

## Policy paper

# “REFORM Action Plans: lessons learnt and policy recommendations for SUMP and mobility planning”

## T.1.2 ACTION PLAN (AP) DEFINITION AND PREPARATION

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 About this document

This **Policy Paper** has been jointly developed by, and mutually agreed among the REFORM partners. This document **intends to serve as an institutional reference for the REFORM regions. It includes the main principles, goals, actions and recommendations, which would seal the support and political commitment of the participating regions to the implementation of their individual Action Plans** and would be transferable for adoption by other regional authorities all over Europe.

The Policy paper is to be:

- presented during the Policy conference “Good practices for supporting the development of SUMP: effectiveness and transferability” at the end of the first phase of the project;
- disseminated during project events during the remaining duration of the project; and
- made available on the project/ Programme website.

### 1.2 Rationale and principles of the Policy Paper

As per the project’s Application Form, the Policy Paper is an additional contribution to the capitalisation of the work carried out in T.1.2, which comprises the definition and preparation of the Action Plans of the four participating Regions.

The Policy Paper builds on all the learning and exchange-of-experience processes of the first phase of the project, carried out through the identification and analysis of the:

- capacities, strengths, weaknesses and needs, but also the differences of the four Regions; and
- Good Practices related to sustainable mobility, as an inspiration for the actions to be included in each Action Plan.

**The Policy Paper is the capping stone of all the efforts made by the partnership during the first phase of the project and the driving force for the second phase: a key-document that contributes to capitalization, communication-dissemination and transferability.** As such, it would be addressed to different stakeholders:

- participating regions;
- policy and decision makers (of the same regions);
- high-level stakeholders (EU institutions and bodies);
- policy and decision makers of other regions in the same countries and beyond; and
- wider audience.

Hence, the Policy Paper will be delivered to the wider audience as **a brief document that will explain the rationale and aims, the problems to be addressed, the key findings and results and the recommendations.**

### 1.3 Structure and contents of the Policy Paper

Based on the above rationale and principles, the structure and contents of the Policy Paper are defined as follows:

- **Introduction**
  - o Purpose of the paper
  - o The issues tackled (gaps) and its significance
  - o The main statement/ declaration
  - o Main fields affected by the policy (society, economy, energy, climate etc.)

- **Background - Current situation**
  - Policy context (EU Transport/ Mobility framework, Urban Package, Europe 2020, Cohesion Policy, Digital Agenda, Regional Operational Manuals...)
  - Current situation – problem description
  - Motivation and actors identified and involved/ to be involved
  
- **Analysis and findings**
  - Insights
  - Facts and figures – info graphs
  - What is done in practice (best-good-bad practices)
  
- **Policy options and impacts**
  - Why a new policy is needed? What is the innovation?
  - Which are the options, if any?
  - Which are their impacts, pros & cons/ reservations and implications?
  - Which is the best option? and comparison with “BAU” scenario (do nothing) – effectiveness, efficiency, feasibility, transferability and replicability
  - Roles and responsibilities of actors
  
- **Recommendations**
  - Which are the recommendations (policy making, actions, implementation, monitoring, assessment)
  - How they can be implemented (financing, coordination) and monitored/ evaluated
  
- **Conclusion**
  - Summary of the analysis and recommendations reminding the problem/ goal/ necessity
  
- **Liability statement**
  - Statement of the signing parties (regions)

## 2 The Policy Paper: “Enhancing the regional governments’ capacities and role in Sustainable Mobility Planning”

### 2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this Policy Paper is to outline –based on the REFORM conclusions- the actions that should be taken towards enhancing the role and capacities of Regions in Sustainable Mobility Planning, for moving towards a low-carbon mobility and improving the living conditions of citizens. Its aim is primarily to be officially adopted by the participating Regions of the REFORM project. Secondly, at any given time, the policy paper is open for endorsement by any other interested Region, located in the EU or beyond.

