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Agriculture and Rural Development

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**INTEGRATED URBAN
TRANSPORT PLANS
AND COHESION POLICY**

STUDY



DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR INTERNAL POLICIES
POLICY DEPARTMENT B: STRUCTURAL AND COHESION POLICIES

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

INTEGRATED URBAN TRANSPORT PLANS AND COHESION POLICY

STUDY

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Abstract

The study deals with the interaction between integrated urban transport plans (sustainable urban mobility/transport plans, SUMP) and the cohesion policy of the European Union. After tackling the concept of SUMP and the role of transport/urban transport in cohesion policy, eight case studies analyse the link between integrated urban transport planning and funding for transport policies/projects by cohesion policy. Finally, the study provides policy recommendations including on the 2011 cohesion policy reform proposals.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAU	Assigned Amount Unit
ATM	Autoritat del Transport Metropolità (Metropolitan Transport Authority)
CCMS	City Centre Movement Strategy (Liverpool)
CEB	Council of Europe Development Bank
CIVITAS	Cleaner and Better Transport in Cities
CP	Cohesion Policy
CUS	Communauté Urbaine de Strasbourg (Urban Community of Strasbourg)
dB	Decibel
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government (Liverpool)
DG	Directorate General
EC	European Commission
EEA	European Environment Agency
EIB	European Investment Bank
ELTIS	European Local Transport Information Service
EP	European Parliament
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ESPON	European Observation Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion
ETC	European Territorial Cooperation
EU	European Union
EUROSTAT	Statistical Office of the European Union
FUA	Functional Urban Area
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HF	Holding Fund

INTERREG	Innovation and Environment Regions of Europe Sharing Solutions
JASPERS	Joint Assistance to Support Projects in European Regions
JESSICA	Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (Development Loan Corporation)
LAU	Local Administrative Units
LTP	3rd Local Transport Plan (Liverpool)
MA	Managing Authority
MUA	Morphological Urban Area
NSRF	National Strategic Reference Framework
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
NWDA	North West Regional Development Agency (Liverpool)
OP	Operational Programme
PDU	Plan de Déplacements Urbains (Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan)
PILOT	Planning Integrated Local Transport (Project)
QUEST	Quality management tool for Urban Energy Efficient Sustainable Transport
R&D	Research and Development
RCE	Regional Competitiveness and Employment
RDA	Regional Development Agency (Cluj Napoca)
SCF	Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund
SDP	Strategic Development Plan (Cluj Napoca)
SME	Small and Medium sized Enterprises
SUMP	Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan
SUTP	Sustainable Urban Transport Plan
TEN-T	Trans-European Transport Network
TRT	Trasporti e Territorio Srl
UDF	Urban Development Fund
VEP	Verkehrsentwicklungsplan (Transport Development Plan)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

European Cohesion Policy plays an important role in improving the competitive position of the Union as a whole, and the weakest of its 271 regions in particular. Through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF), otherwise known as the Structural Funds, as well as the Cohesion Fund, the EU invests in thousands of projects in different economic sectors, cultural and social issues across all of Europe's regions. For the funding period 2007 to 2013 the overall budget of €347 billion represents the single largest source of financial support for investment in growth and jobs on EU level. The instruments to guide the funds to the applicants, the so-called Operational Programmes (OPs), are prepared by the Member States and adopted by the European Commission.

Roughly one fourth of € 347 billion (total cohesion policy funding) is allocated to transport. Only 2.3% of this total is allocated to decided urban transport projects. On the other hand, some 70% of the European population live in urban areas, and this proportion is still rising. All in all, €8.1 billion have been allocated by the Operational Programmes to urban transport projects. Each OP is normally supported by a single fund, i.e. the Structural Funds or the Cohesion Fund. The OPs are managed by national ministries, regional authorities or local councils, which are assigned to act as Managing Authority (MA) of an OP by the Member States.

Beyond the classic OPs of cohesion policy there are specific support instruments, in part supported by the EIB. Five of them should be mentioned, in the context of the financing of urban mobility projects: JASPERS provides technical assistance for the twelve new Member States in relation to high quality, major infrastructure projects. JESSICA (Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas) focuses on supporting urban development and regeneration. European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) is often associated with the INTERREG IVC programme, which supports regional and urban networks by sharing best practises. URBACT II is an exchange and learning programme promoting integrated, sustainable urban development and ESPON supports policy development regarding territorial cohesion.

The White Paper on Transport (European Commission 2011d) suggests examining the possibility of a European support framework for a progressive implementation of Urban Mobility Plans in European cities. Thus, the interaction of cohesion policy and sustainable urban transport projects is clearly addressed. Moreover, the White Paper refers to the concept of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs) or Sustainable Urban Transport Plans (SUTPs) which represent comprehensive planning instruments aimed at addressing all modes of transport in cities and their vicinity. The concept of SUMPs was already highlighted in two preceding EU documents – the Green Paper (European Commission 2007a) and the Action Plan on Urban Mobility (European Commission 2009).

Aim and activities

The aim of the study is to provide a clear understanding of the concept and status of urban areas, urban mobility and SUMP (or SUTPs) in Europe. In addition, the link between cohesion policy and SUMP is analysed.

The methodological basis of the study is twofold: first, a review of the key literature is undertaken, and second, an examination of eight tailor-made case studies revealing a potential link between OPs and SUMP is performed. In fact, only two third of projects identified in the OPs officially constitute a part of a sustainable urban mobility plan or equivalent transport development plan. The eight case studies included four cases of convergence regions:

- Cluj Napoca (Romania);
- Halle (Germany);
- Krakow (Poland);
- Tallinn (Estonia);

three RCE regions:

- Barcelona (Spain);
- Liverpool (United Kingdom);
- Rennes (France);

and one cross-border region under the ETC objective:

- Strasbourg/ Kehl (France/ Germany).

Findings and Recommendations

The literature on SUMP defines several criteria which characterise a SUMP. This study shows that only a few of the investigated plans fulfil all the criteria. The case study analysis generally reveals that the linkage between EU cohesion policy instruments and the local or regional urban mobility planning differs significantly across the cases. In cases where no real SUMP exists, the OP often funds transport infrastructure rather than traffic management measures (Halle, Tallinn). On the other hand, sustainable urban mobility projects play an important role within the OPs in Liverpool and Krakow, even though they are not formally part of the urban mobility plan.

Moreover, the Liverpool case demonstrates the advantage of the bottom-up approach when implementing the OP, i.e. local stakeholders submit specific projects, which are then assessed against the OP priorities. However, due to the complex system of support, which ensures flexibility in meeting the needs of the region, it is often challenging for potential beneficiaries to absorb and understand these conditions and the interaction between the different forms of financial support.

Local transport planning authorities are often not aware of the funding options of the OP, and consequently do not take the OP into account when drafting a (sustainable) urban transport plan. The reason seems to be the different geographical scope: OPs are focussed on regional or national development, while the local plans consider urban conditions.

