



**European Committee  
of the Regions**

**COTER-VII/011**

**7th commission meeting, 26 February 2021**

**WORKING DOCUMENT**

**Commission for Territorial Cohesion Policy and EU Budget**

**Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy**

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Alderman of the municipality of the Hague

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This document will be discussed at the meeting of the **Commission for Territorial Cohesion Policy and EU Budget** to be held **from 11:00 to 16:30 on 26 February 2021.**

Reference document

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy – putting European transport on track for the future

COM/2020/789 final

## Trigger: EU Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy

On 9 December, the European Commission published an EU Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy. This strategy ties in with the EU's Green Deal and Digital Agenda. The strategy is very broad and covers 10 key areas ("flagships") with 82 measures. The strategy sets out a policy agenda and a roadmap for the coming years.

There is a strong focus on reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in order to contribute to the EU's 55% target for 2030. Digitalisation and automation need to support the transition to cleaner and safer mobility.

## The role of regions and cities in the mobility transition

In cities and regions, mobility is the link between living, working, knowledge and free time.

A mobility transition is required in order to meet the objectives of sustainability, accessibility, road safety and health. This is not just a question of making transport more sustainable (towards zero-emission vehicles), but rather of reducing travel and changing mobility (towards more sustainable forms such as cycling and walking).

Mobility is inextricably linked to spatial planning: a clean but compact city that reduces mobility through proximity to various activities and facilities (living, working, business and free time) and that facilitates other active mobility through infrastructure for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. But cities and regions are also multimodal hubs with good connections to a network of regional, national and international connections.

## The EU strategy and urban and interurban mobility

The European Commission recognises the leading role of cities in the transition towards more sustainability. The Commission wants 100 cities to be climate-neutral by 2030.

The sustainable urban mobility plans (SUMP) are central to the strategy. This voluntary policy instrument from 2013 is intended for the mobility management of cities and the connections between cities and the surrounding (peri-urban) areas. There are now 1 000 cities in Europe with an SUMP. In recent years, the EU<sup>1</sup> has published guidelines on issues such as low-emission zones, cycling and shared mobility, covering a wide range of aspects.

In some Member States, regional mobility plans are used, which better reflect the scale of the challenges. Our challenges are not just sustainability, but also issues such as health, road safety and demographic change. This requires a change in behaviour, to which users are key.

## Questions

- What are your experiences with sustainable urban mobility plans (SUMP)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.eltis.org/mobility-plans/sump-guidelines>

*For cities which form parts of larger interconnected metropolitan areas it makes sense to develop a SUMP for the entire area (as opposed to one per city). As such metropolitan areas often cover large distances it may not be enough to focus mainly on walking or cycling. Rather, a SUMP should focus around a well-funded and well-interconnected public transport system.*

- How do you see the relationship between SUMP and regional mobility plans? What do you think the appropriate scale would be?

*Both plans must integrate seamlessly. While SUMP are more focused on the urban area, regional plans take a broader view. However, they intersect. E.g., trains that do not stop inside the urban area except for a central hub still need track capacity inside the urban area, trains that stop inside the area and outside require fitting slots, and incoming busses from outside need to connect to the urban transport system.*

- How can the strategy respond to the broader challenges and can an SUMP help with this?
- What effective incentives can cities use to encourage behavioural change with regard to choice of transport? How do we ensure that the plans do not leave out simple sustainable forms of urban mobility such as cycling and walking?

*For this, cities must follow a non-car-first policy where they provide not only qualitative and end-to-end cycling and walking routes but also dedicated bus and tram lines on routes with regular congestion.*

#### Supporting urban and regional mobility: EU funding

The strategy includes many references to EU funding. The TEN-T programme should be expanded to include first/last-mile solutions, including multimodal mobility hubs, park and ride facilities and safe active infrastructure for walkers and cyclists. To that end, cities must draw up an SUMP. In the new Horizon programme, the Commission intends to develop a mission on climate-neutral and smart cities as a strategic priority.

EU funding often consists of various budgets with different goals, which could be simplified. In order to switch to electric transport (from TEN-T) on a large scale in the near future, the electricity network (from TEN-E) also needs to be strengthened. Cities and regions can serve as testing grounds for the mobility transition and need funding for this purpose. This does not just mean the technical aspects but also the social component, such as dealing with active mobility (e.g. the possibility of electric bicycles between cities and cycling lessons).

#### Questions

- What are your experiences and ideas with regard to EU funding for mobility? Do you think enough money is available in the new programming period for the necessary investments in sustainable and smart transport?

*The Recovery and Resilience Facility will make €672.5 billion in loans and grants available to support reforms and investments undertaken by Member States. To recall, the aim is to mitigate the economic*

*and social impact of the coronavirus pandemic and make European economies and societies more sustainable, resilient, and better prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the green and digital transitions. The specific implementation of this facility is still being discussed. It is important that a substantial part of the RRF will be used to improve public transport infrastructures, including urban and suburban railway lines, all over the European Union.*

- Do you support the idea of using cities and regions as testing grounds for the mobility transition?

*Yes, cities like, e.g., Freiburg (Breisgau) that actively try a transition to eco-friendly mobility, should be supported as testing grounds. Support should not only be limited to financial aid but also include exceptions from car-centric policies (e.g., in Germany regional building regulations, that requires a certain amount of parking positions per building).*

### Supporting urban and regional mobility: EU policy measures

The strategy aims to make existing mobility more sustainable through a variety of technical measures and digitalisation. The strategy focuses on businesses for cleaner vehicles and infrastructure for clean fuel and making rail transport, aviation and shipping more sustainable.

The urban and regional mobility transition also calls for a change in transport management. The strategy does not always have the solutions to these issues. Urban low-emission zones require vehicle registration data to be shared to ensure enforcement with environmental legislation, but also for the purposes of road safety and the regulation of public space. Public-private solutions can play a role in reducing transport through agreements with businesses on working from home, establishment policy or urban distribution.

### Questions

- How can EU policies support cities and regions with the mobility transition, which does not just involve making existing transport more sustainable?

*As mentioned previously exceptions from car-centric policies or their entire removal can benefit the transition to more sustainable mobility. EU policies could limit car-friendly policies in member states.*

*As passengers, we see the need for a greater emphasis on the first/last mile of any door-to-door journey. To me this means greater attention to:*

- *the integration of transport strategy with land use/planning strategy - a well-conceived spatial strategy;*
- *the development of attractive and convenient multimodal passenger hubs (see paras 37 of Staff Working Document SWD(2020) 331 final on Sustainable & Smart Mobility Strategy in relations to TEN-T);*
- *multimodal ticketing for the entire journey (see paras 579 et seq of Staff Working Document SWD(2020) 331 final on Sustainable & Smart Mobility Strategy);*
- *a commitment to action on with a multimodal framework for passenger rights that is simplified, more consistent and harmonised.common principles (not just 'consider options and benefits') para 92 of Communication on Sustainable & Smart Mobility Strategy*

*For the user of environmentally friendly public transport, the price increase is often significantly higher than for private motor vehicles. Attractive and simple tariffs would significantly increase the incentive to use public transport and lead to a modal shift. This would also make it possible to fairly allocate currently uncovered external costs to the polluter.*

- How can the EU ensure that authorities and businesses cooperate better on policy issues?

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Gent, 07.03.21; Josef Schneider EPF, Lukas Iffländer/Katharina Krell PRO BAHN