Challenge Description – Working document

Why is Participation a challenge in sustainable urban mobility planning?

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Summary
Sustainable urban mobility planning, a strategic planning concept promoted by the European Commission, considers the engagement of citizens and stakeholders throughout the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) development process as one the key elements. Involving communities in planning is a fundamental duty of local authorities to improve decision-making and is also a requirement stipulated by EU directives and international conventions. In particular, transport planning and transport relevant measures are often the subject of controversial discussions within the urban community. The concept of Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning, establishes the principle that the public should be involved from the very beginning of the transport planning process and not only when the plans are largely completed and only minor amendments can be carried out. This makes it necessary for public authorities to open-up a highly specialized and complex subject area for debate and prepare for participation as part of the planning process. The concept is exciting because stakeholder participation practices across Europe are very different and in some cases, in particular in the new Member States, there is little experience of what it means really to involve citizens in decision-making, rather than just to inform them of the results. In many places, especially in the European cities of the old Member States, there are already policies and mandatory processes in place on how the public should be involved in major construction projects. Also, there are a variety of examples of how participatory approaches provide a forum for the debate of issues raised by stakeholders, where often conflicting views are expressed, which can lead to changes to projects and successful results. Important questions are how, and to what extent, public participation has increased overall in the context of sustainable urban development, which requires long-term decision-making by urban society where ecological, economic and social matters and different interests have to be balanced. In CH4LLENGE, 31 cities have been surveyed about their participation practices in urban mobility planning. The results revealed that the majority of cities involve stakeholders and citizens; however, the degree of involvement varies.

In CH4LLENGE participation strategies and recommendations what tools might support the participation process in urban transport planning are being prepared. CH4LLENGE partner cities will test in so called challenge pilots different approaches how to prepare a participation process, how to identify relevant stakeholders and interest groups, what kind of interactive formats are useful to apply in which planning phase and how should communication with the public be carried out. All CH4LLENGE cities and other interested city representatives are also invited to join the online learning to receive first-hand knowledge about participation in local sustainable mobility planning processes.

1 Introduction: Aims of CH4LLENGE

The EU co-funded project CH4LLENGE addresses significant barriers for the wider take-up of SUMPsin Europe. In a joint undertaking together with research and resource institutions, the project will support European cities at different stages of advancing the take-up of SUMPsin. Building on previous experiences and lessons from earlier and on-going national and European SUMP initiatives, the consortium has identified common challenges which pose significant barriers in the wider take-up of SUMPsin Europe. The project will work on innovative and transferable solutions for four SUMP-challenges.
This document details and explains why participation, in particular, is a challenge for the take-up of SUMPs in European cities.

2 What is Participation in the context of sustainable urban mobility planning?

Participation reflects the overall integration of citizens and groups in planning processes and policy decision-making and consequently the share of power. A term commonly referred to in participation research is “stakeholder” which may be an individual, group or organisation affected by a proposed plan or project, or who can affect a project and its implementation. Groups with economic interests such as retailers, shop owners or local industry can be considered as stakeholders just like groups representing mobility-related or public interests including mobility, environmental or resident associations. Also cultural and educational institutions such as schools and kindergartens usually have a stake in mobility and often call for involvement (see Krause, 2014). Transport planning frequently affects a great variety of different economic, public and social interest groups either positively or negatively, which often results in complex relationships between the city administration and the groups having a stake in the decisions made.

Public involvement, in contrast, usually refers to engaging citizens in planning and decision-making. While stakeholders usually represent positions of organised groups and have a collective interest, citizens are individual members of the public and unaffiliated participants in the involvement process (Kahane et al., 2013). However, both theoretical and practical distinctions between stakeholders and citizens are blurred since citizens can also be considered a large stakeholder group; citizens can belong to various sub-groups of stakeholders; and a stakeholder representative is at the same also a citizen. In this paper, “stakeholder involvement” refers to the involvement of groups and organisations, to varying degrees, in transport decision-making processes. In contrast to that, “citizen...
participation” is seen to encourage individual citizens to join the debate and to enable them to be part of collective decision making.

Arnstein (1969) defined citizen participation as the redistribution of power and developed an eight-rung ladder gradually symbolising participation levels starting with nonparticipation, referred to as manipulation and therapy, to citizen control at the top rung. Although the ladder is a simplification, it helps to illustrate the gradations of citizen participation.

![Figure 1: A Ladder of Citizen Participation (Arnstein, 1969)](image)

Also other researchers have analysed participation from a scientific perspective and refined the idea of sharing power. One of them is the political scientist Archon Fung (2004). He raised three key questions that are intended to help when analysing the level of participation: Who should be involved – or have the opportunity for involvement – given the purpose of the participation? What is the method of communication and decision-making? How much influence and authority do citizens and stakeholders have? This leads to the question about the nature of involvement and how input forms part of the decision-making process.

Depending on the purpose of the participation it may be more appropriate to target the involvement of specific groups, e.g. people with mobility difficulties in a given instance of participation on barrier free travel. However, there is debate not only in research but also in planning practice about the representativeness of citizens and stakeholders and their influence and authority in the decision-making process. Involving a few women in a participation process, for example, does not mean that ‘women’ are adequately represented. Thinking about the justification for giving particular influence to a few members of the population or a few groups the question of influence can be difficult as well.
An important reason for undertaking participation is to gain knowledge that can inform the preparation of a sustainable mobility plan. A large body of work treats participation as developing knowledge, which underpins many of the participatory approaches developed in last 20 years.