Thus, it is recommended to raise awareness among urban infrastructure planners about OPs covering their municipalities and to appoint institutions that connect suitable OPs, e.g. those with urban development objectives, with potential new SUMP. This includes:

- The provision of comprehensive, but **tailor-made information for potential beneficiaries**;
- The establishment of an **exchange between the MA and transport authorities** and current/ potential beneficiaries, e.g. by holding regular “Round Tables”;
- Making the establishment of a **SUMP a condition for OP funding for urban transport** measures;
- Issuing a **guideline about the elements and implementation of SUMP**s, taking into account the subsidiary principle and the planning authority of municipalities;
- The consideration of the **future trend of potential population decrease**, expected for many but not all regions, when deciding about the focus and priority axes of (new) OPs as such a development alters the mobility needs of a region.

Moreover, good governance plays a key role when both an OP and a SUMP are established. This includes that administrative, reporting and audit requirements associated with the funds are not regarded as a bureaucratic obstacle by potential beneficiaries. Therefore to improve governance and cooperation between existing OPs and SUMP it is recommended:

- To require coordination between MA and SUMP managers even if there is no obvious link between OP transport projects and urban mobility;
- To establish an institutional setting to encourage communication between MAs and SUMP. One option could be to set-up a national contact point for SUMP that then needs to be informed about OPs in a country as well as to forward such information to SUMP planners;
- To include any OP project that may affect urban transport in the SUMP in order to strengthen its comprehensiveness and effectiveness;
- To assess if either the administrative rules to apply for funds from the OP could be simplified or transport authorities and potential beneficiaries could be educated to overcome the barrier of real or perceived bureaucracy.

For strengthening the linkage between cohesion policy implemented by an OP and sustainable urban mobility, three important lessons can be drawn from this study. First, strategic and high-level issues should be laid down by the OP as this covers a larger scope, i.e. a nation or a region, and will consider the wider regional aspects in the surroundings of an urban region for which a SUMP should be set up.

Second, the actual urban mobility projects must be developed from the bottom up at the local level, strictly following a participatory and integrative approach. How these fit together with the strategic objectives and high-level issues needs to be discussed between the actors at the two levels, e.g. the managing authority of the OP and the planning authority of the SUMP.

This already implies the third lesson to be learnt: communication between managing and planning authorities of the OP and the SUMP needs to be ensured and facilitated. The case studies revealed different successful communication options. A strategic approach always

feasible is to set up institutions (such as a coordination board) with members from both the managing and planning authorities as well as the beneficiaries of OP and SUMP. In other cases institutional structures that existed prior to the establishment of the OP and/ or SUMP safeguarded communication. For instance, when exchange between municipalities and regions was already in place for long, ad hoc working groups could easily be established to deal with emerging issues that would require cooperation between OP and SUMP. Finally, cooperation could also be implemented by persons involved in both the OP and the SUMP.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since 2007 the European Union consists of 27 Member States, which are characterised by significant economic and social disparities. Consequently, the European Cohesion Policy plays an important role within the effort to improve the competitive position of the Union as a whole, and the weakest of its 271 regions in particular. Through the Structural Funds (ERDF and ESF) as well as the Cohesion Fund, the EU invests in thousands of projects across all of Europe's regions. For the programming period 2007 to 2013 the overall budget of €347 billion represents the single largest source of financial support on an EU level for investment in growth and jobs (European Commission 2008a, p. 5). This is 35.7% of the total EU budget for this period. The instruments to guide the funds to the applicants, so-called Operational Programmes (OPs), are prepared by Member States and adopted by the European Commission.

One way to raise regional competitiveness is by improving the situation of urban development and urban transport. A major aim of the EU here is to raise urban sustainability, which is taken up in several documents such as the Green Paper on Urban Mobility and the White Paper on Transport. The importance of this issue is also highlighted by several new financial instruments and city networks that focus on sustainable urban development. Specifically in the White Paper, the linkage between regional and cohesion policy on the one hand and sustainable urban mobility on the other hand is highlighted.

The proposal for the new financial framework to implement the EU 2020 strategy earmarks a budget of € 31.6 billion for transport infrastructure investment over the period 2014 to 2020. The money will mainly be distributed via the newly established Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) (European Commission 2011a, 2011b). The CEF is funded by a dedicated budget and through ring fenced amounts for transport in the Cohesion Fund. Local and regional infrastructure with linkage to the priority infrastructure can be additionally co-financed by the Structural Funds (Cohesion Fund and/or ERDF, depending on the situation of each member state/region) (European Commission 2011a).

The details for the new funding period 2014 to 2020 are currently under discussion. One key element of the future approach is "to foster integrated urban policies to enhance sustainable urban development in order to strengthen the role of cities within the context of cohesion policy" (European Commission 2012a). In the Budget 2020 Communication and Fifth Cohesion Report, the Commission has proposed changes to the strategic planning framework, mainly to ensure a greater focus on the priorities of the Europe 2020 strategy. One of the suggested thematic priorities is to promote sustainable growth by promoting sustainable transport (Mendez et al 2011, p. 29, 77, 81f). In this respect, several proposals have been made already, such as promoting low-carbon transport systems (European Commission 2011a).

In this context, the Committee on Regional Development of the European Parliament has commissioned this study, with the objective to obtain a clear understanding of the status of urban areas, urban mobility and sustainable urban mobility plans (SUMP) in Europe, the support they get from cohesion policy and its effects. In order to obtain first-hand information of the current situation, eight carefully chosen case studies are analysed. The study has been carried out and is presented in five steps: First, a methodological outline was provided to specify key literature to be reviewed, to propose a case study template and to describe the interview strategy. Second, the general context and the key concepts in

terms of cities and sustainable urban mobility are set out (Chapter 2). Third, the linkage between urban mobility issues and cohesion policy is described (Chapter 3). The empirical part of the study summarises the most important results of the case studies (Chapter 4). Finally, the results of the previous steps are summarised in order to draw conclusions and give policy recommendations (Chapters 5, 6).

2. GENERAL CONTEXT AND KEY CONCEPTS

KEY FINDINGS

- The **regional concept of urban areas** or larger urban zones is as important for sustainable urban mobility planning as the local concept of cities.
- **Sustainable urban transport** is transport with a low impact on the environment on the one hand, and transport that is accessible, safe and affordable on the other hand, such as walking, cycling, public urban transit but also green logistic concepts.
- **Urban mobility** refers to all travel options and activity either within a certain city or urban area, or having either the origin or the destination in the city or urban area respectively.
- Both the **Green Paper** and **Action Plan on Urban Mobility** acknowledge that cities need support to tackle the challenges with respect to sustainable mobility, taking into account the local context.
- The **White Paper on Transport** calls for a **reduction of CO₂ emissions** through mixed urban strategies, involving land use planning, pricing schemes, efficiency and infrastructure for green modes.
- The **development of 'Sustainable Urban Transport Plans' or 'Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans'** is suggested by all three of the above mentioned documents; however, a common European understanding is still missing.
- Apart from cohesion policy, the EU promotes sustainable urban transport by **regulatory, financial, participatory and advisory instruments**.