Transport systems in our era need to be integrated and efficient. In urban areas – either densely or less densely populated – and their congested roads alternative means of transport should be available. These alternatives should co-exist and co-function as a system. Actions and measures are well known to scientists and practitioners, but the take up is slow at the local government level. Planning for a functional city should be an integrated approach, based on sound knowledge of the existing patterns of people’s mobility and goods’ transportation.

The know-how, the methods and the tools are existing and available. What is actually missing in most of the cases is the framework - legal and institutional - that enables metropolitan or regional administrations to gather, organise, process and use data for the purposes of planning, policy design and decision making and having a coordinative role for their discrete municipalities’ planning, actions and measures.

Mobility and Transport is a policy sector on its own and it is also a substantial sector of the economy. Both sectors should not be restricted and limited, as long as people and goods need to move and be moved. The transport system must be properly managed and changed and adjusted, to serve the communities, the social and economic activities of the cities and regions, in an environmentally-friendly and energy-efficient way.

With this Policy Paper, Regional Administrations reinforce their commitment to the implementation of their Action Plans developed in the framework of REFORM project, following the same principles, adjusted to their respective contexts and particularities.

### 2.2 Background - Current situation

Due to the extensive economic activity in urban areas, many European cities face problems related to or caused by transport and traffic. Economic and social evolution has rapidly increased the levels of mobility. The growth of private car use has been accompanied by an increase in urban sprawl and commuting, whereas the expansion of public transport networks has not been able to cater for the increased mobility needs of a growing European urban population. As noted in the European Urban Mobility Policy Context published by the European Commission (2017), the percentage of European population living in urban areas is expected to rise to 80% by 2050.

The EU urban transport policy has been discussing about the challenges and options for intervention in urban transport in a series of EU policy papers. The Green Paper “Towards a new culture for urban mobility” (2007) aimed at stimulating discussion on urban mobility at the European level. Its main identified challenges were the free-flowing and green towns and cities, smarter, safe, secure and accessible urban transport. Moreover, the Action Plan on Urban Mobility (2009) put forth 20 measures and tools to facilitate and support policy making and urban transport management. **Integrated planning systems is among the issues addressed**, along with others of equal importance, such as greener transportation (low and zero emission vehicles). And in the - currently effective - White Paper (Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area, 2011), specific urban transport goals have been included, namely halving the use of conventional cars in cities and achieving CO<sub>2</sub> and free logistics in major urban cities, both by the year 2030.

The Urban Mobility Package was adopted in late 2013, recognising that **urban mobility is primarily a responsibility of the local actors by developing integrated strategies for sustainable urban mobility, action plans and monitoring framework**. Specifically, the Urban Mobility Package highlights the important role that Member States play in **providing the right framework conditions for local action, as well as for ensuring that action across the Union and across the different levels of government within their territories is coordinated, complementary and mutually reinforcing**.

A resource-efficient Europe presupposes collective and individual efforts on each single day. Sustainable urban mobility planning principles are more and more promoted during the last years and are applied with different speeds by various cities all over the continent. But what does “urban” means in practical terms? A city, Municipality, or a group of adjoining Municipalities, a metropolitan area. Even more, with the urban sprawl, it could mean a wider region with metropolitan area(s) and satellite conurbations.

Not putting the blame on Municipalities with active Mayors and staff that have enrolled in national and international programmes, initiatives and projects which ensure financial support and grants for elaborating Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans, **quite often, a discontinuity of proper, integrated and coordinated planning and monitoring is evident**. This leads to **unbalanced and fragmented actions among the different, even bordering, Municipalities of the very same city or metropolitan area**.

On the other hand, citizens, users of the transport system and the system itself do not perceive nor recognise municipal borders when commuting, walking, biking for business, for leisure or any other purpose. What is directly and easily understood by them, though, is when the environment is obviously different than their “backyard”, neighbourhood or Municipality.

Extending the supporting methodologies in sustainable mobility planning could provide a clear guidance and support to all regional cities in their SUMP development and implementation. This has been the outcome of the joint work of the REFORM partners and an extensive dialogue established and performed with several stakeholders, comprising representatives of the 1<sup>st</sup> level local governments, the academia and research institutions, business and citizens associations, transport authorities and operators, as well as national authorities at Ministerial level.