According to Glass (1979), public participation has five key objectives: information exchange, education, support building, supplemental decision-making and representational input. Krause (2013) defines the targets and benefits of participation in planning processes as follows:

- It makes decision making processes more transparent.
- It raises mutual understanding between citizens and administration.
- It considers ideas, concerns and everyday knowledge.
- It improves the knowledge basis.
- It has a positive influence on planning processes as it increases acceptability.

Working with stakeholders is generally considered common practice – but in many cases only certain stakeholders actually have a say in planning. It is crucial to involve all different types of stakeholders throughout the planning process, addressing their specific requirements. This especially concerns groups with less ability to articulate their concerns or requirements and prevail in comparison to other more powerful groups. Examples of hard to reach groups are ethnic minorities, impaired people, young people and the elderly, people with low literacy and apathetic groups.

Depending on the groups and representatives involved and the planning phases, different involvement models can be distinguished. Figure 2 shows a hierarchy of intensity of participation ranging from dissemination of information to interaction and real decision-making.

Figure 2: Chances and potential of participation for better transport planning (Sturm, 2012)
Focusing on the potential for participation to improve the knowledge base informing decisions, Booth and Richardson suggest that:

“The quality of planning outcomes may be enhanced through public involvement by:

• inclusion of new ideas and knowledge;
• increasing the range of options;
• testing evidence and positions;
• addressing uncertainty and conflict.” (Booth and Richardson 2001, p. 148)

There are a number of questions that have not yet been solved completely in participatory planning. However, moving back to non-participation is no option either. Current planning examples in Europe like Stuttgart or Bucharest, where controversial urban development projects led to mass protests, show that planning processes without public legitimation can be blocked and, in the worst case, even prevented. Many other European cities are experiencing similar situations and there is a striking trend of people realising and showing that transport planning in practice does not accord with their ideas and expectations. Not only citizens, but also researchers and politicians are calling for an increase of direct democratic methods and citizen participation in planning to ensure compliance of the view of politicians and private industry with the view of the „ordinary” citizen.

Local authorities need to react to this call that has emerged over the past decade(s) so that citizens and stakeholders, actually being the target groups of urban mobility, are heard and that their views and opinions are taken into account. At the same time, participatory planning processes can educate citizens and stakeholders on how to contribute their knowledge and experiences to mobility planning and how to successfully contribute to democratic decision-making in general. For both parties collaborative planning is still a new approach requiring a learning curve on both sides, just as the Gent case study shows.

Local authorities can develop more effective and (cost) efficient mobility plans and projects by involving citizens and stakeholders from the initial to the final planning stages and by identifying controversial issues before a decision is made. Participation can prevent opposition and the failure of a plan by bringing the local stakeholders together and reaching agreement on how to progress. Thus delays and costs can be reduced in both the planning and implementation phases. Last but not least, participation frequently contributes to a sense of ownership of decisions and measures, and creates a greater sense of responsibility among

1 In Stuttgart, people protested against the huge urban renewal project “Stuttgart21”. In Bucharest, large parts of the historical centre were supposed to be demolished for road construction. Both projects lacked public participation and communication with the public and media.
politicians, planners and citizens and stakeholders.

3 Why is Participation important for SUMP?

Public participation on issues shaping the city is not in itself a new concept or responsibility. In many places, especially in the European cities of the old Member States, there are already policies and mandatory processes in place on how the public should be involved in major construction projects. Also, there are a variety of examples of how participatory approaches provide a forum for the debate of issues raised by stakeholders, where often conflicting views are expressed, which can lead to changes to projects and successful results. Important questions are how, and to what extent, public participation has increased overall in the context of sustainable urban development, which requires long-term decision-making by urban society where ecological, economic and social matters and different interests have to be balanced. A relatively new dimension of participation relates to new media, such as social media and professional forums, which enables a person to be informed about an issue and comment at any place and at any time. Nevertheless, a broad, systematic culture of participation that is unequivocally supported by the participating actors and actively used by the public, has not yet materialized.

There is now momentum building for a new approach to strategic sustainable transport planning across Europe that incorporates public participation as an integral element. In particular, transport planning and transport relevant measures are often the subject of controversial discussions within the urban community. The concept of Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning, which is promoted by the European Commission, establishes the principle that the public should be involved from the very beginning of the transport planning process and not only when the plans are largely completed and only minor amendments can be carried out. This makes it necessary for public authorities to open-up a highly specialized and complex subject area for debate and prepare for participation as part of the planning process. The concept is exciting because stakeholder participation practices across Europe are very different and in some cases, in particular in the new Member States, there is little experience of what it means really to involve citizens in decision-making, rather than just to inform them of the results.

Stakeholder involvement supports the development of a more effective and (cost) efficient plan. A dedicated strategy is needed for the involvement of stakeholders, drawing on different formats and techniques when dealing with authorities, private businesses, civil society organisations, or all of them together. Citizens are a special group, which do not constitute a homogeneous group. Involving them in planning is a fundamental duty of local authorities to improve decision-making involving citizens in planning is also a requirement stipulated by EU directives and international conventions (e.g. Council of Europe 2001 and Aarhus Convention 1998).

