



Sustainable Urban Transport Planning Policy Recommendations to the European Union and Member States

PILOT, BUSTRIP and SUTP...

The European project **PILOT** has developed a methodology to support the process of Sustainable Urban Transport Planning in cities and local authorities across Europe. It also supports the demonstration of preparing Sustainable Urban Transport Plans **in four European cities**: Braila (Romania), Evora (Portugal), Lancaster (UK) and Tallinn (Estonia).

The core objective of the **BUSTRIP** project is to develop through extensive city/peer co-operation SUTPs in **11 cities and one regional authority** in the Baltic sea region that are at a different stage on their transport planning. By doing this, the project aims at improving the state of the urban environment, and reducing urban sprawl, traffic and pollution.

The PILOT and BUSTRIP consortia and many forerunner cities across Europe that have already developed and implemented SUTPs are convinced that urban mobility problems can only be tackled as part of **an integrated approach to urban development**, via a **multifaceted policy response**, based on a **long-term strategy**, which should be developed in **consultation with other authorities and civil society**. Furthermore **concrete and achievable targets** need to be set in order to demonstrate real change.

SUTP takes up this challenge and offers a **structured approach to direct local transport planning practice towards the overall goal of a sustainable urban development**. It helps local authorities to achieve their local environmental and economic goals and supports them to contribute and comply with the environmental objectives and requirements set at the European level.

This document presents the **joint PILOT and BUSTRIP policy recommendations to the European Union and Member States**. Both levels have a crucial role to enhance SUTP and fully exploit its potential throughout the EU.

The recommendations reflect the work with a wide range of European transport experts, and the SUTP process in the PILOT and BUSTRIP cities.



Keep the ball rolling at the EU level...

Recommendation 1 Define clearly the European Commission's future activities to enhance SUTP within Europe

The European Commission's 'Communication on the **Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment**' [COM(2005) 718] highlights the potential of SUTP for a more sustainable development of urban areas. Now it is **time to concretise how the EU can most efficiently encourage the development of SUTPs throughout Europe.**

The EU can use a wide range of instruments to do this, without contradicting the subsidiarity principle. This includes for example the provision of an appropriate evaluation framework, financial support, guidance, training, exchange of good practice as well as dissemination and research. The EU should draw up an **action plan, which precisely outlines the activities planned for the next years and which could be part of the action plan foreseen as a follow-up of the European Green Paper on Urban Transport.**

Recommendation 2 Integrating SUTP in all relevant EU policy initiatives

Sustainable Urban Transport Planning is a cross-cutting approach. **All EU policies that are related to urban transport should take into account Sustainable Urban Transport Planning and refer to its potential to** achieve their objectives. SUTP is an effective instrument to address a wide range of issues that are on the European Commission's agenda, for example air quality, noise and CO₂ emissions, social inclusion, economic competitiveness, fair pricing for the use of transport infrastructure, intermodality, land use planning, promotion of ITS and Galileo applications.

Evaluation Framework for SUTP

Recommendation 3 Define a key indicator set for SUTP

The EU should define **a set of key indicators, which makes possible comparative analyses of mobility policies** (incl. assessment and evaluation of plans and progress, benchmarking, good practice exchange) and would support efficiently Sustainable Urban Transport Planning processes. Urban agglomerations should measure the same transport parameters for guiding decision

making. The set of indicators would need to **take into account existing norms and indicators**¹ and would need to be complemented by **additional indicators to be defined at the national and local level**, according to local needs and conditions.

Beyond this and with the same objectives, the EU should also continue the efforts made to improve the available **knowledge base on urban data which can create references for cities preparing their Sustainable Urban Transport Plan.**

Recommendation 4 Define quality targets for the SUTP process and selected key indicators

The EU should define **minimum quality targets for** the planning tasks and the strategic and operational framework of SUTP processes, which relate to those defined in European projects as PILOT and BUSTRIP. This is necessary to ensure that a city is truly realising a complete SUTP process. If **EU funding** is made conditional to the existence or preparation of an SUTP (see following recommendation), quality targets for SUTP will help to assess if a city complies with minimum standards. The assessment method should be partly qualitative and take into account the differences between cities across Europe regarding their experience in sustainable urban transport planning and their available resources.

