Transport and mobility are vital for society. Socio-economic interaction requires the physical movement of people and goods, which affects people’s quality of life. Despite its crucial function, transport today has a wide range of negative impacts: air pollution, noise, decreased accessibility, congestion and safety problems. These impacts are particularly acute in urban areas. In addition, motorised urban transport contributes substantially to global climate change.

Urban transport policy and mobility planning therefore imply choices that strongly affect society as a whole. They shape the environmental, economic, social and cultural future of your city — not only transport infrastructures and services.

"Our concern for the long-term benefits for health, the environment and the lives of people in our city offers us no alternative to a comprehensive approach addressing the issue of mobility."

Danica Simšic, Mayor of Ljubljana

"In Lancashire, we integrate our transport schemes with programmes that are traditionally associated with other policy domains. We are already working with programmes to renew housing, to review clinical health services and to bring people back to employment."

Councillor Jean Yates, Lancashire County Council

In practice, integrated planning processes are hampered by organisational divisions between transport modes, government agencies and services. Transport planning tends to be regarded as a technical task. Consequently, it often lacks adequate stakeholder participation and only delivers piecemeal measures.

This is where Sustainable Urban Transport Planning (SUTP) comes in. Urban mobility problems require a multifaceted policy response, based on a long-term strategy. It should be developed in consultation with other authorities and civil society. Concrete and achievable targets need to be set in order to demonstrate real change.

To facilitate this innovative mission, the PILOT project is developing guidance on SUTP for European cities and regions.

"Mobility must not become a negative story. Mobility can become a success story, if people switch to sustainable ways of transport."

Kathleen Van Beynen, Minister for Mobility, Flanders Region

Sustainable Urban Transport Planning helps local authorities to cope with their current and future mobility problems.

- SUTP encourages new efficient ways of working in local transport planning. It uses existing resources - budgets, workforce, knowledge, technology or infrastructure. It seeks to enhance partnerships and public participation.
- SUTP resolves transport problems more effectively, addressing mobility in the urban agglomeration through integrated packages of transport measures, creating win-win solutions.
- SUTP is a strategic approach, helping to improve the legitimacy and coordination of transport-related policies. It has a long-term perspective, while focusing on immediate progress.
- SUTP receives strong support from the EU as a common response to similar problems in cities and regions across Europe, and is fully in line with national or regional regulations.

"Sustainable Urban Transport Planning promotes strategic thinking and encourages integration. Partners across a range of sectors sign up to the understanding that in order to progress, a holistic approach is required."

Helen Holland, Bristol County Council

"In Braila, meetings of all key actors in the field of transport, education, and environment have lead to a common vision on sustainable transport for our city."

Mr. Ionescu, Vice - Mayor of Braila

"According to the strategic 'Tallinn Development Plan 2005-2014', the urban design should follow the principles of sustainable development. A sustainable transport system has a very important role to play in reaching this objective."

Mr. Jansen, Deputy Mayor of Tallinn

On this basis, a well-structured strategic planning process can be achieved, respecting the following five key tasks:

1. Status analysis and scenario development
2. Definition of vision, objectives and targets
3. Establishing an action and budget plan
4. Assignment of responsibilities and resources
5. Monitoring and evaluation

PILOT has developed an SUTP manual for cities and regions. It offers a comprehensive introduction to all activities related to SUTP. PILOT demonstrates the practical application of the manual in four European cities: Braila, Evora, Lancaster and Tallinn.

In some EU Member States (France, UK), SUTP has already become a legal requirement for local authorities. Useful practical experience is therefore available to help stakeholders take up the approach successfully.

"Lille Metropole encouraged all municipal and other technical services to work together, also involving citizens. A steering committee was set up in order to evaluate the results of the plan and improve it if necessary."

Paul Astier, Vice-President Lille Metropole

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What are the benefits & costs?

SUTP seeks to achieve a broad and lasting impact on urban mobility through a wide range of well-synchronized measures. It guarantees to comply with EU policies and legal requirements. It aims to:

- reduce noise and pollutant emissions and raise the share of renewable fuels;
- tackle congestion and problems linked to parking and urban freight;
- make urban transport systems more accessible, fair and safe;
- establish environmental issues on a par with social and economic ones in decision making processes that involve the public;
- define the relationship between local authorities and transport service providers.

Building on good practices and proven experiences from across Europe, SUTP thus helps to achieve key local development goals:

- increasing the cost-effectiveness of urban transport;
- improving the quality of life for citizens living and working in cities;
- enhancing the city’s attractiveness for investors and visitors;
- strengthening urban communities and identities.

In the long run, SUTP ensures the best value for money by:

- avoiding any wasteful allocation of scarce budgets and conflicts between measures (public and private);
- internalising the socio-economic and environmental costs of transport, thus reaching better cost equity;
- obtaining access to external funds through visible SUTP commitment.

How does the EU support SUTP?

The European Union strongly supports SUTP through its policies.

In addition, key aspects of sustainable urban transport planning have also become regulated by various EU directives over the past 10 years:

- The Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment: defines the objective of sustainable urban transport planning and the principles to be followed to achieve it in order to raise awareness of SUTP among local decision makers and to encourage its uptake.
- The Future of policy making for urban mobility

- The Future of policy making for urban mobility

In the future, the EU’s transport policies are expected to play a major role in supporting sustainable urban transport planning. This will include:

- The Sustainable Urban Transport Planning (SUTP) action plan, which outlines the key objectives and recommendations for promoting sustainable urban transport planning in Europe.
- The Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment, which sets out the principles and objectives for sustainable urban transport planning and provides guidance on how to implement them.
- The European Transport Policy for Sustainable Development (ETPSD), which sets out the EU’s objectives for reducing CO2 emissions from transport and improving energy efficiency.

In conclusion, sustainable urban transport planning is an important area of EU policy and will continue to be a priority in the future.