The following Fehler! Verweisquelle konnte nicht gefunden werden. shows the SUMP cycle and indicates in which steps participation activities of are required.
4 What research and information is available on Participation in transport planning?

Significant activities on participation have been observed in transport planning over the past two decades and in some cases there has even been “partial success in developing carefully conceptualised, inclusive, and meaningful participation programmes” (Bickerstaff and Walker 2001, p. 431). Stakeholder involvement and citizen participation practices in transport planning do, however, vary across European countries and between cities. Several countries have formal, mandatory consultation procedures for mid- and large scale transport projects as well as for the development of transport plans and SUMPs. Local Transport Plans (LTPs), for example, which UK local authorities are legally obliged to develop, require consultation of both local stakeholders and the public at various stages of the planning process. Other countries such as Germany and France, the latter requiring public consultation when developing the French urban mobility plan (Plan de Déplacement urbains, PDU), also apply legally consolidated involvement procedures (ELTISplus, 2012).

A number of European countries have extensive experience in innovative participation instruments in complex planning processes. In Germany, moderated, interactive citizen workshops and workshop series have become a frequently applied tool for joint idea development and creative decision-
making in both the development of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans and also for specific mobility issues relevant to transport planning (e.g. electric mobility). The involvement of citizens in all local planning activities is also set in law in Flanders, Belgium through the ‘Gemeentedecreet’, a decree on the functioning of municipalities (ENDURANCE, 2014). A range of Belgium cities have gone even beyond the formal consultation procedures described in this act and developed new participation approaches and routines, such as the idea of transition management which is applied in the City of Gent.

There are also a number of countries in Europe that have no or only very limited formal procedures for involving citizens and stakeholders. Here, transport planning still focuses on traffic and infrastructure rather than on planning for and with people. The transport planning objectives in these countries usually link to traffic flow capacity and speed, while accessibility, quality of life and social involvement have been added only very recently to the cities’ transport agendas. The planning itself is still undertaken primarily by transport and technical experts while citizens and stakeholders are only informed about the planned developments, plans and projects, rather than being involved in the planning processes. Some of the Eastern European countries belong to this group since they have only little experience in collaborative planning approaches that have a democratic component. However, also countries from other parts of Europe have yet to adopt sustainable urban mobility planning that take citizens and stakeholders as the focus.

The European project “CH4LLENGE – Addressing Key Challenges of Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning” (2013-2016) surveyed 34 cities from across Europe and beyond about their transport planning practices and the status of transport plans and Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans, if available. Based on the project’s first workshop, survey results and a self-assessment, the cities were grouped into Advanced Cities which have already developed a SUMP or are currently developing a SUMP, and Starter Cities which plan to work on various steps towards SUMP development.

The survey showed that most of the Advanced Cities have a SUMP or a strategic transport plan in place, or are currently preparing one. Starter Cities have either several topical plans in place or are preparing transport plans at the moment. The survey revealed that air quality and congestion are the two most serious problems in all cities that participated and that the lack of economic growth is seen as the most severe factor complicating transport planning. Also the lack of financial resources and staff capacities were rated as very pressing problems. In general, SUMP Starter Cities assessed most of the given problems as more serious than the Advancing Cities. A variety of objectives ranging from accessibility to the reduction of energy consumption and effective transportation are well addressed by the cities’ urban transport policies. Emissions and air pollution were two of the highest ranked problems – but are not addressed within the objectives of all cities.

Cities were also asked whether and at what stages they involve their local stakeholders, such as public transport providers, environmental, sustainable and social Non-Governmental Organisations) NGOs, motorist associations, or local companies, in transport planning processes. Stages for potential involvement include:

- identifying transport and mobility problems;
- specifying the vision and objectives;
- identifying possible solutions;
• evaluating (appraising) the alternatives; and
• Implementing the chosen strategy.

The results revealed that the majority of cities do involve stakeholders; however, the degree of involvement varies significantly. Stakeholders are mostly involved in the identification of transport and mobility problems, but only in a few cases in other planning stages (e.g. specifying the vision and objectives, identifying possible solutions). Stakeholders that are commonly involved and consulted in more than three planning and implementation phases include public transport providers and sustainable transport NGOs. Retailers and customers, for example, are only rarely asked to participate at later stages of plan preparation, even though they have a stake in SUMP development.

Also citizens can be engaged at various stages of the planning process and through a number of involvement tools. The survey considered approaches ranging from information and communication instruments such as written information that is being distributed to citizens, to more interactive methods like individual consultations with planners or politicians, focus groups or public discussions, up to high-level involvement tools such as joint strategy development processes or referendums. The latter were only rarely applied in the surveyed cities while large-scale consultation events such as public discussions or hearings, which are mandatory planning elements in many of the countries surveyed, are more frequently held. More than half of the cities that participated also indicated that they use focus groups for finding out about citizens’ opinions and preferences. In general, cities tend to use less complex involvement tools that give rather little influence to citizens; only a few cities allow citizens to become part of the planning process and directly shape it by contributing their opinion, ideas and knowledge at the different planning stages (CH4LLENGE, 2014).

