Belgium, 07/03/2022

UMCASE: Creating mobility with people, for people

Nowadays, user involvement is mostly developed in the context of testing digital applications and innovative mobility solutions. However, this means that certain groups are left behind, as they may not have the knowledge, skills, interest or monetary capacity to access this technology. Additionally, user involvement and co-creation are still often forgotten when developing non-digital public transport solutions.

UMCASE intends to shift the attention of policy-makers and mobility experts to those who often don't have a voice, providing cities a method to improve their transport solutions and tailoring them to individual needs.

UMCASE (Citizens' inclusive and accessible urban mobility solutions) is a one-year project, supported by EIT Urban Mobility, an initiative of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), a body of the European Union. The project will create an innovative method to engage key city actors in creating the mobility that suits them. Often, mobility solutions of a city are replicated from other contexts, not considering the specific characteristics and needs of their inhabitants. This is even more evident with digital solutions for mobility.

Vulnerable groups such as older people, people with a disability, travellers with a low income or even migrants are often not considered in the designing phase of the applications and end up being unable to access these solutions. Their extra difficulties to access current mobility not only affects them as a group, but society as a whole, creating imbalances in the urban mobility system and hindering the transition to more sustainable modes of transport. Besides the common physical barriers to mobility in our cities, digital mobility brings an extra degree of inequality for these groups. Users from a more vulnerable background might not have the financial capacity to own a smartphone, might own one but not have the latest model that is compatible with current apps or might even not have the IT skills to use such a phone. This hinders them from full participation in the current mobility services, as they cannot use certain apps. Moreover, if citizens are unable to use these online services, cities are also faced with an extra barrier to reach them and to get them involved in participatory frameworks.

The UMCASE method is based on a **design thinking approach** that allows citizens, citizens' representative organisations, relevant urban stakeholders, transport providers and businesses to **work together during an intensive ideation cooperation**. The unique combination of observation, interaction and evaluation of the solutions allows UMCASE to go further than just formulation of ideas, truly being able to maximise people value (functional and emotional) while striking a balance between business viability and feasibility at large (technical, organisational and institutional).

To develop and test this method, our project will focus on two groups that are often faced with unequal access to mobility: **older people** and **people with a low income**. Our two pilot cities: Vitoria (Spain) and Eindhoven (the Netherlands) will test our method with these two different target audiences. The city of Vitoria will focus on older people, approaching the digital gap that this age group might have. Complementary, the city of Eindhoven will focus on another group that might have difficulties accessing digital services, travellers with low incomes.

Together with cities and citizens, we will develop our ideation sessions following five key steps:

1. **Field immersion:** We will start by going through one week of immersion at each city, trying to observe and experience the current mobility from the end-user's eyes;

2. **Ideation workshop**: Later we will organise and conduct a co-ideation session with representatives of all the parties having a stake in the provision or use of inclusive digitally-enhanced mobility. These extensive workshops will allow us to understand the problems, unleashing creative solutions and preparing prototypes;

3. **Design exploration:** The initial material will be further refined, deepened, and brought to a point where the best ideas or solution blocks can be mocked-up;

4. **Mocking-up**: The ideas further refined and deepened in the previous phase will be turned into mock-ups;

5. **Mock-up appraisal**: Finally, these mock-ups will be evaluated, in context, by actual users and local stakeholders.

The co-created UMCASE **methodology and execution tutorial** will not only benefit the communities in our pilot cities but will also be made available for other cities, citizens, service providers and other stakeholders. This will allow other cities to use our tool in their own context, understand the challenges their populations face and co-create the mobility solutions of the future, with people and for people.

For more information, please contact:

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About EIT Urban Mobility

UMCASE is a project under the support of EIT Urban Mobility.

EIT Urban Mobility, an initiative of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), a body of the European Union, aims to accelerate solutions and the transition towards a user-centric, integrated and truly multimodal transport system. As the leading European innovation community for urban mobility, EIT Urban Mobility works to avoid fragmentation by facilitating collaboration between cities, industry, academia, research and innovation to solve the most pressing mobility challenges of cities. Using cities as living labs, its industry, research and university partners will demonstrate how new technologies can work to solve real problems in real cities by transporting people, goods and waste in smarter ways.

About UMCASE

UMCASE (Citizens' inclusive and accessible urban mobility solutions) is a one-year project under the support of EIT Urban Mobility. It focuses on providing cities a method to improve their transport solutions as to make them better tailored to individual needs, in particular those from vulnerable groups. This method is based on a design thinking approach that allows citizens, citizen's representative organisations, relevant urban stakeholders, transport providers and businesses to work together during an intensive ideation cooperation. The UMCASE methodology and execution tutorial will be made available for cities, citizens, service providers and other stakeholders at the end of the project.