EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

Brussels, 17.12.2013
SWD(2013) 529 final

COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Accompanying the document

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

Together towards competitive and resource-efficient urban mobility

{COM(2013) 913 final}
{SWD(2013) 524 final}
{SWD(2013) 525 final}
{SWD(2013) 526 final}
{SWD(2013) 527 final}
{SWD(2013) 528 final}

1. GENERAL CONTEXT

In 2010, the Europe 2020 Strategy[1] for smart, inclusive, and sustainable growth highlighted the importance of a modernised and sustainable European transport system and stressed the need to focus also on the urban dimension of transport. The 2011 Transport White Paper[2] mentioned the possibility of a European support framework for Urban Mobility Plans.

2. PROBLEM DEFINITION

Despite existing EU policies and legislation tackling individual policy areas with impact on urban mobility, road safety, climate change, air quality, noise), and related action in the Member States, many cities in Europe still face common challenges. They are struggling with congestion and accessibility, seamless mobility along the TEN-T, traffic accidents on urban roads, air pollution, CO2 emissions and noise pollution.

The main problem identified is that the EU objectives crucial for a competitive and sustainable transport system - i.e. seamless mobility along the TEN-T, improved road safety, reduced CO2 emissions and noise pollution, and improved air quality - are at risk because of transport developments in urban areas. This consequently negatively affects the well-being of citizens and effectiveness of businesses located in urban areas.

The general root cause of this problem is linked ***to regulatory failure at the urban level and the fact that market mechanisms alone are not able to address this situation.*** The regulatory failure is itself linked to the fact that many local authorities are not effective in their actions ***due to a lack of an integrated urban mobility approach***. They tackle the individual policy areas separately, without necessarily looking for possible synergies or conflicts between those individual policy areas.

3. ANALYSIS OF SUBSIDIARITY

The right for the EU to act in the field of transport is set out in Articles 90-91 of the TFEU, which makes provisions for the Common Transport Policy, and in Articles 170-171 of the TFEU, Title XVI on the trans-European networks.

The necessity to take action at EU level on urban mobility is linked to the fact that urban transport systems are integral elements of the European transport system and therefore also of concern for the Common Transport Policy. As most transport of goods and people starts and ends in a city, the urban dimension linked to the TEN-T cannot be neglected.

EU action in the area of urban mobility can bring added value by providing a more coordinated policy framework to the European cities for their integrated urban mobility planning, thus making their actions more effective. The EU can give a clear political message that should translate into stronger political will at national, regional and local level. The EU also has the potential to leverage greater results and magnify the efforts in domains such as dissemination of information and knowledge, expansion of the knowledge base, capacity building, practical guidance and support to authorities, networking, research, and exchanges of best practice in the area of promoting integrated urban mobility approaches.

This initiative gives a lot of consideration to local circumstances and refrains from imposing arbitrarily specific measures on cities. It will be directed towards supporting national

[1] COM(2010)2020 final
[2] COM(2011)144

authorities with a framework on an integrated urban mobility approach, in full respect of subsidiarity and of different organisational structures at the local level.

4. OBJECTIVES

The general objective is *to unlock the full potential of urban areas* to contribute to a more competitive and resource-efficient transport system.

The specific objective is to *ensure the uptake of an integrated urban mobility approach* by EU urban areas.

The operational objectives are:

- To provide EU urban areas with a *policy framework* encompassing all policy issues necessary to ensure an integrated approach to urban mobility, at the latest by 2020.
- To provide EU urban areas with a *governance framework* encompassing all procedures and processes necessary to ensure an integrated approach to urban mobility, at the latest by 2020.

5. POLICY OPTIONS

The public consultation, the expert and stakeholder meetings, independent research, experiences from past initiatives and own analysis have allowed the Commission services to identify a set of policy options having the potential to reach the identified key EU Transport White Paper objective:

5.1. Option 0B: Business as usual scenario

The EU would support a bottom-up approach (the business-as-usual scenario) to promote integrated urban mobility planning. The Commission would continue present activities.

In this approach, the Commission would further stimulate by its activities the uptake of SUMPs, with an emphasis on a comprehensive policy framework and a minimum governance framework.

5.2. Option 1B: Non-binding recommendation on SUMPs

The EU would seek to enhance voluntary development and implementation of SUMPs by the competent authorities in the Member States by providing recommendations on this topic. The recommendations will encourage Member States to set up national policy frameworks to encourage the development and implementation of SUMPs in their urban areas.

5.3. Option 2A: Mandatory development of SUMPs by Member States-defined urban areas

The EU would make mandatory the development and implementation of SUMPs by the competent authorities in the Member States for certain urban areas categories. In option 2A the Member States need to freely define themselves the urban areas (e.g. based on population size) for which they esteem a mandatory development and implementation of SUMPs necessary to reach the goal of this initiative.