Where possible, the EU should also define **minimum targets for selected key indicators**, which can be monitored and whose achievement in the SUTP implementation process can be assessed. They should build on **existing EU legislation (e.g. air and noise directives) or national targets**. Where there are no such targets, the EU should encourage national governments to set national targets for SUTP, which are appropriate to the national context.

Incentives and Financial Support

Recommendation 5 Encourage the development of SUTPs throughout Europe by providing financial incentives

Financial incentives can play an important role to encourage local actors to prepare Sustainable Urban Transport Plans. It is therefore highly **recommended that the EU**

¹ Expert Working Group on SUTP, D4 Final Report (2004), p. 26, provides existing indicators as starting point.

and Member States use financial instruments to stimulate SUTP development.

The EU should make the existence of an SUTP or a strong commitment to the development of an SUTP a **pre-condition for local authorities to obtain funds for urban transport projects.**

Within the latest **CIVITAS Plus** call, candidate cities already needed to comply with the existence or development of “an ambitious local transport plan together with clear intentions, political commitment and stakeholder support”. This is a positive development, while for future calls the requirements should be made more specific to ensure that cities fulfil certain quality standards for the planning process.

EU financial support **to urban infrastructure projects and vehicle acquisition** should also depend on the existence or the commitment to a Sustainable Urban Transport Plan. In particular it should consider how SUTP can be a pre-condition for urban transport projects within **cohesion and structural funds.**

Also the **Member States should consider making SUTP a pre-requisite to obtain national funding for urban transport measures.** The example of the UK demonstrates that this can be a key driver for successful SUTP development within a national framework.

As for many cities the financing of the SUTP process itself would be a large barrier, the EU and Member States should **actively fund SUTP development in SUTP “beginner cities” that do not have sufficient resources for this.** The funding of the SUTP process itself should also be possible in a “package” combined with other (co-)funding for urban transport infrastructure and systems.

In a first step the EU should continue to fund **pilot projects to test a European methodological framework for SUTP** and the definition of related appropriate **quality targets** (see recommendation 4). This could include the development of a **benchmarking framework** for SUTP processes.

Fostering of skills, assistance and promotion

Recommendation 6 Encourage the creation of national contact points for SUTP

The EU and the Member States should encourage the establishment of national SUTP contact points. These contact points should have the task to **make easily available information on SUTP and give advice in the language of the respective Member State.** This would be more effective than a common EU wide contact point.

The required funding to set up national SUTP contact points should principally be provided by Member States within national strategies to promote SUTP. The EU could provide kick-off funding.

Recommendation 7 Provide training and foster twinning arrangements

The EU and Member States should establish **training programmes targeted at improving the abilities of local and regional stakeholders to carry out SUTP.** In some European cities the necessary skills to successfully run a complete SUTP process are not yet available but are urgently needed to successfully run an SUTP planning process. Therefore dedicated SUTP training programmes on EU and national level are clearly needed. The PILOT experience showed in particular **that trainers that have practical experience with SUTP processes** can make an important contribution to SUTP development in cities which wish to develop their own expertise in SUTP.

Particularly valuable may be the **set up of twinning arrangements between cities that are experienced in SUTP and newcomer cities,** both within and across national borders. Such staff exchange for a certain time can effectively contribute to the development of key skills for SUTP development.

Recommendation 8 Support the exchange of good practices and increase awareness about SUTP

The EU should **actively continue to support the exchange of good practices on SUTP,** e.g. in the new LIFE+ programme. The good practice exchange is particularly effective via projects, such as PILOT and BUSTRIP, but also provides valuable information via online databases. Good practice on SUTP should be integrated in well established online tools.