In the following, the general context of sustainable urban mobility is described. Beginning with the concept and definition of 'cities' within the European Union, sustainable and urban mobility will be tackled in the middle part. This chapter closes with a summarised description of the role of the EU in transport.

2.1. Cities – Definition, Status and Mobility

'Cities' consist of a concentration of people, activity, capital and buildings. Transport systems in cities and surrounding areas are structured on major roads, railways and urban transit. The whole forms a system that functions by flows of people, goods, energy, water and information.

In general, the term '**city**' refers to an administrative unit or a certain population density. This reflects two different realities: the *de jure* city and the *de facto* city. The first type describes urban zones within administrative borders, often developed from the historic city with its clear borders for trade and defence and characterised by a well-defined city centre. On the other hand the *de facto* city "*corresponds to physical or socio-economic realities which have been approached through either a morphological or a functional definition*" (European Commission, 2011c, p. 1). The European Commission and the OECD have jointly developed a definition for analytical purposes. It is based on a minimum density and number of inhabitants:

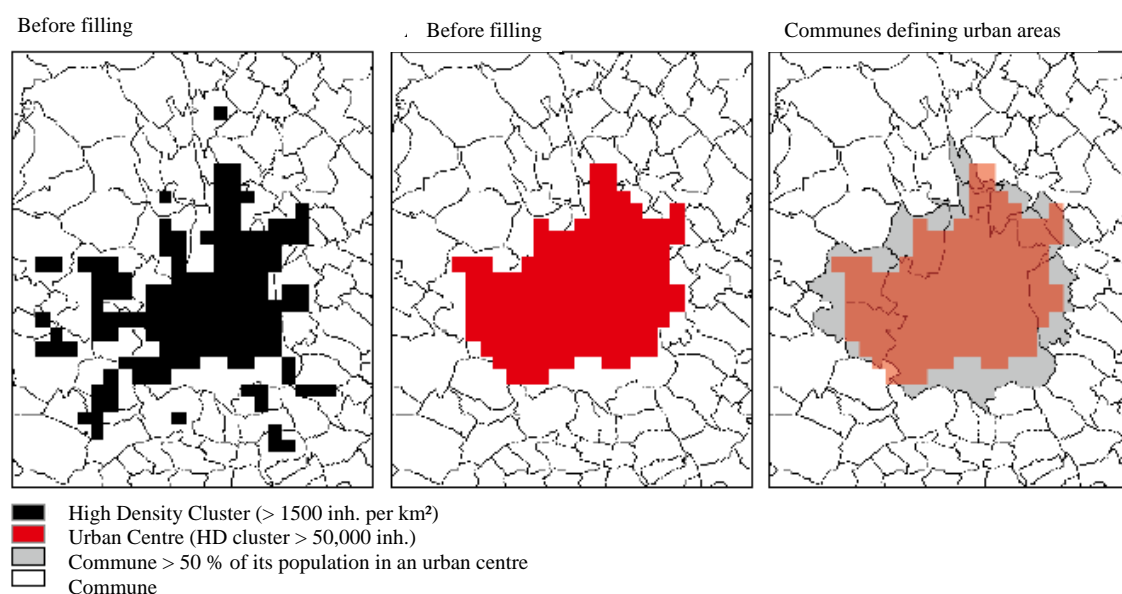
DEFINITION OF CITY

- A city consists of one or more municipalities (local administrative unit level 2 – LAU2).
- An urban centre has at least 50 000 inhabitants. It consists of a high-density cluster of contiguous¹ grid cells of 1 km² with a density of at least 1 500 inhabitants per km² (left image in Figure 1), as well as filled gaps² (middle image in Figure 1).
- At least half of the city residents live in an urban centre (right image in Figure 1).

(European Commission 2011c, p. 95)

Figure 1: How to define a city

High-density cluster, urban centre and city (Toulouse)



Source: European Commission (2011c).

By means of an Urban Audit, which is a joint effort by European Commission DG Regio and Eurostat, the quality of life has been assessed in European towns/ cities. Accordingly, in most countries the term 'city' corresponds to the concept of 'Local Administrative Unit' (LAU) level 2 (formerly NUTS level 5)³. As it has been difficult to apply this concept to all Member States, there has been an emphasis within the first Urban Audit of 2004 on identifying a city concept based on political responsibility. These are the "communes/ gemeenten" in Belgium, the "communauté d'agglomération" and "Communauté urbaine" in France and the "districts" in the United Kingdom (European Commission 2004, p. 10).

¹ Contiguity for high-density clusters does not include the diagonal (i.e. cells with only the corners touching).

² Gaps in the high-density cluster are filled using the majority rule iteratively. The majority rule means that if at least five out of the eight cells surrounding a cell belong to the same high-density cluster, it will be added. This is repeated until no more cells can be added on the grounds of this rule.

³ The first Urban Audit has been developed to meet the need of comparable information on European agglomerations in the mid-nineties and is based on information concerning 500 variables at three points in time and at three spatial levels for 58 towns/ cities (European Commission 2004, p. 10). NUTS is a geocode standard for referencing the subdivisions of countries for statistical purposes. The basic components of NUTS regions are called LAU, which is a low level administrative division of a country, ranked below a province, prefecture or region.

However, cities are always involved in and part of a larger region. According to the European Observation Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion (ESPON), a **Functional Urban Area (FUA)** can be described by its labour market basin and by the mobility patterns of commuters, and includes the wider urban system of nearby towns and villages that are highly economically and socially dependent on a major urban centre (ESPON 2007, p. 16). On the other hand, the **Morphological Urban Area (MUA)** means the continuity of the built-up space with a defined level of density (European Commission 2011c, p. 1). Neither of the concepts is a stable entity, because urban landscape and economic patterns evolve and so do densification and mobility patterns.

Another concept is the **Larger Urban Zone (LUZ)** which has been defined by the DG Regio as part of the first "Urban Audit" for each Member State. In this respect, data are collected on three spatial levels – core cities, sub-city districts and – the largest unit – larger urban zones (European Commission 2004, p. 11). In order to define the Larger Urban Zone (LUZ) the concept of "Functional Urban Region" (FUR) is used as a proxy. In contrast to FUA, the FUR concept is broader: "They are more extensively defined than local labour markets or travel to work areas [...] They are more urban, indeed metropolitan...." (NEWRUR 2007, p. 2).

Map 1: Location of Larger Urban Zones (Urban Atlas)



Source: Pangeo (2011).