This mandatory EU level framework would by nature have to take the form of a legal instrument. As to respect the subsidiarity principle and as to take into account the different situation in cities and Member States, a Directive - and not a Regulation – would be the appropriate instrument in this case.

5.4. Option 3A: Mandatory development of SUMPs by EU-defined urban areas (minimum policy and governance framework)

The EU would make mandatory the development and implementation of SUMPs by the competent authorities in the Member States for certain urban areas categories. In option 3A the EU level defines the urban areas for which a SUMP needs to be developed and implemented (e.g. based on population size).

This mandatory approach would only cover the minimum requirements, both for the policy and the governance framework, as described in section 5.1.3 above. For the same reasons as for option 2A, option 3A would take the form of a Directive.

5.5. Schematic overview of the retained policy options and implementation

Table 4: Retained policy options

(for all options: governance framework: minimum)	**A** **Policy framework** **MINIMUM**	**B** **Policy framework** **COMPREHENSIVE**
0) Business as usual: R&D, funding, best practice, campaigns, local capacity building	N/A	**Option 0B**
1) Non-binding recommendation on SUMPs	N/A	**Option 1B**
Make mandatory the development and implementation of SUMPs:		
2) Member States need to define themselves the urban areas (e.g. based on population size) for which a SUMP needs to be developed and implemented	**Option 2A**	**N/A**
3) The EU level defines the urban areas for which a SUMP needs to be developed and implemented (e.g. based on population size)	**Option 3A**	**N/A**

6. ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS

6.1. Effect of the policy options on the uptake of SUMPs

Compared to the business as usual scenario, the mandatory approach (options 2A and option 3A) is assumed to lead to a much higher uptake of full SUMPs. The voluntary approach (option 1B) leads to a more moderate increase in uptake of full SUMPs, depending on the local situation and incentives in place. Within the mandatory approach, it could be reasonably argued that the uptake of SUMPs would be slightly higher for option 3A than for option 2A. This is because the EU definition of cities to implement SUMPs is more likely to have a wider coverage, as the EU definition would be more linked to reaching the key EU Transport White Paper objective towards a more competitive and resource-efficient transport system.

6.2. Link between the uptake of SUMPs and the economic, social and environmental impacts of this initiative

It can be assumed that the more cities implement a full SUMP, the higher the potential environmental/social/economic impacts will be. Therefore, in the following sections on the assessment of impacts it will be argued that option 0B, 1B, 2A and 3A will have an increasing effect on potential economic/environmental and social impacts.

6.3. Main economic impacts

6.3.1. Congestion and the free movement of people and goods

People and businesses locate in urban areas to have easy accessibility to jobs, services and resources. Congestion reduces this accessibility and therefore also the attractiveness and business opportunities of the location. The development and implementation of SUMPs will lead to reduced congestion. Travel times will become more predictable and fewer passenger-hours and tonne-hours will be lost, allowing households, the public sector and businesses to save time and costs.

6.3.2. TEN-T network

Given that traffic in cities is closely interlinked with traffic on cities' rings and bypasses, SUMPs will also affect the adjacent transport network. Reduction of traffic congestion through SUMPs in urban areas will be positive for the TEN-T logistics, by improving access to motorways, better linkages with main transport hubs (ports, airports) located in urban areas and better organisation of city logistics in general.

6.3.3. Modal shift

Introduction of SUMPs will have a positive effect on the modal shift as they promote walking and cycling as well as public transport.

6.3.4. Research & innovation, economic development and competitiveness of EU industry

Developing a SUMP framework at the EU level could give Europe leadership in the integrated urban mobility planning know-how and could thus strengthen the competitiveness position of the EU industry. Moreover, the SUMP framework can bring additional positive results to the competitiveness of the EU industry, as one of the underlying objectives of SUMPs is to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness of transportation of persons and goods.

6.3.5. Small and Medium Enterprises

The overall impact of SUMPs on SMEs is expected to be positive as the costs of running business in cities, related mainly to congestion would decrease. Even if it is impossible to quantify the overall impact of SUMPs on SMEs, the benefits should outweigh the costs, due to reduced congestion and improved accessibility and attractiveness of cities with SUMPs.

6.3.6. Budgetary impacts

Administrative costs

Local, regional and national authorities are affected due to higher administrative costs for developing and implementing a SUMP in comparison with traditional transport and infrastructure plans. The implementation of SUMPs could lead to additional administrative burden, e.g. additional permits for logistic service providers to enter an access restriction zone in a specific city.

Cost savings

On the other hand, local, regional and national authorities will save costs due to the development and implementation of a more coordinated, effective and efficient combination of measures within a SUMP. Results from the first round on Local Transport Plans in the UK indicate that the benefits of integrated transport schemes are likely to be significant relative to the costs and offering "value for money".