SUTP can also play a role in countries and world regions with fast developing economies, demographic changes and new mobility needs. The EU and its member states can introduce this topic in a mutual exchange of smart local transport solutions.

As SUTP is still a topic which is not very well known among local authorities and citizens, the **EU should initiate an awareness and information campaign on SUTP.** One crucial task would be to clarify what SUTP is about. Due to its complexity there are frequent misperceptions. SUTP is not an additional planning layer but a new planning approach that needs to grow from and within local authorities and existing practices.

SUTP as a dedicated research and demonstration topic

Recommendation 9 Give SUTP a stronger place in EU research and demonstration activities

SUTP should be made a **dedicated research and demonstration topic in coming EU programmes**. Despite important groundwork during the last years by some EU initiatives and projects such as the SUTP expert group as well as the PILOT and BUSTRIP projects, there is still more insight needed into complex SUTP processes.² Research on sustainable urban transport plans is also identified as a priority by ERTRAC and the EURFORUM project, which aims at defining research priorities respectively for the future of road transport and urban mobility in Europe.

A particularly important research topic is the **development of easy to use decision support tools**, which help local authorities to assess the possible impact of broad integrated policy packages within SUTP. This was stressed by a study for DG ENV which expressed the need for “more sophisticated tools that are able to better reflect the diverse policy linkages.”³

Need for suitable framework conditions at the national level

Recommendation 10 Encourage Member States to establish suitable legal and funding frameworks for SUTP

The **EU should encourage its Member States to establish suitable legal and funding frameworks for the development of SUTP**. While some Member States (e.g. France, UK) successfully showed that the provision of such frameworks is well accepted on local level and contributes to better urban transport planning, other countries are not addressing this topic at all. While the degree of regulation and its form needs to be tailored to national context conditions, the EU should encourage Member States to better explore this topic and encourage them **to help cities that want to develop an SUTP via national instruments**.

SUTP is a concept that can also help to **smoothen and facilitate ongoing processes of decentralisation of transport competences to the regional and local level**.

For more information

The PILOT project developed **guidance on SUTP for cities and regions, which is presented in the “SUTP Manual”**. The document is available in English, German, French, Italian, Polish, Romanian and Spanish on the PILOT website (www.pilot-transport.org).

The **PILOT project consortium** is formed by: POLIS (co-ordinator), Rupprecht Consult, Mobiel 21, Vectris, EUROCITIES, TTR, Sylwia Klatka – ConVoco and the cities of Braila (RO), Evora (PT), Lancaster (UK) and Tallinn (EE).

In addition, **PILOT is advised by** CERTU (F), URTP (RO) and the Cities of Bologna (IT), Bristol (UK), Cologne (DE), Hampshire (UK), Lille (FR), Genoa (IT) and The Hague (NL).

The **BUSTRIP project supports the SUTP policy recommendations**, developed by the PILOT Consortium.

The **BUSTRIP project consortium** is formed by: UBC Environment and Agenda 21 Secretariat (co-ordinator), UBC Commission on Transportation and Chalmers University of Technology in Göteborg. The 11 partner cities and one regional authority are Bremen (D), Gdynia (POL), Göteborg (SE), Kaunas (LT), Kouvola Region (FIN), Liepaja (LV), Pärnu (EE), Sundsvall (SE), Tartu (EE), Turku (FIN), Vilnius (LT) and Örebro (SE).

Please visit both projects' websites:
www.pilot-transport.org
www.bustrip-project.net

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Disclaimer

This document has been prepared by the authors on behalf of the European Commission, DG Environment. It does however not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission.

² Expert Working Group on SUTP, D4 Final Report (2004), p.32, identified a list of research and training requirements.

³ Rupprecht Consult (2005): SUTP and urban environment: Policies, effects and simulations, p. 149.