During the last century, Europe transformed itself from a predominately rural to a largely urban continent. Within the EU, approximately 70% of the population (= 350 million people) live in agglomerations of more than 5,000 inhabitants (European Commission 2011c, p. 2). The share of urban population is forecast to rise by 10% in the period to 2050 (UN 2009). Compared to other regions such as the USA and China, Europe is characterised by a rather polycentric and less concentrated urban structure: There are 345 cities of more than 100,000 inhabitants in the EU, but only 23 cities of more than 1 million, applying the definition of city above (European Commission 2011c, p. 2).

For the context of this study the concept of Urban Areas or Larger Urban Zones is as important as the administrative concept of cities. Traffic relations are often intraregional, especially in terms of commuting, which is one of the criteria for defining Larger Urban Zones.

2.2. Sustainable and Urban Mobility

Cities and urban areas are the drivers of innovation and economic development. Thus, one of their key features is a substantial demand for transportation of goods and persons. In order to meet the objectives of urban sustainability it is crucial that people *"have access to the services and activities integral to their daily lives, while minimising the negative environmental, equity, economic and health impacts of travel"* (ECMT 2002, p. 9).

2.2.1. Definition

Whereas transport constitutes a derived demand that is driven by the needs of society and the economy, the concept of **mobility** is broader: It includes the opportunities and the accessibility provided by the transport system (Schade/ Rothengatter 2011, p. 24). Thus it is generally defined as *"an ability of an individual to move within, and interact with, the environment, usually involving the utilisation of public and/ or private transportation"* (Dimitriou 2006, p. 3). In this study we define **urban mobility** as all travel options and activity either within a certain city or urban area, or that part of a trip within a city or an urban area having either the origin or the destination in the city or urban area respectively.

Due to significant and partially still growing environmental problems related to transport, the concept of **sustainable transport** (or **green transport**) has been discussed as a goal linked to sustainable development. It refers to any means of transport with a low impact on the environment, such as walking, cycling, public urban transit but also green logistics concepts. It involves building or protecting urban transport systems that are fuel-efficient and space-saving and promote healthy lifestyles. Moreover a sustainable transport system is accessible, safe and affordable (ECMT 2004).

Sustainable transport or mobility is often linked to urban mobility, since due to the high number of affected persons cities and urban areas are seen as the key to enacting sustainable transport. Due to the concentrated transport flows in urban areas, the efficient use of green transport modes is possible due to short journey distances and potential for grouping transport demands together. The Report "Cities of Tomorrow" states that *"cities are key players in the reduction of CO₂ emissions and the fight against climate change"* (European Commission 2011c, p. 5).

2.2.2. Challenges

Sustainable urban transport faces several challenges:

- *Congestion*; congestion is seen as one of the main mobility-related problems in urban areas. The European Commission stated in its Green Paper 'Towards a new culture for urban mobility' that the costs of congestion and its implications (e.g. delays and pollution) have risen annually to €100 billion, or alternatively 1% of the EU's GDP (European Commission 2007a, p. 3). Due to increasing traffic levels – in the absence of additional policy making – these costs are likely to increase further over the next decades.
- *Air pollution*; pollutant emissions from transport have been reduced over the last twenty years, particularly through a gradual tightening of the Euro emissions standards. However, despite these improvements, environmental conditions in urban areas are still not satisfactory. The European Environment Agency (EEA 2011, p. 15) shows that, in 2009, the limit values⁴ for PM₁₀ and NO₂ had been exceeded by about 30% and 41% respectively, across all traffic-related monitoring stations in the EU-27. Large parts of the areas, which face problems with meeting these requirements on air quality, are urban ones. Transport emissions may lead to serious health problems for people living in these areas.
- *GHG emissions*; the CO₂ emissions of (urban) means of transport have increased significantly over the past decades and – without the implementation of additional policies – are expected to keep on growing in the future (AEA et al. 2010, p. 4). Urban road traffic contributed to at least 40% of transport-related CO₂ emissions and to approximately 10% of overall CO₂ emissions in the EU in 2005 (European Commission 2007b, p. 8).
- *Noise*; in 2000, more than 200 million people in Europe were regularly exposed to over 55 decibel (dB) of road traffic noise, a level potentially dangerous to health (CE Delft 2008, p. 12). A more recent analysis of noise maps of the 163 largest agglomerations of the EU indicates that 65.4 million people are exposed to those noise levels caused by traffic (European Commission 2011g, p. 6). A large number of these people lived in urban areas. Traffic noise can have several adverse impacts on people's health, including a deterioration of people's cognitive functions and cardiovascular diseases.
- *Traffic safety*; about two thirds of accidents and one third of road fatalities are in urban areas (European Commission 2007b, p. 9). Pedestrians and cyclists are frequently victims of traffic accidents, with children, women and the elderly the groups most affected (European Commission 2007a, p. 3).
- *Ageing*; data forecasts show that the segment of EU-27 population aged 65 years and over will increase to 30% by 2060, and the segment aged 80 and over will increase to 12% (TRT 2010, p. 26). This demographic trend will have an important impact on the requirements on urban transportation. An important challenge will be to develop an urban transport system that safeguards the mobility needs of the elderly.

⁴ The limit values for the atmospheric concentrations of main pollutants are set by Directive 2008/50/EU (EEA 2011, p. 14).

- *Social exclusion*; the design of the urban transport system may cause social exclusion in various ways:
 - Spatial exclusion, which usually emerges in low density areas, where public transport services are not operated because they are not profitable.
 - Temporal exclusion, which is mainly related to problems faced by people travelling very early or late in the day, when public transport services do not exist or are infrequent.
 - Personal exclusion, which refers to constrained use and access to travel of certain groups of people due to some specific characteristics (disability, age).
 - Economic exclusion, which concerns people's inability to afford the private cost of transport services (TRT 2010, p. 25).

Therefore, to prevent social exclusion, these potential causes should be taken into account when designing the future urban transport system.

- *Urban sprawl*; over the last decades European cities have progressively spread out in urban forms characterised by low-density development (TRT 2010, p. 25). Several drivers of urban sprawl could be identified, including cultural traditions, a desire to live outside the inner city, land prices, the prevalence of fossil-based car transport, individual housing preferences and demographic trends. From a transport perspective, the main results have been an increase in overall transport volumes and an increase of car-dependency. In this way urban sprawl reinforces the other problems related to urban transport, like congestion and air pollution.
- *Public transport*; increasing car ownership combined with urban growth imperils the attractiveness and efficiency of public transport systems (ECORYS et al. 2006, p. 29).

2.3. Role of the EU in Transport

The influence of the EU on European transport ranges from binding European-wide legislation over defining strategic principles to soft policies providing guidelines and recommendations while respecting the subsidiarity principle. The latter applies in particular to the urban level and urban transport.

