely increasing battery performance, vehicle range and growing charging infrastructure), it has been concluded that individual preferences are becoming more important to determine EV shares (Taylor, & Fujita, 2018). The literature on pro-environmental attitudes has confirmed the attitude-behaviour gap (Blake, 1999), the gap between the intention and actual purchases, even regarding EVs (Martin, & Västfält, 2016). Consequently, the reasons for this gap have to be understood, namely the entirety of the EV purchase process, its individual stages, underlying decision-making processes and external influences. For that, the present research applied a mixed-method approach, combining a review of relevant literature and an online survey, conducted in December 2018 among 553 Swiss respondents. They firstly conclude that the vehicle purchase process is very complex, with five stages reaching far beyond the vehicle purchase itself. Moreover, these are underlined by a plurality of decision-making strategies that differ depending on the process stage. Thirdly, the generated data showed that car dealers are the most important external influence, exerting role across all stages, especially within information search and purchase. Yet, they also represent a major barrier to EV sales. From the respondents who have already been to a car dealer, 94.7% stated that they were not offered an EV during their last car dealer visit. However, consultation of a plurality of information sources and their perception as very important is correlated with EV consideration. For a more efficient EV promotion, policy makers are suggested to build on these results. Coordinated information platform and incentives in the form of car dealer trainings directly answer them and thus are suggested for policy implementation.