THE URBAN MOBILITY PACKAGE “TOGETHER TOWARDS COMPETITIVE AND RESOURCE-EFFICIENT URBAN MOBILITY” ADOPTED BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON 17.12.3013

The package was released together with a Eurobarometer survey on citizens’ perception of urban mobility (Attitudes of Europeans towards urban mobility, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb_special_419_400_en.htm#406). The survey shows that “a strong majority of citizens considers congestion, the cost, and the negative environmental and human health impacts of urban mobility and transport patterns to be important problems. Most respondents were rather pessimistic about the prospects for improving the traffic situation in their cities.” The survey also showed that considerable differences exist across the EU. “There is an increasing ‘urban mobility gap’ between Europe’s few advanced cities and the majority trailing behind”.

With the Urban Mobility Package, the European Commission asserts the need for a step change to tackle urban mobility challenges. In this framework, EU action is considered to have a significant role to contribute to the joint effort. The communication insists that this EU-wide action on urban mobility needs to involve Member States.

In the document, the European Commission therefore commits to certain non-regulatory initiatives and asks the Member States to consider a number of initiatives on their side.

The Package starts with a short summary of the mobility problems that European cities are facing. They are the home of 70% of the EU population which makes mobility increasingly difficult and inefficient. Urban areas account for 23% of all CO2 emissions from transport and traffic congestion is costing a big amount of money to the cities and states’ budgets. At the same time the European Commission recognises the potential that the cities have to revert this situation and support sustainable development. With their high population densities and high share of short-distance trips, there is a greater potential for cities to move towards low-carbon transport than for the transport system as a whole. Secondly, through active means of transport such as cycling and walking, the development of good public transport system and the early market introduction of clean vehicles, cities can positively affect air quality, reduce CO2 emissions and congestions.

SUSTAINABLE URBAN MOBILITY PLANS (SUMPS)

Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans are given special attention in the document and the work of city networks like Polis in sharing experiences is recognised there. The Urban Mobility Package outlines that the EC would support national, regional and local authorities to develop and implement SUMPs also financially. European Structural and Investment Funds “should be used more systematically for the funding of integrated packages of measures, where cities have developed an integrated local transport plan, such as a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan, and identified the appropriate actions”.

The document also presents the main characteristics a SUMP is expected to have, highlighting that urban mobility is primarily about people. The Annex on SUMP to the Urban Mobility Package defines more clearly the concept where it is stated however that these should be taken as guiding principles only and not as binding.


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The **goals and objectives** of a SUMP are to improve accessibility of urban areas and provide high-quality and sustainable mobility and transport to, through and within the urban area. It regards the needs of the ‘functioning city’ and its hinterland rather than a municipal administrative region. A Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan presents, or is linked to an existing, long-term strategy for the future development of the urban area and, in this context, for the future development of transport and mobility infrastructure and services. A Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan equally includes a delivery plan for short-term implementation of the strategy.

In relation to that the Commission also defines the necessary time, budget and resources.

**Timetable and budget plan:** The delivery plan should include a timetable for implementation as well as a budget plan. Sources for the requisite funding should be identified. The delivery plan ideally should cover a period of 3-10 years.

**Responsibilities and resources:** A Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan should provide a clear allocation of the responsibilities for the implementation of the policies and measures set out in the plan and identify the required resources for each actor.

In addition, the development of a sustainable urban mobility should build on a careful assessment of the present and future performance of the urban transport system.

As already mentioned above the SUMP should foster better integration of the different urban mobility modes and encourage a shift towards more sustainable modes. The plan puts forward an integrated set of technical, infrastructure, policy-based, and soft measures to improve performance and cost-effectiveness with regard to the declared goal and specific objectives. For this purpose, the following topics would typically be addressed:

- Public transport
- Non-motorised transport
- Inter-modality
- Urban road safety
- Road transport (flowing and stationary)
- Urban logistics
- Mobility management
- Intelligent Transport Systems

Finally, the implementation of a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan should be closely monitored.

The Commission then recommends to the Member States to consider:

- Conducting a careful assessment of the present and future performance of urban mobility in their territory, also in view of key EU policy goals;
- Developing an approach to urban mobility which ensures coordinated and mutually reinforcing action at national, regional and local level;
- Ensuring that Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans are developed and implemented in their urban areas and that they are integrated into a wider urban or territorial development strategy;
- Reviewing – and amending where necessary – the technical, policy-based, legal, financial, and other tools at the disposal of local planning authorities;
- Where appropriate, measures to avoid fragmented approaches to ensure continuity and compatibility of urban mobility measures to safeguard the functioning of the internal market.