Both the CH4LLENGE survey and also previous research show that citizens’ interest in participating in SUMP development is rather low. Interest in specific mobility measures, in contrast, is much higher – especially when citizens realise that they are directly affected by a proposed measure. As a reaction to the suddenly emerging conflicts, politicians often start a dialogue process trying to solve these. However, at this point, the project or measure is often already in a late stage of development. This phenomenon is known as the “dilemma of participation” (Team Ewen 2010, Krause 2014, p. 36). It reflects that the interest of citizens is low in early planning phases when processes are still open and flexible. As soon as planning processes and proposals become more concrete and at the same time more inflexible, citizens’ interest increases as they now feel directly affected. Accordingly, one of the challenges for cities is to select different participation approaches and tools for different planning phases in order to ensure active participation and to raise the number of people involved.

The survey showed that there are also other barriers to involving stakeholders and citizens successfully, including:

• the lack of political will and support for carrying out an (in-depth) participation process, resulting in a low priority given to participation also within the administration;
• limited financial and personnel capacities within local authorities to set-up, manage, carry out and evaluate an involvement process and to arrange its internal adminstrational process;
• a lack of skills on how to plan and carry out a participation process including lack of knowledge about suitable involvement tools and about which steps to take at which stage of the planning process; missing overall structure, plan, or strategy for participation resulting in uncoordinated and fragmented involvement actions;
• a so called ‘consultation fatigue’ mirroring the low interest and awareness of transport planning among citizens and stakeholder groups;
• an imbalance of stakeholders with interest groups that are able to strongly communicate their opinion while weaker stakeholders have difficulties to contribute their interests to the process;
• difficulties to initiate behavioural change; and
• the lack of a participation tradition in Eastern European countries in particular, where institutional cultures still place low priority on participation rather than allowing citizens and stakeholders to actively contribute to the transport planning process and form its outcomes.

The European urban mobility projects GUIDEMAPS (Gaining understanding of improved decision making and participation strategies) and CIVITAS produced manuals and guidance documents which assist in developing and implementing participation strategies and tools (see links below). These projects showed that the involvement of stakeholders is a permanent and long-term activity and that the degree of participation is linked to a variety of factors such as the economic situation, the development of democratic experience as well as to history and culture and to the emancipation of the individuals from the power of government.

The European Commission’s CIVITAS initiative seeks to help cities in Europe to develop a new mobility culture focussing on decision-making processes under different cultural, economic and political conditions. A CIVITAS handbook was designed for transport practitioners helping them to involve stakeholders in the planning process (CiViTAS-VANGUARD Project, 2011: Involving Stakeholders: Toolkit on Organising Successful Stakeholder Consultations). The handbook is structured in a six-step strategy illustrated with European city showcases.

1. Specify the issue(s) to be addressed.
2. Identify which stakeholders to involve.
3. Analyse the potential contribution of various stakeholders.
4. Set up an involvement strategy.
5. Consult your stakeholders.
6. Evaluate and follow up.
In the CIVITAS ELAN project, a citizen engagement strategy\(^2\) has been defined and guidelines for the engagements of citizens have been developed (Citizen Engagement in the Field of Mobility – CiViTAS-ELAN Work and Lessons Learned Related to Citizen Engagement). The ELAN model cities all had different starting points with regard to culture, legislation, institutional setups and practices for engaging citizens. The cities of Brno, Zagreb and Ljubljana have practised participation before ELAN; however, these were early attempts rather than comprehensive and strategic participatory approaches. Citizens were informed but neither were their opinions and suggestions taken into account nor were they involved in the decision-making process. Until the ELAN project, citizens had not been engaged in transport planning consultations in these cities.

The handbook “GUIDEMAPS: Successful transport decision-making - A project management and stakeholder engagement handbook” was published by the GUIDEMAPS project in 2004. It addresses transport professionals working in local authorities or transport companies and provides a set of methods, analysis tools and practical decision-making guidelines such as checklists, covering different types of transport schemes and stages of the policy process as well as good practices (GUIDEMAPS Handbook 2004).

5 What are the barriers and challenges in a participation process?

A successful process of citizen and stakeholder involvement, no matter whether it is part of the development of a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan, is a result of various factors and preparatory tasks. Almost certainly, a local authority will never be able to guarantee a successful participation process; however, the careful planning and implementation of a participation process can increase the chances to achieve a high-quality consultation process significantly.

Just as with sustainable urban mobility planning, citizen and stakeholder involvement also needs to follow a strategic approach in order to fulfil the purpose of the local participation process and to reach the goals set. A participatory culture and transparency are preconditions for effective participation. A participation process in mobility planning is typically organised by the city administration’s transport, planning or urban development department. In some cases, the organisation of a participatory process is also the task of the department for public relation or communication. Regardless of the allocation of responsibility, the most important principle for participation is its transparency. This includes the transparency of preparatory works carried out by the city administration, transparency about who will be involved in the participation process, what its aim and scope is and how views will be considered in the planning process. Public officials need to be aware and believe in the importance and benefits of participation in order to create credibility and maintain it throughout the participation process. Direct and honest communication is one of the keys to a transparent planning culture and at the same time it is a driver for stakeholders and citizens to contribute to the planning process. If the value of stakeholder and citizen involvement is underestimated within the city administration, this can result in a chain reaction: civil servants not

\(^2\) “Citizen Engagement is a process that enables local people to be part of addressing problems, and involves them in the planning and delivery of innovative solutions to those problems.” (CIVITAS 2012a, p 9)
taking participation as serious as claimed leading to a loss of credibility and a de-motivation of citizens and stakeholders to contribute to the planning process, resulting in low participation numbers and a lack of representativeness of views.