2.3.1. Urban transport in general

Transport issues in the context of urbanisation are an important concern of the European Commission. In 2006 the **Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment** was launched (European Commission 2006). It tackles a number of environmental challenges such as "*poor air quality, high levels of traffic and congestion, urban sprawl, greenhouse gas emissions and generation of waste and waste water*" (ibid.). As for the field of transport, the main action point under this strategy was to provide guidance on integrated environmental management and on sustainable urban transport plans. These issues were taken up and further elaborated upon in subsequent policy documents (European Commission 2007a, 2009a). The European Commission is aware that cities cannot face all challenges with respect to sustainable mobility on their own; there is a need for cooperation and coordination at the level of the EU institutions. However, at the same time the Commission acknowledges that solutions for urban challenges depend heavily on the local context and hence a top-down approach would not be desirable; concrete measures have to be implemented by local authorities.

The **Green Paper 'Towards a new culture for urban mobility'** shows that the European Commission intends to play a facilitating role in helping local authorities to implement measures with respect to urban transport in practice. It suggests that this could be done in various ways: *"promoting the exchange of good practice at all levels (local, region or national); underpinning the establishment of common standards and the harmonisation of standards if necessary; offering financial support to those who are in greatest need of such support; encouraging research, the application of which will make it possible to bring about improvements in mobility safety and [the] environment; simplifying legislation and, in some cases, repealing existing legislation or adopting new legislation"* (European Commission 2007a, p. 5). Among others, an integrated approach around the common goal of increasing the economic, environmental and social sustainability of the urban transport system is required. The **Action Plan on Urban Mobility** elaborates on this strategy and proposes 20 concrete actions to be launched by 2012 (European Commission 2009a). In the box below these actions are summarised. A review of the implementation of these actions is currently being conducted. On the basis of a stakeholder consultation in 2012 any needs for further action will be assessed.

The Green Paper pays specific attention to the financial resources needed for urban mobility (European Commission 2007a, pp. 19-21). It states that all stakeholders at local, regional, national and EU level must contribute, including users. The latter should pay a fair price for collective transport services. Moreover, the use of parking charges and urban road user charges are seen as possible ways to internalise the (external) costs of urban car use and, at the same time, to gather revenues which could contribute to urban transport financing. At European level several sources of financing are available, for instance the Cohesion Fund, the Structural Funds and loans from the European Investment Bank (EIB). Interesting in this respect is JESSICA, which is an initiative of the European Commission in cooperation with the EIB and the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB). JESSICA, which started in 2007, allows Member States to co-finance projects forming part of an integrated plan for sustainable urban development, by using some of their ERDF to hand out repayable investments (in the form of equity, loans and/ or guarantees). Due to the revolving nature of this instrument, returns from investments are reinvested in new urban development projects, thereby enlarging the effect of EU co-funding.

As of mid 2012, the most recent strategic EU policy document with respect to urban mobility is the **White Paper 'Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system'**, which was published in March 2011 (European Commission 2011d). It envisages a reduction in CO₂ emissions from transport of at least 60% by 2050, but a key element of the overall strategy is ensuring the growth of the transport system and the maintenance of mobility levels. It calls for cities to follow a mixed strategy involving land-use planning, pricing schemes, efficient public transport services, infrastructure for non-motorised transport modes and charging/ refuelling infrastructure for clean vehicles (e.g. electric vehicles) to reduce congestion and emissions. All of these instruments could be brought together in an integrated urban mobility plan. To support these urban mobility plans, procedures and financial support mechanisms will be established at European level. Moreover, the Commission will examine whether these urban mobility plans can become mandatory for cities of a certain size.

PROPOSED ACTIONS IN THE ACTION PLAN ON URBAN MOBILITY

- **Accelerating the take-up of sustainable urban mobility plans (SUMP).**
- **Sustainable urban mobility and regional policy;** providing information on the link between sustainable urban mobility measures and regional policy objectives to increase the awareness of the funding available from the Structural and Cohesion funds and the European Investment Bank.
- **Transport for healthy urban environments;** support of partnerships towards healthy environments.
- **Platform on passenger rights in urban public transport;** European Commission will moderate dialogue with relevant stakeholders on this issue.
- **Improving accessibility for persons with reduced mobility;** in cooperation with Member States.
- **Improving travel information;** support of projects.
- **Access to green zones;** a study will be launched on different access rules for different types of green zones in EU.
- **Campaigns on sustainable mobility behaviour.**
- **Energy-efficient driving as part of driving education;** discussion with Member States whether energy-efficient driving could be included in private driving tests.
- **Research and demonstration projects for lower and zero emission vehicles;** via Seventh Framework Programme for research and technological development.
- **Internet guide on clean and energy-efficient vehicles.**
- **Study on urban aspects of the internalisation of external costs.**
- **Information exchange on urban pricing schemes.**
- **Analysing the needs for future funding.**
- **Optimising existing funding schemes.**
- **Urban data and statistics;** study to improve data collection for urban mobility.
- **Setting up an urban mobility observatory;** in the form of a virtual platform to share information, data and statistics, exchange best practices, etc.
- **Contributing to international dialogue and information exchange;** by using existing platforms and financial mechanisms, e.g. the CIVITAS Forum network.
- **Urban freight transport;** support on how to optimise urban logistics efficiency.
- **Assistance for intelligent transport systems (ITS) for urban mobility.**

2.3.2. SUTP and SUMP in particular

On the basis of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment, the Commission published a Preparatory Document on **Sustainable Urban Transport Plans** (SUTPs). It was intended as a summary of the state of the art with respect to best practices that could be considered when developing SUTPs at local levels (European Commission 2007b). The document is aimed at local authorities, who are responsible for urban transport management and land use planning in order to support sustainable urban transport patterns.

The SUTPs' basic characteristics include a participatory, knowledge based and integrated approach, which involves political and technical cooperation and which can be measured (ibid., p. 11). Moreover, it emphasises that the *"establishment and implementation of sustainable urban transport plans can benefit from cohesion funding under the three objectives of the cohesion policy (convergence, competitiveness and cooperation)"* (ibid., p. 15).

However, the Action Plan on Urban Mobility introduces the term **Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans** (SUMPs) and called for their increase in Europe. Even though it uses a slightly different term, it was meant to pick up the already introduced concept of a SUTP. In the White Paper the Commission even suggests making the development of a SUMP mandatory for cities of a certain size. It represents a comprehensive planning instrument to *"pave the way for a shift from a short-term, mainly operational supply-oriented approach to a more long-term strategic approach covering both urban passenger and urban freight transport [...] and where the integration of land use and transport planning is regarded as a critical factor"* (TRT 2010, p. 30).

Based on desk research, a large number of interviews with relevant stakeholders and various expert workshops, Rupprecht Consult (2011a, p. 12) proposes to define a SUMP as a *"strategic plan designed to satisfy the mobility needs of people and businesses in cities and their surroundings for a better quality of life. It builds on existing planning practices and takes due consideration of integration, participation and evaluation principles"*.