The Commission, in turn, plans to:

- Set up, in 2014, a European Platform on SUMPs to coordinate EU cooperation on developing the concept and tools further;
- Provide a one-stop shop; and expand the present www.mobilityplans.eu website into a virtual knowledge and competence centre;
- Support national, regional and local authorities to develop and implement Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans, including through funding instruments.

For more detailed information, refer to the accompanying Annex:

2 Remarkably, the urban mobility package also stresses the health benefits of active modes of transport
OTHER URBAN MOBILITY AREAS

The Urban Mobility Package puts forward specific recommendations for coordinated action between all levels of government and between the public and the private sector in four additional areas: (i) urban logistics; (ii) urban access regulation; (iii) deployment of intelligent transport system solutions; (iv) and urban road safety. Each of them is presented in more detail below.

Urban logistics

Urban logistics is seen in the Package as a sector which will gradually grow, further increasing its high external costs. In addition, urban logistics is making up a significant share of urban traffic and accounts for 40% of the CO2 emissions from transport. The Commission believes that improvements in urban logistics such as better mode and vehicle selection, improved load factors, route optimisation and access to loading/unloading zones can be very cost effective and reduce the cost of goods and services. Improving the efficiency of the 'first and last mile' of deliveries is of particular importance for economic growth.

The Staff Working Document on urban logistics to the Urban Mobility Package shows that a review of best practice has demonstrated that particular attention should be paid to the following areas:

- Manage urban logistic demand
- Shift modes
- Improve efficiency
- Improved vehicles and fuels

To the Member States the Commission recommends:

- Ensuring that urban logistics are given proper consideration in their national approaches to urban mobility and in Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans;
- Creating platforms for cooperation, exchange of data and information, training, etc., for all actors of urban logistics chains.

The Commission commits to:

- Improve the dissemination and uptake of urban logistics best practice (2014). The Best Practice Factory for Freight Transport (BESTFACT), in which Polis participates is seen as one of the major sources which provides access to a number of best practice experience and expertise.
- Prepare, with experts, guidance documents that provide practical assistance on how to improve urban logistics performance, e.g. by developing delivery and servicing plans, city logistics in access regulation schemes etc. (2014-2016);
- Facilitate procurement of clean vehicles used for urban logistics by reviewing the scope of the Clean Vehicle Portal (2015-2016), in which review Polis is also taking part. A new horizontal EU legislation to be adopted in 2014 will contain clear rules in order to facilitate this process.

Smarter urban access regulation and road user charging

The Commission considers that urban vehicle access regulations can help optimize urban access, improve air quality and contribute to the goal of phasing out conventionally fuelled cars in cities by 2050. A fully harmonised European approach is not considered appropriate in this area because of the wide variety of schemes existing in Europe and the necessity that they are tailored to the specific local situation in each urban area. This variety can cause confusion among users that need to comply to different schemes in different cities.

The Commission asks Member States to consider:

- Conducting a thorough review of the effectiveness and impacts of existing and planned urban access regulation schemes;
- Providing a framework that allows local transport authorities to design, implement, and evaluate access regulation schemes, including urban road user charging.

The Commission plans to:

- Foster an exchange with Member States and experts on urban access regulations across the Union, including their conceptual foundations, practical implementation, effectiveness and impacts;
- Prepare, with stakeholders, non-binding guidance to help cities implement access regulation schemes effectively.


Coordinated deployment of intelligent transport system solutions

With the Urban Mobility Package the Commission recognised once again that although ITS have already been developed for more than 20 years, their deployment is still uneven across the European Union, its Member States and urban areas. The Commission sees in the Staff Working Document on ITS to the Urban Mobility Package the deployment of ITS solutions grounded in open standards and common specifications as contributing to inter-urban, inter-regional and ultimately pan-European interoperability.

The Commission, while acknowledging the pressure on the public budget of local authorities, believes that the standardisation of data formats and interfaces for new mobility services (such as bike sharing schemes, car sharing, and carpooling) and their introduction into multimodal information systems, including applications for booking, payment and ticketing, could considerably contribute to promoting more sustainable (multimodal) mobility.

The Commission affirms that the control of multimodal datasets in urban areas, including data from all transport modes and mobility services will guarantee the consistency of the services provided with public policies.