6.4. Main social impacts

6.4.1. Road safety

Taking measures within a SUMP to increase road safety will reduce the high costs of traffic accidents on society as well as on individuals. Saving lives and reducing serious injuries is a cost-efficient investment, whereas the costs of status quo in EU total today for the serious traffic accidents amount to around 2% of EU GDP[3].

6.4.2. Health

The implementation of a SUMP and its measures, such as access restriction zones, will have an impact on emissions of air pollutants. Improved air quality will lead to less people with respiratory diseases and weak hart conditions suffering from air pollution and therefore to reduced health costs. Taking measures within a SUMP, such as speed limits or isolation measures, will lead to reduced noise exposure leading to reduced health costs, as noise exposure increases the risk of cardio-vascular diseases. Furthermore, measures to promote a modal shift to walking and cycling will contribute to a more active life style and reduce levels of obesity.

6.4.3. Employment & social inclusion

Taking measures within a SUMP to improve accessibility to economic centres by investments will improve social inclusion of citizens living in peri-urban areas by providing better access to public transport, making potential destinations for economic activities closer to their houses. Social inclusion of citizens who do not have a car will also be improved by providing more alternative transport modes. By providing access to services and opportunities people's quality of life will improve.

6.5. Main environmental impacts

6.5.1. Air quality

The implementation of a SUMP and its measures, such as access restriction zones, will have an impact on emissions of air pollutants. Improved air quality will lead to reduced environmental damage and reduced health costs.

6.5.2. Energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) in transport, including possible territorial effects

The implementation of a SUMP and its measures, such as the promotion of non-motorised transport modes, alternatives for the car and good access to public transport, are likely to result in a decrease in (the growth of) energy consumption and reduce emissions of CO_2. The JRC carried out an assessment of impacts at EU level, with focus on the territorial dimension. When considering all potential policy measures within a SUMP the assessment shows that by 2030 the CO_2 emission reduction potential at EU level is in a range of 7% to 8.8%, relative to projections under current trends and policies.

7. COMPARISON OF OPTIONS

7.1. Effectiveness

In comparison to the baseline scenario (option 0B), all other policy options will more effectively help to unlock the potential of urban areas to contribute to a more competitive and resource-efficient transport system, as they all stimulate the uptake of SUMPs. However, the effects of the mandatory policy options (2A and 3A) will be higher than for option 1 B, which

[3] WHO (2004), World report on road traffic injury prevention"

would introduce non-binding recommendations on SUMPs. This is because it is assumed that the uptake of SUMPs will be higher for the former.

7.2. Efficiency

All policy options are efficient: they bring value (effectiveness) for their money (costs). The difference between minimum (option 2A and 3A) or comprehensive requirements (option 1B) for the policy framework of a SUMP will not significantly influence this balance. However, as the voluntary approach leaves the cities more freedom in choosing the appropriate framework, stakeholders argue that there could be a reduced administrative burden stemming from possibly redundant legal requirements, without losing out on effectiveness. Therefore, policy option 1B is likely to be more efficient than policy option 2A and 3A.

7.3. Coherence

All the options are coherent with the overarching objectives of EU policy. All policy options bring about net positive economic, social and environmental gains. Moreover, policy option 2A and 3A will ensure a coherent framework on SUMPs as there will be an obligation on certain cities to implement the reference SUMP framework. In option 1B this reference SUMP framework is only there as guidance and cities will not be obliged to implement all components. Therefore, it can be concluded that although all policy options are coherent, policy option 2A and 3A are slightly more coherent than policy option 1B.

7.4. Stakeholder support

The respondents to the public consultation are to a large extent in favour of EU support measures in relation to option 0. However, only 29% of the registered respondents point to a mandatory framework for SUMPs in EU cities (options 2 and 3). The support for a non-legislative approach was also expressed at consultation meetings with stakeholders and members of the Committee of the Regions.

8. PREFERRED OPTION

Based on the analysis of impacts and the comparison of the options it is concluded that the preferred policy option is option 1B (non-binding recommendations on SUMPs with comprehensive requirements for the policy framework). This is because it scores best overall in relation to effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and stakeholder support. The advantages of non-binding recommendations over a legal approach are multiple. A much more detailed guidance can be given to cities, resulting in more flexibility and enhanced effectiveness. Moreover, the buy-in of all stakeholder categories is likely to be higher under the voluntary option. Given the large diversity on urban mobility approaches at Member State level and given the current limited availability of comparable data and statistics, non-binding recommendations on the development and implementation of SUMPs are therefore the optimal way forward at this point in time.

9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Commission services will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this initiative through a set of instruments including the future European Platform on Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans. They will evaluate by 2020 the uptake of integrated urban mobility approaches in the European Union. Based on these elements, they shall assess the need for further action.