According to the ELTISplus guidelines (Rupprecht Consult 2011b, p. 6) a SUMP:

- Involves all stakeholders in the process of developing and implementing the plan (*participatory approach*);
- Balances economic development, social equity and environmental quality (*overall sustainability principles*);
- Applies an *integrated approach* between policy sectors, authority levels and neighbouring authorities;
- Has a focus on achieving measurable targets derived from *short term* objectives which are aligned with a *long term vision*;
- And considers transport *costs and benefits* (both the internal and external ones).

The definitions above show that both terms, SUMP and SUTP, basically describe the same concept. However, in spite of these definitions a common European understanding of SUMPs or SUTPs is currently still missing (Rupprecht Consult 2011, p. 10; TRT 2010, p. 32).

The objective of a SUMP is to create a sustainable urban transport system by:

- Making it accessible to all;
- Improving its safety and security;
- Reducing its environmental impact;
- Improving the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the transportation of persons and goods;
- Contributing to enhancing the attractiveness and quality of the urban environment and urban design (Rupprecht Consult 2011a, p. 11).

Despite the interest in SUMP at a European level, this is not supported by a corresponding spread in their implementation across the EU (TRT 2010, p. 32). In some countries SUMP are implemented on a large scale and supported by national regulation (e.g. France, UK), while in other countries (e.g. Bulgaria, Greece) these plans are not used and political support to implement them in the short term is lacking (Rupprecht Consult 2011a, p. 18-24). In most countries no national legislation or guidelines on sustainable urban mobility planning exist. Partly (e.g. France, Belgium) these plans have clear sustainability objectives, while in Germany the plans are mostly aimed at the specific provision of movement-related transport infrastructure (and hence do not necessarily contain specific sustainability objectives) (Rupprecht Consult 2011a, p. 19).

The concept of SUMP is also supported by the Covenant of Mayors, an European movement involving local and regional authorities, which voluntarily commit to increasing energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources in their territories. With their commitment, Covenant signatories aim to meet and exceed the European Union 20% CO₂ reduction objective to be reached by 2020.

As a tool for implementation the co-funded PILOT-Project (Planning Integrated Local Transport, <http://www.pilot-transport.org/>) illustrated the preparation of SUTPs in four European cities: Braila, Evora, Lancaster and Tallinn. It set out to propose tools, guidelines and recommendations for the elaboration of SUTPs in other European regions and local authorities (PILOT 2007).

Another relevant tool is QUEST (Quality management tool for Urban Energy Efficient Sustainable Transport), funded by the Intelligent Energy Europe programme, which aims to assist small- and mid-sized cities in improving their SUMP processes by developing an audit tool based on the concept of Total Quality Management (TQM).

2.3.3. EU instruments other than cohesion policy

An overview of transport-related EU instruments – apart from the cohesion policy that is discussed in the next chapter – is given in the following.

An effective group of policy measures on EU level are referred to as **regulatory instruments**. The environmental and health related considerations around transport as well as congestion and urban access issues have prompted the use of various instruments in order to regulate, among other things, vehicle performance, the design and planning of networks, fuel quality and pollutant concentrations in the atmosphere. The adoption of the instruments into national legislation is binding and depends on national legislation frameworks. The most important are pollutant limit concentrations for CO, HC, NO_x and PM,

fuel standards, vehicle standards and traffic noise policies (Bakas 2011; ISIS/ PwC 2010). An important example on urban level is the requirement to develop noise abatement plans ('action plans' according to Environmental Noise Directive (European Commission 2002)).

Due to the subsidiarity principle many of the European initiatives focussed on the urban level are formulated as **non-binding strategies**. An example is the current Transport White Paper, which suggests defining a strategy for moving towards 'zero-emission urban logistics' in order to improve the air quality in cities. Moreover, the development of urban access restriction schemes has been suggested (European Commission 2011b). In terms of logistics the Logistics Action Plan defines six actions, each consisting of several measures. In contrast to other strategic policy documents, each measure is assigned a deadline by when it should be implemented (European Commission 2007a).

In addition, **financial instruments** play a major role. An important source for funding transport infrastructure is the TEN-T (Trans-European Transport Network) programme in cooperation with the European Investment Bank's financial instruments. It grants aid for transport infrastructure of European significance at a rate of 20 to 30% of the respective total cost. This comprises ports, traffic management systems, navigation and user information systems, airports, roads and rail tracks. The investment is partly refunded by revenues, tolls or other user-charges. Studies and pilot actions can be co-financed up to a maximum of 50% (European Commission 2011e). However, the TEN-T policy review showed that there is a need for establishing the connections to urban transport networks. Moreover, nodes as transfer points between urban and long-distance traffic have been suggested to be considered within future TEN-T policy (European Commission 2009d).

On the local level, **economic instruments** like charges or taxes (e.g. cordon charging, parking fees etc.) play an important role to influence urban mobility. Again, such measures need to be decided on and implemented by the local authorities. Thus, the current White Paper suggests developing a validated framework for urban road user charging and its applications (European Commission 2011b). Furthermore, the European Commission provides **funding for research** – mainly through the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) with an overall budget of € 50.5 billion for the period 2007-2013. € 4.1 billion thereof is allocated to the transport sector (European Commission 2012b).

Participatory instruments represent a softer approach. These are plans, strategic documents, legacies and projects that are designed to initiate and motivate the participation of public and private sector groups, communities and citizens in the development and implementation of a certain (transport) policy (Taşan-Kok/ Vranken 2011). The Lisbon Strategy, renewed in 2005, made clear that more efforts have to be made to increase the awareness and ownership of the European population in respect of EU actions. Thus the guidelines for consultation state that the Commission consults and is in constant touch with external parties when elaborating its policies (European Commission 2009c). At a lower level of governance, public participation can take place in terms of providing information and consultation in order to obtain the views of the stakeholders and the general public. Moreover, stakeholders can become decision-makers and can become involved in the implementation of a certain strategy (PLUME 2003).

In addition, there is a series of **advisory/ consultancy instruments** available at EU level. The most relevant papers are described in section 2.3.1. Furthermore, there are information and training initiatives such as the Urban Mobility Portal ELTIS (www.eltis.org). It acts as a platform for news and events and contains a case study archive. Besides, it provides a tool section with guidelines, handbooks and on-line tools, to support urban

transport professionals in their work. Another initiative co-financed by the EU is CIVITAS (Cleaner and Better Transport in Cities, www.civitas-initiative.org). Launched in 2002, it aims at supporting cities in introducing ambitious transport measures and policies towards sustainable urban mobility. A total of 60 European cities have implemented innovative measures towards clean urban transport. In addition, CIVITAS includes a Forum Network, in which a city can become a member and exchange ideas and experiences with other cities.