Following 11 sub-challenges in order to carry out a successful participation process in transport planning is explained in more detail.

1. **Political commitment and active engagement in participatory processes**

Political support for carrying out an in-depth participation processes is one of the crucial factors that influence the outcome of a participation process. Politicians and political committees such as local councils need to commit to taking the results of a participation process into account in the on-going and future transport planning processes. Therefore, it is most important for a city administration to gain sufficient support from local decision-makers to carry out a participation scheme and to integrate results into subsequent technical planning. In many cases, this is easier said than done: some political actors might not regard participation as an opportunity to obtain valuable knowledge and constructive input from citizens and stakeholders; others might fear the open confrontation which could result in a, literally, change of plans. Participants of an involvement process hesitate to contribute their opinions and knowledge if they feel that their views are not taken into account. Therefore, the city administration should act as a connecting link by supporting all parties involved to build trust.

**Risks if not considered:** If the lack of political will for carrying out a participation process is missing, this can result in a low priority given to participation also within the administration. Significant efforts and resources are required to gain political support; low level of participation as citizens and stakeholders do not feel to be taken seriously.

2. **Development of a communication and participation strategy**

The identification of the current status of participation within an administration is a crucial first step to clarify the position of both high level officials and civil servants on participation and to assess the relevance they give to it. Reflection on the understanding of the concept, a comparison of what involvement actions have been taken in the past and what the scope of future activities should be, set the foundation for the definition of targets for future participation. Experience has shown that the development of a participation strategy is an important preparatory step for involvement. It should define rules, procedures and responsibilities within the administration as well as the overarching principles of participation. The CIVITAS ELAN project, for example, observed that “the implementation of citizen engagement was more effective when objectives, participation rules and principles were clearly presented to the participants at the very beginning” (CIVITAS ELAN, 2012). A participation strategy should address all phases of a measure from problem definition to its implementation and define opportunities and the level of involvement for each stage. It should cover the following elements:

- **Aims and objectives**

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3 The definition of sub-challenges bases on the analyses of the SHAPE-IT project (Shaping sustainable transport patterns in European cities, case study “The SUMP Participatory Approach”)
• Identification of stakeholders and the public to be involved
• Resources, capacities and budget
• Engagement timeline
• Media marketing strategies and key messages
• Identification of appropriate participation instruments and involvement techniques
• Agreement on the integration with decision-making
• Documentation and evaluation of the participation process

Special emphasis should be given to communication and working with the media as measure promotion/marketing can have a significant influence on a policy’s acceptance.

**Risks if not considered:** If purpose, aims and intensity of participation are unclear, unrealistic expectations towards the participation process might be raised by citizens and stakeholders; a non-strategic approach usually goes along with a loss in credibility and transparency, with the risk that objectives are not achieved and with a lack of constructive input and discussions.

3. **Thorough identification of stakeholders and analysis of their constellations**

The identification of stakeholders gives first insights into local interests, from groups that support the given measure or plan to be developed and groups that are ambivalent, through to groups that oppose the measure or plan. The purpose of an involvement process needs to link to the stakeholder groups identified and their interests. If there is the risk that certain groups or citizens may feel left out or do not show any interest in the transport project but will be affected at some point, this needs to be carefully considered in the selection of involvement tools. Stakeholders frequently interested in being involved in mobility planning are the following (GUIDEMAPS, 2004):

- Government/authorities: e.g. politicians, higher-level authorities, neighbouring cities, traffic police, emergency services, project managers, professional staff
- Businesses/operators: e.g. business associations, major employers, retailers, utility services
- Communities/neighbourhoods: e.g. local community organisations and interest groups, cycle/walking groups, citizens, landowners
- Others: e.g. research institutes and universities, experts from other cities

Stakeholder mapping can also be complemented by an analysis of stakeholder constellations which is based on different criteria or attributes such as interest, power, or coalitions. “The objective of a systematic analysis of actor constellations is to get a clear picture of conflicts of interests or potential coalitions and to be able to better determine clusters of stakeholders who may exhibit different capacities and interests in the issue in question” (European Commission, 2014). An influence-interest matrix can help for the identification and grouping of stakeholders.

**Risks if not considered:** Imbalance of stakeholders with weak stakeholders being overlooked; unexpected interventions and conflicts with opposing stakeholders jeopardising the policy; untapped

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4 There is a great variety of involvement tools and techniques ranging from tools for information giving and gathering (e.g. letters, posters, leaflets and brochures, newsletters, telephone techniques, web-based tools, surveys) to interactive engagement (e.g. exhibitions, information centres, public meetings, focus groups, transport visioning workshops, citizen juries, stakeholder conferences, planning for real events).
opportunities to create alliances for a sustainable transport measure (see also success factor 4 “Early engagement with policy supporters and potential veto players”)

4. Early engagement with policy supporters and potential veto players

A thorough analysis of how local actors position themselves towards a new transport policy allows local authorities to take the next step – engaging with those who support the measure and also with those who oppose it. Allying with, for example, environmental and sustainable mobility organisations, powerful private sector actors or political parties is a crucial factor that helps the implementing authority to raise awareness and to gain stronger acceptance for the planned policy. A wider target audience can be reached by working in partnership, using supporters’ communication channels and networks. It also opens up new opportunities to involve local actors in actual measure implementation and to create synergies.