The main expected improvements will be in terms of:

- Harmonisation and integration of sustainable urban mobility planning principles at a wider territorial area including the extra urban dimension (polycentric areas, peri-urban areas), including specific provisions in the SUMP of the different cities to address this dimension as well;
- Efficient and timely delivery of plans at regional level;
- Involvement in the SUMP development process of a larger number of cities in the region, namely medium-sized ones;
- Durability of the effects of the support actions, thanks to a better harmonisation of the policies at different territorial levels (i.e. local and regional);
- Data exchange and integrated management for monitoring and planning purposes;
- Enhanced opportunities for funding the selected measures of local and regional importance through available sources and exploiting the Regional Operational Programs as vehicle for coordination and bridging local and national governance.

### 2.3 Analysis and findings

The purpose of REFORM was to contribute to the improvement of the regional policy instruments (Regional Operational Programmes & Greater Strategy) of the participating regions, in line with the European Commission’s Communication on Urban Mobility and SUMP COM(2013)913. This would gradually, but more

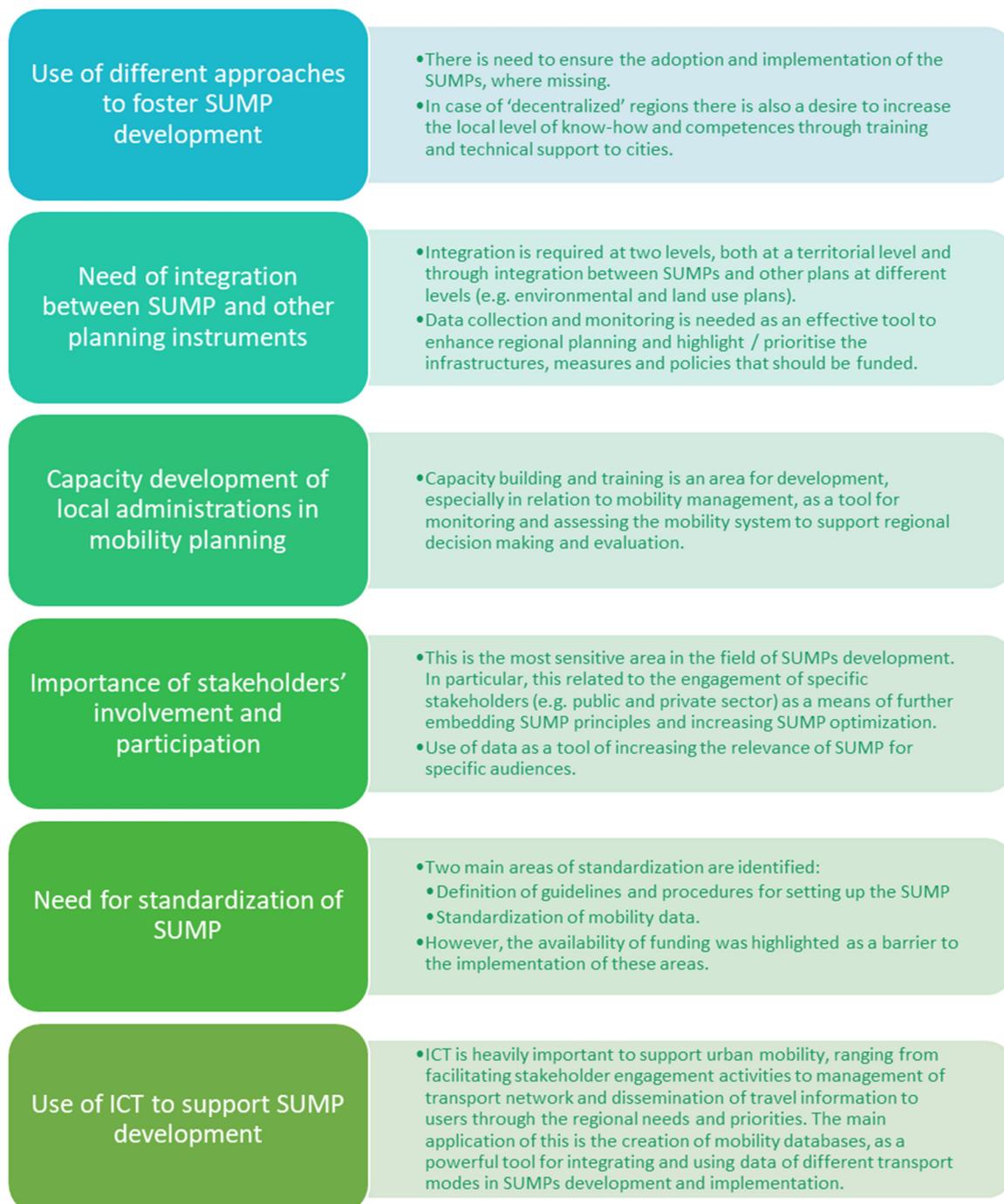
intensively and effectively lead to a faster widespread of SUMP's development as a key-factor for moving towards low carbon alternatives for mobility.