As suggested by the *Transvisions* study commissioned by DG TREN, the future of EU transport policy should rely upon an ideal combination of policy instruments: technology development, regulatory and economic and participatory instruments as well as selective investments in infrastructures (Tetraplan et al. 2009, p. 219).

3. URBAN AREAS, SUMP AND COHESION POLICY

KEY FINDINGS

- There is a **complex system of support** with a number of instruments relevant to urban, transport and urban mobility projects, with varying priorities and conditions.
- The **majority of cohesion policy funding on transport is allocated to roads**, and a significant part of it to TEN-T-projects.
- **Urban Mobility is mainly covered by the ERDF**; specific support instruments such as JASPERS and JESSICA are important in this context; JASPERS for preparation of major projects, JESSICA to fund urban projects in particular.
- The White Paper clearly includes three optional measures for urban mobility, of which one is to **examine support for implementing SUMP in European cities**.

This chapter describes the support for urban areas, general transport and urban mobility policy by cohesion policy; for example relevant objectives, funding and measures of the Structural and Cohesion Funds, but also the role of Urbact II and JESSICA. Subsequently, the links and synergies between cohesion policy and urban mobility policy are analysed.

3.1. Overview of Support for Urban Areas, Transport and Urban Mobility Policy

The EU approved a **National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF)** for each Member State. This document outlines each country's strategy and contains a list of OPs. The OPs were prepared by each Member State and present the priorities selected by the national and regional authorities for the programming period in effect (2007-2013) (European Commission 2012c). Generally each OP is supported by a single fund (ERDF, ESF or Cohesion Fund), although there is provision for some flexibility (European Commission 2010c, p. 9). OPs are managed by Managing Authorities (MAs), i.e. a national ministry, regional authority, local council or another public or private body approved by a Member State (European Commission 2012a). Potential beneficiaries include public bodies, some private sector organisations (especially small businesses), universities, associations, NGOs and voluntary organisations.

A framework for preparing NSRFs and OPs is provided by the Community Strategic Guidelines (CSG) (European Commission 2010c, p.9). There are also OPs concerned with transnational, cross-border and interregional cooperation which go beyond state boundaries. 455 OPs exist in the current programming period (European Commission 2012a - c).

3.1.1. Urban areas and cities

While urban planning does not fall within the EU's remit, cohesion policy has a strong urban dimension. It has had a growing impact on the development of cities (European Commission 2011c, p. 7).

For 2007-2013 € 21.1 billion has been earmarked for urban development, representing 6.1% of the total EU cohesion policy budget. Of this, € 3.4 billion is targeted for the rehabilitation of industrial sites and contaminated land areas, € 9.8 billion for urban and rural regeneration projects, and € 7 billion for clean urban transport. Other investments in housing, research and innovation infrastructure, the environment, education, health and culture also impacts the cities significantly (European Commission 2007d).

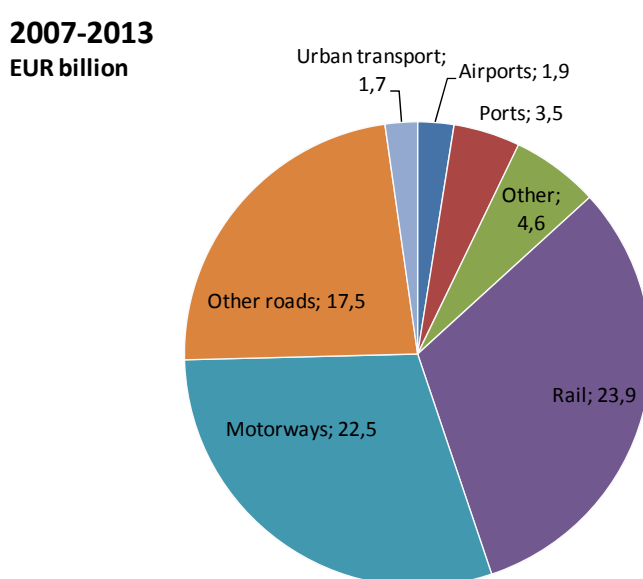
3.1.2. Transport and urban mobility policy

Urban mobility accounts for 40% of all CO₂ emissions of road transport and up to 70% of other pollutants from transport. Consequently European cities increasingly face problems caused by transport and traffic. Whereas cities themselves are usually in the best position to find the right responses to these challenges, they are often dependent on financial help (European Commission 2011f).

23% of cohesion policy funding, i.e. around €80 billion out of a total of €347 billion, is allocated to transport. This represents an increase of 65% from the previous programming period (European Commission 2012c). Investment is planned mostly in the Central and Eastern European states, where road and rail networks need modernising, but also in many southern regions where investments have extended over several programming periods and are nearing completion (European Commission 2010b, p. 204).

Figure 2 breaks down planned funding by different elements of transport. It can be seen that over half of the investment relates to roads. Moreover, nearly 50% of the transport related ERDF/Cohesion Fund allocations are for **Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T)** projects (CE Delft et al., 2012, p. 50). Its aim is to establish a single, multimodal network integrating land, sea and air transport across the EU, and allowing people and goods to move easily between Member States (European Commission 2012d).

Figure 2: Planned cohesion policy expenditure on transport



Source: European Commission (2010b), p.218 (own representation).

However, the EC regional policy website presents a different picture of cohesion policy allocations for transport. For example, it indicates the following figures: urban transport €8.1 billion (2.3% of the total cohesion policy investments), ports and inland waterways €4.1 billion (1.2%), multimodal transport and intelligent transport systems €3.3 billion (1%) (European Commission 2011h, specifically the 'fields of activity/ transport' subsections). Presumably these differences are due to the use of different ways of classifying.

The relationship between the different cohesion policy instruments and cities, transport and urban mobility is considered in more detail in section 3.2. The picture is complex and is summarised in a table in the concluding section 3.6.

3.2. ERDF Support for Operational Programmes (OPs)

ERDF support is provided for infrastructure (including transport), investments in companies, territorial cooperation and networking between cities, and technical assistance. One focus is to address economic, environmental and social problems in towns. The ERDF budget is €201 billion, 57.9% of the total cohesion policy budget.

3.2.1. Urban areas and cities

An EU report on NSRFs breaks down the allocation of both the ERDF and Cohesion Fund by theme. This indicates that 3.8% is devoted to urban and rural regeneration (European Commission 2008a, p.7). The Fifth Cohesion Report notes that the budget for urban regeneration and urban development is greater than in the previous programming period, with around €10 billion of the ERDF being allocated to urban development at Priority Axis level within OPs (European Commission 2010b, p. 236).