Further, it turned out beneficial to also actively approach those actors and organisations (potentially) against the measure in an early phase of planning. Offering them opportunities to express their opinions and concerns is a key aspect when trying to jointly find a solution that is acceptable for all actors involved. Working closely with opponents and those who are ambivalent to supporting might also make it possible to turn around opinions and win them as supporters.

Risks if not considered: Similar to the risks of the success factor above – it might be a missed opportunity to collaborate and establish a work relationship with other organisations and actors committed to sustainable mobility in order to push the given transport policy; veto players might unexpectedly oppose the policy at an advanced stage of planning when the planning process is no longer flexible.

5. Thorough and appropriate integration with decision-making

If citizen or stakeholder participation is carried out, this needs to form an integral part of the decision-making process. The engagement strategy should set out transparently the purpose of the participation process and the links between involvement techniques and key decisions (see success factor 2 “Development of a communication and engagement strategy”). A clear agreement on how results of a participation process will be taken into account in the on-going technical planning process and how to come to a joint, accepted decision is crucial. Giving citizens and stakeholders as much decision-making power as possible is generally favourable; however, it needs to be carefully considered at what level decisions can be taken by a mix of actors and/ or citizens (e.g. strategic decisions) and when decisions should be made by planners and experts (e.g. on technical issues). Tools for engaging local actors and citizens in decision-making include, for example, citizen juries, voting, referendums, expert round tables, or events (e.g. visioning workshops, open space events, focus groups) of which the outcomes are taken into account in the planning process.

Risks if not considered: Ineffective participation process and inefficient use of resources if unclear how results from a participation process are considered in the on-going planning process; citizens and stakeholders feel that their views and concerns are ignored; chances for joint agreements and acceptance of the measure decrease significantly.
6. *Clear institutional roles and leadership for participation*

The involvement of citizens and stakeholders is closely connected to administrative processes and a local authority’s public management procedure. When the overall strategy and timeline have been agreed upon, dialogue structures and the process organisation within the administration need to be set up. It is necessary to define who is in constant dialogue and how, whether this dialogue happens on a constant or project-base and who takes the lead.

The latter aspect links to the general question of responsibilities. Participation can be arranged on a decentralised basis, with responsibilities spread over different departments. Alternatively, participation may be led by a special unit, preferably with direct contact to the mayor, which has the sole responsibility for process organisation and institutional cooperation. It is the practical questions that are often marginalised but which are highly important for the management of the process such as: who should be invited to consultation events? Who decides how often these take place? How are they documented and by whom? A review of resources (personnel, time, financial) and skills is another fundamental step.

A fixed budget that is dedicated to participation clearly helps in setting up the involvement procedures. However, in many European cities there is no budget reserved exclusively for citizen and stakeholder participation (specifically in transport planning). Therefore, it needs to be carefully assessed whether the activities planned and the budget available match, and whether further funding is required. A review of skills and participation competences within the administration is another essential element in process organisation. The identification of expert knowledge but also knowledge gaps among municipal staff members leads to the question of whether capacity building, in-house training or external support is required.

**Risks if not considered:** Administrative processes, roles and relationships are unclear; inefficient use of the limited resources available; delays in carrying out the participation; loss of quality of participation process.

7. *Clear management and leadership for policy development and implementation*

Beyond participation, institutional roles and leadership also need to be clear for all other policy development stages: problem definition, option generation, assessment, decision-taking, implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation. However, in practice, roles and relations within an administration as well as responsibilities and input required from other departments and municipal institutions are often unclear. Cooperation is required at geographic, political, administrative and interdepartmental levels. Due to its complexity, it is helpful to structure and formalise cooperation on the local level by e.g. making legal arrangements or formal contracts of responsibility, by mapping competence areas and working with organisational charts/organograms, by defining functional relations (e.g. with a responsibility assignment matrix), or by defining rules and procedures for institutional engagement (CH4LLENGE, 2014). At the same time, inflexible structures should be avoided as project management and cooperation structures need to be responsive to changing circumstances. Leadership within a multi-stakeholder planning process is essential – the leading organisation/ the core team, the role of the policy leader and the leadership style as well as the share of power need to be carefully defined.
**Risks if not considered:** Delays in day-to-day management and delays in overall policy development; objectives are not met; risk that policy fails if no one takes the leadership or responsibilities are blurred.

8. **Capitalising on support from key proponents**

Personal commitment of a "local champion" can contribute considerably to the success of a policy. A leading individual might be a politician, a city administration's public official, a committed project manager, or a devoted institutional or organisational stakeholder who can raise awareness for sustainable mobility and can speed up i.e. drive the process of planning and implementing a policy. Key characteristics of such a person include the ability to create alliances, to have a significant influence on the planning process, to be able to negotiate and to be capable of mobilising resources (see European Commission, 2014). The role of a local champion can be manifold ranging from active promotion and consciousness raising, to activation of local actors and citizens or to leading the policy's planning process. One could conclude that "you either have it or you don’t“ – nevertheless it is always worth examining during the stakeholder analysis whether a local key person might be a policy’s ambassador.