The four public regional authorities involved in the REFORM project face different challenges and have different starting points and different needs, as reflected in the summary below:

 <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Region of Central Macedonia</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The Region of Central Macedonia (RCM) has developed a Metropolitan Plan, the "Integrated Spatial Investments for Sustainable Urban Development of Thessaloniki", which aims at the implementation of development strategies of the Metropolitan area of Thessaloniki. Nonetheless, fragmentation of responsibilities in planning is still a great issue.</li> <li>•There are currently some significant funding opportunities for the implementation of Municipal SUMP's and SUMP's concept has already been considered as a significant tool.</li> <li>•Main needs concern the way SUMP's can integrate other policy themes, the institutionalization of the stakeholders' engagement processes, the training of the Regional and Muniicipal staff on SUMP's and the collection and analysis of mobility data that can support SUMP development.</li> <li>•Main challenge is the coordination at regional level and integration to a large-scale mobility plan that integrates local SUMP's and territorial planning.</li> </ul>	 <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Region Emilia – Romagna</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The Emilia-Romagna Region (RER) has a strong experience in spatial and mobility planning, but there is also a strong fragmentation of sectorial planning and lack of a unique mobility vision.</li> <li>•There is great interest and high expectations for SUMP development at Municipality level and the Region has already participated in a national initiative to define guidelines for Municipal SUMP's, in order to tackle the great variation between the Municipalities, in terms of skills and know-how.</li> <li>•Main needs and priorities identified concern the collection and analysis of mobility data, citizens change of mobility behaviour, and introduction and use of indicators for plans monitoring.</li> <li>•Other important areas, but with a differed level of priority, focus on the normative side of SUMP's, Strategic Environmental Assessment, but also professional training and education topics that will promote the change of modal split towards public transport.</li> </ul>	 <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Greater Manchester</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Greater Manchester transport Authority (TfGM) follows the national requirement for development of Local Transport Plans (LTPs, equivalent of SUMP's).</li> <li>•GM's SUMP set outs conurbation-wide policies and programmes for transport, thus helping the implementation of the Greater Manchester Strategy.</li> <li>•Greater Manchester Low Emission Strategy and Air Quality Action Plan, 2016, and Climate Change and Low Emissions Implementation Plan 2016-2020 both support the need for a mode shift to sustainable transport and reduction of emissions from vehicles.</li> <li>•Current main needs focus on the requirement for more knowledge and skill in transport economics, including cost-benefit analysis and strategic/ project appraisal, effective approaches to partnership working and stakeholder engagement.</li> <li>•A main challenge is the discontinuity of funding, but also the level of it, which makes it difficult to fund infrastructural interventions.</li> </ul>	 <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Parkstad Limburg</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Stadsregio Parkstad Limburg has a traffic and transport plan that started in 2011 for the period up to 2020.</li> <li>•The regional traffic and transport plan has been approved by the Regional Council and is effective. This plan will be replaced in 2021 by a regional SUMP to be developed.</li> <li>•Meanwhile Parkstad adopted an ambition on energy transition, namely to be energy neutral in 2040 by savings and sustainable generating.</li> <li>•The main needs identified are:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The inclusion of mobility as a priority axis in the Operation Programme, since it will give the opportunity to start the implementation of several measures already studied so that there will be the opportunity to set up a significant set of new projects.</li> <li>- Actions and measures for the achievement of the SUMP's for the polycentric region and the energy efficiency targets set.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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Within REFORM, several Good Practices have been identified and evaluated, providing a valuable source of inspiration for the development of SUMP Action Plans and have a high potential for transferability in different regional contexts. Although these practices are not aspiring to encompass the full set of policies adopted throughout Europe for supporting the uptake of SUMP, they represented a significant set of cross-cutting issues that public authorities used as valuable elements to inspire actions to be included in their respective Action Plans.