The document states in addition that ITS should be adapted to the particularly complex characteristics of urban mobility, hence embedded in any sustainable urban mobility policy.

The Commission finally sees as crucial, in this context of multiplication of ITS solutions, to ensure future interoperability of systems and of data formats to foster multi/inter/co-modality and facilitate data sharing and processing.
In order to achieve the benefit of urban ITS to the fullest, there is a need for action at every administrative level: local, national and European. Thus, the Commission makes recommendations to the Member States for their future work and presents the plans for work on European level.

The recommendations of the Commission to the Member States are to consider:

- Using the Guidelines when key ITS applications are deployed in their conurbations;
- Developing proper interfaces between urban and surrounding interurban transport networks;
- Setting-up interoperable multimodal datasets gathering all information about urban mobility.

The Commission’s work according to the document will concentrate on:

- Taking forward the work on supplementing the existing legislation on access to traffic and travel data and re-use of data, in order to unlock the potential lying in transport data, through appropriate instruments.
- Preparing specifications on Real-Time Traffic Information and Multimodal Information Services, as foreseen under the framework of the ITS Directive;
- Facilitating the deployment of vehicle to vehicle and vehicle to infrastructure communication systems in urban areas, by developing a roadmap and building consensus among relevant stakeholders.

For more detailed information, refer to the accompanying Commission Staff Working Document “Mobilising Intelligent Transport Systems for EU cities”:

Urban road safety

In view of the traffic crashes taking place in cities every year, and the fact that 50% of those killed in accidents in urban areas are pedestrians or cyclists, this sector and in particular vulnerable road users deserve attention. Vulnerable road user safety cannot be efficiently addressed without focusing on urban area road safety.

Furthermore, the Commission makes links between road safety and other urban mobility aspects, such as policies which encourage a modal shift to more sustainable transport modes, the implementation of access restriction zones or city logistics.

The main issues seen by the Commission on the accompanying Staff Working Document on road safety are:

- Safe driver behavior
- Infrastructure safety
- Vehicle safety
- Emergency response
- Urban road safety planning

In order to reach the EU targets of halving road deaths by 2020, road safety must be a prioritised issue by all relevant stakeholders, including at the local level.
To the Member States the Commission recommends:

- Ensuring that Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans take account of road safety aspects as a horizontal issue, at all steps of the planning process and address appropriately issues like safe urban infrastructure, especially for vulnerable road users, the use of modern technology for enhanced urban road safety, traffic rules enforcement, and road safety education;

- Ensuring proper gathering of data on road safety indicators at the most detailed level possible and encourage local authorities to use such data for local analysis and road safety planning.

The Commission will, during 2014-2015:

- Gather and disseminate good practice examples for road safety planning;

- Analyse measures for reducing the number of serious road traffic injuries in urban areas.


**Actions planned at EU level**

With the Urban Mobility Package, the Commission plans to support urban mobility with four main types of actions:

**Sharing experiences, show-casing best practices, and fostering cooperation.**

One of the main tasks for the Commission here is the setting-up of the European platform for sustainable urban mobility plans (SUMP), as presented above. The Commission will continue to support the development of an Urban Mobility Scoreboard, by identifying harmonised indicators to benchmark and compare the progress of urban areas across the EU. In that the Commission will build on work conducted in projects like Conduits, where Polis has also been involved. Finally, the Commission will set up a Member States’ Expert Group on Urban Mobility and Transport.

**Delivering research and innovation on urban mobility.**

The main instrument for that will be the CIVITAS 2020 initiative in the framework of Horizon 2020. The core of CIVITAS 2020, as inherent to CIVITAS programmes, will be developing and testing novel approaches for urban mobility. The estimated budget for 2014 and 2015 is €106.5 Million. CIVITAS 2020 will be complemented by the Smart Cities European innovation partnership and activities within the European Green Vehicles Initiative.

**Providing financial support for urban transport projects through the European structural and investment funds, in particular for the less-developed regions of the EU.**

The Commission specifies that measures for urban mobility can be supported by ESI-funds if they contribute to low-carbon objectives.

For the first time the Commission is including urban nodes in the TEN-T network as action by European cities is seen as crucial for achieving the objectives of TEN-T policy. Urban nodes will be covered through the Connecting Europe Facility. EU financial support will therefore be available for projects of common interest in urban areas, such as improving urban logistics operations which are part of national or international supply chains.

**Enhancing international cooperation, especially with the EuroMed countries, Brazil, Singapore and China.**