**Risks if not considered:** A key individual supporting a policy is beneficial to have; it is not an indispensable requirement though. It should be noted that an assessment is whether the person is able to fulfil its supportive role and that there is also the risk of one individual, whether intended or not, influencing the process negatively.

9. **Participation routines and clear structures for active involvement**

The involvement of citizens and stakeholders can be organised as a one-time event or as a continuous activity. If carried out on a regular basis, this enhances the social learning process for both the leading authority responsible for participation and the participation’s target group. Routines help those involved to familiarise themselves with participatory planning. Routines can be understood as a participation instrument that is repeatedly applied (e.g. establishing a round table of stakeholders and city administration staff members that meets on a regular basis and has clear decision-making structures), recurrent events (e.g. regular, interactive face-to-face meetings), or procedures (e.g. the systematic involvement of citizens that always follows a similar structure, see examples below).

Routines and clear structures allow for continuous evaluation of the participation procedures thus improving the process and fine-tuning the involvement actions. Process evaluation also offers the opportunity to expand the scope of participatory planning step-by-step.

**Risks if not considered:** The outcome of the participation process might be less representative and of lower quality if participation procedures are carried out only once; if collaborative planning is still a new approach in a local authority, participants might not have enough time to familiarise with it.

10. **Local partnerships and cooperation with private sector actors**

The success of a sustainable mobility policy is usually not only the result of an active city administration but also of the dynamic engagement with the target group. A plethora of transport
policies including e.g. sustainable mobility promotion, mobility management and low-emission freight measures are heavily based on the acceptance and involvement of local businesses and industry actors. Approaching the private sector target group proactively has turned out valuable in achieving a policy’s objectives in various cases – such as in Utrecht. It contributes to community empowerment and stimulating local commitment, but is also an instrument to draw on the private sector’s expertise and experience in the policy’s topic. Further, it can increase attention for the policy and gain stronger positive publicity. The local authority can act as the facilitator thus promoting cooperation and support with industry. There are also various benefits for the businesses involved: partnership projects can strengthen their voice in policy development and implementation, and transport planning overall, and can build new relationships in the short- and long-term. They might even seek out for further partnerships if they feel that the local authority is supportive in their role as a public sector facilitator.

Risks if not considered: Missing the opportunity for cooperation with local businesses, retailers and industry actors might lead to less successful policy implementation and less dynamic take-up of innovative measures at the local level.

11. Test period for controversial measures – a real-life “look and feel” for citizens and stakeholders

In contrast to “quick win” measures which help to generate a positive response among citizens and other stakeholders in the short-term, the full positive impacts and effects of controversial measures often become visible only after a longer time-span. In the first instance, citizens and stakeholder might regard such a policy rather as imposing a restriction/limitation on their private and working lives as well as their transport-related activities instead of considering the overall benefits they will profit from in the long-term (better quality of life, improved air quality, better transportation etc.). Using a trial as a tool for convincing the target group and testing the measure is a very interesting and obviously valuable approach. Testing a controversial measure over a certain period to demonstrate its positive effects on a city’s environment and for its inhabitants, gives citizens and stakeholder the opportunity to take part in a real-life “look and feel” of the policy and might illustrate (unexpected) benefits.

A policy trial of course needs careful preparation and consideration of its values and costs. It should not be taken lightly as it requires substantial efforts and resources. It should also be ensured that there are good chances for positive effects to emerge during the test period. The planning of a measure with wide consequences will cause considerable public debate which must be given adequate time. In addition, it is important to agree prior to the trial how to proceed after the testing period. This includes clarifications about the analysis of results and the subsequent decision-taking whether to implement the policy in the long-term.

Risks to be considered: Inefficient use of budget and personnel resources if trial is not planned carefully; test period for a controversial measure might backfire and not result in policy acceptance.
6 Participation examples
The following participation examples showcase how to engage a variety of political, technical, academic and local mobility stakeholders in SUMP development through a roundtable, and how to stimulate creative thinking and changes in mind-sets in transport planning with the aim of enhancing a city’s sustainability, attractiveness and liveliness.

5.1 The SUMP Round Table: stakeholder involvement in Dresden, Germany
The City of Dresden initiated a stakeholder round table for its “Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan 2025+”, a comprehensive, integrated mobility plan. A number of committees were established (see Fig. 4-5), e.g. the Steering Committee led by the mayor including also representatives of city council groups, heads of department, City of Dresden officials, councillors, project managers and round table facilitators. At the round table a large number of actors are involved such as the transport providers and associations, business associations, city council groups and others. A scientific advisory board consisting of representatives of transport and transport-related studies as well as the Dresden University of Technology and other German research institutions form another important advising actor. Also regions and neighbouring communities as well as citizens were involved. The round table is the centrepiece of the participation process where stakeholders decide on the main directions of the plan and comment on the drafts prepared by the city. The round table is moderated by an experienced external moderator, which is seen to be essential for successful discussions. All committees, groups and boards are in a continuous dialogue process.