The report “EU Good Practices on sustainable mobility planning and SUMP” and the classification of the Good Practices performed within the framework of REFORM concluded to the identification of a number of key issues that need to be dealt with. These key issues have also been discussed by the REFORM partners through an evaluation process:



## 2.4 Policy options and impacts

The enhancement of the role of the Regions as the second level of governance above several cities and towns is the aim of this Policy Paper. The policy framework at the European level exists, however **the Urban Mobility Package leaves to the Member States to develop a national approach in the field of urban mobility; and to review the set of current tools and instruments that are available for local actors and to complement and modify this set, where appropriate.**

As acknowledged by REFORM and verified by the work done so far, different regions around Europe seek to enhance their role in urban planning for their territories. However, the existing frameworks and jurisdictions of Regions vary among the EU member states: In the case of the Regions represented in REFORM, SUMP development is obligatory (Greater Manchester, Region Emilia Romagna) or not (Region of Central Macedonia, Stadsregio Parkstad Limburg). SUMPs are in some cases funded by national governments or on the other edge by Local Transport Authorities' own funds, while measures are funded by Regional Operational Programs or the national governments. Therefore, a one-size-fits-all model is not a solution, depending on the existing framework and governance model of each Member State and particularly the administrative type of the Regions (centralised, decentralised or mixed).

Hence, options vary, ranging from: do nothing and maintaining the current context, if already satisfactory; to making some changes to improve the current framework and its functionality; or even to proceed with rather radical changes.

Formalising collaborative arrangements – either on a project-by-project basis or as a standing arrangement – between local municipalities in the preparation of SUMP can be a good initial approach for early SUMP development. This was the original approach to SUMP development in Greater Manchester and has been proven effective in Parkstad Limburg.

However, in order to achieve integrated planning, funding, implementation and monitoring, the potentially most effective option is to institutionalise the role of the Region – particularly where the role of the Region is missing or downgraded, or where early attempts to formalise collaborative arrangements have been unsuccessful. This requires the creation of the necessary conditions for policy change and modification of the respective legal framework, always in coordination and collaboration with the competent Ministries and the local Municipalities. The latter should see in this an opportunity of a high-level monitoring and facilitating body, and any hesitance should be lifted in continuous dialogue that clarifies roles, responsibilities and jurisdictions.

Apart from the positive impacts demonstrated above, implications are not expected beyond the usual stagnancy for changes and shift from the business as usual conditions. It should be communicated to the stakeholders and the currently responsible urban transport planning authorities at local level, that a leading and coordinating role of the Region does not mean the transfer of planning responsibility, nor the interference into local contexts without considering the will and aspirations of Municipalities (i.e. the citizens and users of the transport system of the cities and towns, so of the same Region). On the contrary, it should be clarified that this new mechanism will act in favour of all the cities and towns and be a vehicle for securing necessary funds for their actions and measures, as well as projects that concern a bigger population and area within the region than a city or town.

The REFORM project has organized several events and established dialogue with local authorities and stakeholders, academia, business operators, associations, citizens, etc. and concludes that the conditions are - to a certain extent - mature to initiate such an exercise where needed, starting with the Regions involved in the project. They also believe that this policy change is transferable and replicable by other regional governments as well, primarily in the countries represented in the project, and beyond, where similar conditions prevail.

## 2.5 Recommendations

An integrated approach to mobility systems planning, implementation, function, monitoring and assessment is needed with all transport modes and infrastructures optimally developed and used. Sustainable mobility and use of clean and energy efficient modes should be promoted, not only to meet the requirements of the Paris Agreement on climate change and the Climate Convention, but also to provide a significant contribution to the reduction of other environmental damage caused by transport and mobility. Additionally, coordination in funding projects is needed in order to exploit the different financial sources available at regional, national and EU levels.

Based on the outcomes of the Policy Conference organised by REFORM in Brussels (December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018) with the participation of high-level representatives from the European Commission and by acknowledging and endorsing the relevant results and recommendations of other EU funded projects (IEE POLY-SUMP, CIVITAS PROSPERITY, CIVITAS SUMP-Up):

- **SUMP should be considered as an overarching city and regional level strategy** to overcome silo-thinking and tackle transport-related environmental and health problems.
- SUMP scope should be expanded to functional areas (intermunicipal or regional). **Regions should play a role and must be included in the on-going revision of the SUMP guidelines.**
- Member States should establish a clear and well-structured (not necessarily obligatory) regulatory framework to encourage SUMP take-up. **The legal and governance dimensions of the national framework for urban mobility should be developed or reinforced, in order improve integration between administrative levels:** local, regional and national.
- **Means of funding (EU, public authorities' budgets, private sector, etc.) should be assessed and used according to the results and impacts achieved.** Cities that apply for project funding should become able to combine resources from different levels (EU, national and regional).
- **Participatory process, capacity building and learning should be increased in the areas of evaluation, indicator development, and data gathering,** given that evaluation of transport planning process and SUMP impact is not yet being conducted systematically and remains a low priority in most EU cities. Formal or informal meetings should be set up between different administrative bodies to exchange on relevant issues and create a culture of cooperation.
- **Awareness should be increased, targeting decision makers and opinion leaders at the national, regional and local level.**
- **Data collection and sharing should be considered in planning for innovation process,** since it has a strong regional dimension.
- **Even experienced SUMP cities need support in areas such as transport evaluation and newer mobility policy areas, such as urban logistics, shared mobility, use of public space, and automation.** Future capacity building programmes and funding opportunities at EU level should also focus on these aspects.

In this context, Regions could and should play a decisive and coordination role by undertaking specific responsibilities, overcoming also specific barriers and obstacles.

### Responsibility to be undertaken:

*Reinforcement of the role of the Regional government in SUMP adoption and development through coordination and networking activities*

### Barriers to overcome:

- Structural changes covering legal, institutional, technical and financial aspects
- Fragmentation of responsibilities/planning

### Proposed Actions:

- Close cooperation and consultations of the national government with the regional and local representatives for clarifying the allocation of roles and responsibilities among the various levels of governance as regards the SUMP development and evaluation.

**Responsibility to be undertaken:**

*Establishing and maintaining constant communication channels and constructive dialogue with the local governments, stakeholders and citizens*

**Barriers to overcome:**

- Stand-alone administrative culture
- Tension over competing interests
- Lack of structured involvement of stakeholders in specific policies
- Lack of guidance (instruments/methodologies) at national or regional level

**Proposed Actions:**

- Organisation of regular meetings with local officers, technicians and the relevant stakeholders for common planning and decision-making
- Organisation of awareness raising events, campaigns and open dialogues for change of mobility behaviour and for active participation in sustainable mobility planning and actions definition

**Responsibility to be undertaken:**

*Enhancing the regional capacities, in terms of human resources know-how and tools, to be able to evaluate and provide guidance to the local SUMP elaborated on their territories ensuring their comprehensiveness, validity and overall success in planning and implementation*

**Barriers to overcome:**

- Lack of regional examples and practices
- Missing skills in specific areas (i.e. transport economics)
- Defining a cost effecting model for skills' enhancement
- Loss of skills