As a result of the implementation of the round table involvement tool, planning processes for the Dresden SUMP are even more complex and require more time than usual. Dresden found that it is extremely important to communicate to citizens and stakeholders that, in order to ensure the transparency of mobility planning, the discussion and decision-making process (decisions, preparation of documents, responses to comments, etc.) is necessarily long and time-consuming.

The City of Dresden contracted an external consultant through a Europe-wide tender to support the development of the urban mobility plan. However, it is the city administration itself that organises and manages all participation processes (CH4LENGE, 2013).
5.2 Bottom-up mobility visioning: the transition management in Gent, Belgium

The City of Gent started to engage stakeholders in mobility planning from the 1990s onwards. Until the early 2000s, the communication was one-way, from the city to citizens. Step by step, a two-way process of communication has evolved. The city began to consult citizens about their opinion on specific mobility projects, for example, by inviting them for discussion nights. A change of mentality in the city administration started with the realisation that they had move away from the “we know what is good for citizens” attitude to facilitating, instead of steering, transport planning processes. The city administration also needed to learn how to deal with the wide range of different opinions given by citizens and stakeholders. This mutual learning process for both the administrative staff and also the groups involved needed much time to evolve (CH4LLENGE, 2013).

Little by little, the City of Gent tried various engagement techniques ranging from public consultation events and stakeholder workshops, to the use of social media and the approach of co-creation. The most recent governance approach in Gent is transition management. This term refers to shifts in structures, mind sets and practices by involving actors from a variety of levels and disciplines (Roorda et al., 2012). The transition management process is structured in successive phases (see Fig. 6). It starts with establishing a Transition Team and exploring a city’s dynamics (Phase I-II). This is followed by forming a Transition Arena group that meets regularly and jointly envisions a sustainable city, drafts visionary images and develops transition paths and a transition agenda (Phase III-V). The visions’ dissemination, the initiation of actions and enlargement of the network are the final steps of the transition process (Phase VI-VII; see Roorda et al., 2012).
Developing fresh approaches to changes in urban mobility, public space and people’s awareness and attitudes in order to make the city more liveable city in 2050 – this is the aim of Gent’s Transition Arena, a group of about 25 creative people from various backgrounds including young entrepreneurs, citizens, architects and transport professionals. The Transition Arena was initiated by the city’s Environmental Department and Mobility Department, however, it was the Transition Arena participants who developed the ideas. After one year of brainstorming ten icon projects were devised showing how Gent could look like in 2050. One of the visions is “The Living Street” which has already been tested by citizens in two streets. For one month the streets were cut from the road network and turned into a car-free zone allowing temporary street furniture and creating places for residents to meet. New forms of mobility were tested such as e-bikes and cargo bikes, as well as car sharing and home delivery. All activities were solely organised by the residents themselves. The icon project attracted significant interest from regional and national media.

“On Wheels” is another of the ten icon projects and refers to a Belgium law stating that a car park may be occupied by any object that stands on wheels. This inspired the Transition Arena to think one step further: why not use car parks for resident-friendly activities and set up objects such as barbecues, picnic tables or urban gardens? Each based on a chassis with four wheels like a conventional car. Ideas from the Transition Arena might appear futuristic at first, but are growing bottom-up providing a sense of direction for mobility in the long-term.
7 How does CH4LLENGE address Participation?

There are still a number of questions that have not yet been solved completely in participatory (transport) planning. CH4LLENGE tries to contribute to the current debate and is carrying out different activities in the course of the project. Analytical work and the implementation of different participatory approaches so called test pilots will provide findings how to improve participation processes in sustainable urban mobility planning and how to improve transport planning processes through participatory approaches.

- CH4LLENGE’s training workshop (Gent, July 2013) is looking at involvement concepts and methods, and participation experiences shared by the nine CH4LLENGE Cities and Follower Cities.

- A survey of all CH4LLENGE cities is showing current participation practise, barriers and training requirements.

- CH4LLENGE is providing a portfolio, based on the cities’ experiences, of potentially applicable involvement tools.

- Five of the nine project cities (Brno, Budapest, Krakow and Zagreb) are testing certain participation approaches.

- Also the cities of Dresden, Gent, Amiens and the County of West Yorkshire, all having substantial experience in participation already, are improving and fine-tuning their involvement processes in CH4LLENGE.

- The CH4LLENGE Participation Kit (consisting of a quick-fact brochure, manual and an online learning course) will recapitulate the lessons drawn from the cities’ strategies and pilot schemes and the results of the project’s training activities to facilitate the take-up of SUMP in Europe.
6 Further reading

Project results

CH4LLenge (2013): Participation Workshop Results. [http://www.sump-challenges.eu/content/gent-workshop-participation]

CIVITAS (2011): Involving Stakeholders: Toolkit on Organising Successful Consultations

CIVITAS (2011): Reaching the Citizen: Toolkit on Effective Communications and Marketing
[http://www.eltis.org/docs/tools/CIVITAS_toolkit_on_marketing_communications.pdf]

CIVITAS (2012a): Citizen Engagement in the field of mobility

CIVITAS (2012b): Citizen Engagement Shelf


Scientific literature

Aarhus Convention (1998): Convention on Access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters


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