**Proposed Actions:**

- Operation of Regional Competence Centres on SUMP development and support
- Organization of training seminars on SUMP development and implementation
- Development of regional SUMP guidance and specification
- Consulting existing guidance and material – creating a SUMP knowledge-library

**Responsibility to be undertaken:**

*Ensuring the complementarity of (local) SUMP in a wider territorial planning perspective and their consistency with other regional plans, strategies and objectives*

**Barriers to overcome:**

- Silo approaches to design and planning
- Different priorities between local administrations
- Competing schemes/policies (i.e. economic growth, social inclusion and mobility management)

**Proposed Actions:**

- Development of a regional depository of the proposed local measures and policies
- Collecting, managing and properly using data from the Municipalities with the exploitation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), as a means for effective assessment, monitoring and future planning activities, through the use of common set of performance indicators

**Responsibility to be undertaken:**

*Ensuring effective assessment, monitoring and future planning activities, through the use of a common set of performance indicators*

**Barriers to overcome:**

- Lack of common methodologies
- Missing knowledge on analytical tools

**Proposed Actions:**

- Collecting, managing and properly using data from the Municipalities with the exploitation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and/or the development of data repositories
- Development of regional models for simulating and evaluating proposed planning activities and policies

**Responsibility to be undertaken:**

*Taking the responsibility and/ or assist and support the (local) administrations, where needed, in securing funding for SUMP and Action Plans implementation*

**Barriers to overcome:**

- Non-continuity of funding
- Difficulties to fund transformational infrastructure
- Prioritization

**Proposed Actions:**

- Ensuring a well-orchestrated implementation plan aligned to the Regional Operational Programs
- Update of SUMP at regular/ specific intervals according to the regional planning priorities

## 2.6 Conclusion

The European Union identified the guiding principles for sustainable mobility planning and strongly supports SUMP take-up and acknowledged the importance of local administrations in mobility planning. The REFORM's added value lies in the creation of the appropriate conditions for easier SUMP adoption and wide spreading. Addressing Regional Operational Programs, the policy instrument for the use of Structural Funds, and other available funding sources, newly developed models for mobility planning process governance will promote sustainable mobility choices and will integrate them in a wider unitary scheme.

The lack of coordinated actions and unsatisfactory levels of financing have emerged from the Action Plans that were developed. European Regions show different degrees of maturity and awareness about the role they can play in SUMP take up and how to strengthen their access to structural funds to develop integrated local mobility planning vision.

The policies and initiatives to be adopted are expected to influence directly the medium-term planning framework of Regions and cities within, with a significant amplifying effect. The adoption of SUMP, as a targeted strategic intervention in mobility planning within an organic policy framework, and their adoption and implementation will provide continuous planning process over a significant time period, adjustable to the technological, societal and financial evolutions.

The creation of specific high-level competences in SUMP within the Regional Administrations' structure will facilitate the work of those local administrations willing to develop and adopt a SUMP and will ensure the durability of any structural changes and revised framework where these are required. Moreover, ICT can contribute substantially to SUMP development, integrated planning, monitoring and assessment, and overall in decision making, since SUMP are not "static" planning instruments but require adaptation and improvement over time. For this reason, the exploitation of ICT should be further encouraged, also for the facilitation of stakeholders' involvement during the SUMP development and to support data collection, management and maintenance processes.

## 2.7 Liability statement

***Following their fruitful interregional cooperation, the Region of Central Macedonia (Greece), the Region of Emilia-Romagna (Italy), Transport for Greater Manchester (UK) and the Region Parkstad Limburg (the Netherlands), affirm:***

- ***the importance of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP) as strategic planning tools to foster low carbon mobility through ERDF funds and Regional Operative Programmes;***
- ***the key role of the Regions in SUMP implementation and adoption, through the integration of planning competences, advanced mobility data collection and analysis, and support in behavioural change; and***
- ***their intention to pursue their cooperation in order to strengthen the role of Regions in the development of a multi-governance framework for a shared transport vision at local, regional and national level, which will tackle present and future mobility challenges.***

## REFORM Partners



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