The Fifth Cohesion Report also notes that in over half of ERDF programmes addressing urban challenges *"operations range from the regeneration of disadvantaged areas to actions boosting innovation and competitiveness in urban growth poles"* (European Commission 2010b, p. 236). This has *"given all Member States and regions the possibility to design, programme and implement tailor-made, integrated development operations in their cities"* (European Commission 2011c, p. 8). The ERDF supports 316 OPs. An analysis of the programme documents (Piskorz, 2009, p.12, 21; European Commission 2008b, pp. 3-4) and related literature shows the following:

- Urban development priorities are split equally between Convergence and RCE region's OPs;
- There is a wide range of actions reflecting the diversity of needs "on the ground". These can be categorised into three main groups: **regenerating deprived neighbourhoods; sustainable urban development in various thematic fields:** increasing competitiveness, creating jobs, physically rehabilitating urban areas including city centres, improving infrastructures such as transport in new Member States; **promoting more balanced development via networks of cities;**
- Although recommended by cohesion policy, new Member States have had less opportunity to focus on integrated urban development. This is due to the fact that new Member States have been unable to benefit from previous EC URBAN initiatives,

and have less developed regional and national policy support for urban development.

The following table compares urban dimensions in OPs funded via the ERDF, in relation to different region types/ policy objectives.

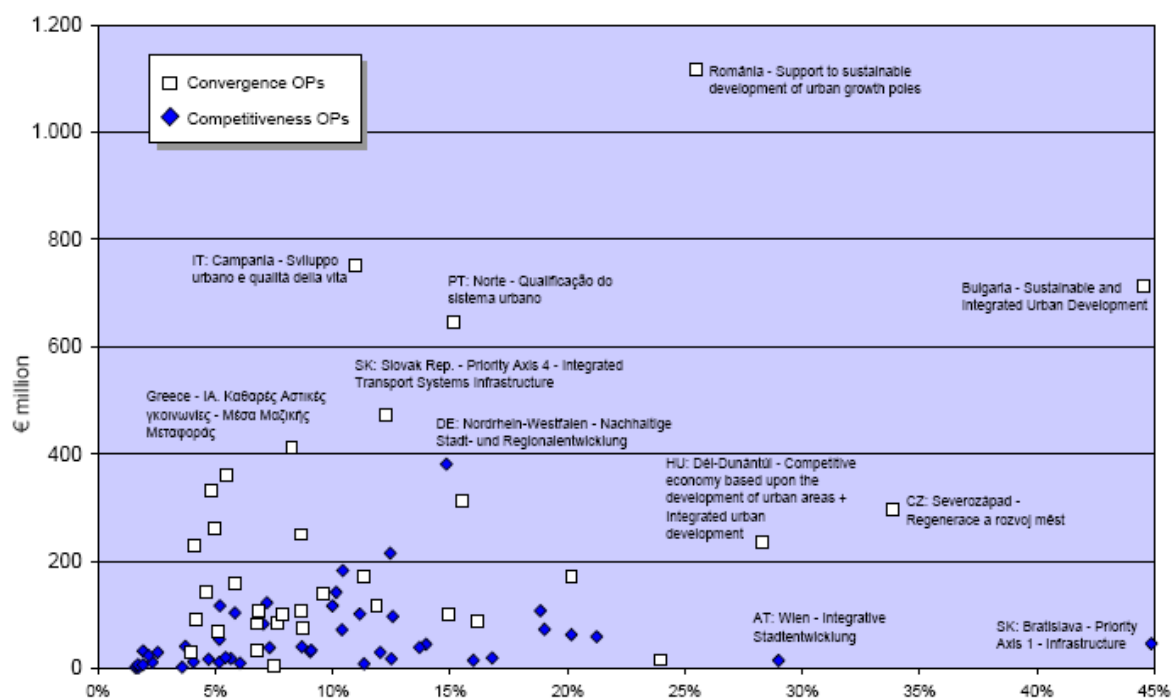
Table 1: Comparison of urban dimensions in OPs funded by ERDF across different types of region/ policy objectives

Type of region/ policy objective	No. of OPs with urban dimension	Total allocation for urban dimension (€)	% of ERDF budget	Range (€)
Convergence	76	7.24 billion	3.2	4.8 million (OP Melilla, Spain) to 1.1 billion (Romanian Regional Development OP)
RCE	80 (Around 2/3 located in four states - Germany, Spain, France, Italy)	2.77 billion	8.9	1.1 million (OP La Rioja, Spain) to 381 million (OP North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany)
ETC	22	(No data)	(No data)	(No data)

Source: The table is based on information from the European Commission (2008b), pp. 18, 26 and 42.

The following Figure 3 shows the distribution of ERDF support for urban priorities in convergence and RCE OPs, in terms of absolute funding (vertical axis) and proportion of OP budgets (horizontal axis). It identifies the OPs with the largest allocations (absolute and/ or proportional).

Figure 3: ERDF allocations for urban Priority Axes in OPs



Source: European Commission (2008b), p.53.

The OPs implemented under the Convergence objective have a greater ERDF allocation for urban development than those of RCE, although across RCE regions' OPs this funding amounts to a greater proportion of the total ERDF budget than across convergence regions' OPs.

The analysis of OP documents indicated that only very few regions and Member States considered urban development issues when designing technical assistance interventions (European Commission 2008b, p. 41).

3.2.2. Transport and urban mobility policy

Literature relating to transport/ urban mobility and the ERDF is very limited.

The EU report on NSRFs indicates that 28.3% of both the ERDF and Cohesion Fund will be allocated to transport (European Commission 2008a, p. 7). Various priorities for assistance are defined within Articles 4 and 5 of the ERDF Regulation, including:

- Under the convergence objective priorities include transport, which covers integrated strategies for clean transport;
- Under the RCE objective priorities include access to transport services of general economic interest, and promoting clean and sustainable public transport especially in urban areas and cities (European Commission 2010c, pp. 14-15).

The analysis of OP documents highlights that the urban dimensions of OPs under the convergence objective are strongly related to improving urban infrastructure, including transport. The OPs of RCE regions indicate a focus on investment in urban transport. 60 out of 115 RCE OPs plan infrastructural investments to promote clean and sustainable public transport. These focus on improving access to urban mobility systems and attractiveness of public transport, traffic management and transport planning (European Commission 2008b, pp. 19, 30-31).

3.2.3. Transnational and Cross-Border Cooperation Programmes

There are 13 Transnational Cooperation Programmes, with a total ERDF budget of €1.8 billion. They are part of the ETC objective, covering large areas of cooperation (European Commission 2012c). Themes covered include:

- Sustainable **urban development**, in particular polycentric development;
- **Accessibility** (European Commission 2012c).

There are 52 **Cross-Border Cooperation Programmes**, with a total ERDF budget of €5.6 billion. They are part of the ETC objective, operating along EU internal borders, and implemented via agreed cross-border "analysis and response" strategies (European Commission 2012c). These programmes address a wide range of issues including:

- Supporting links between **urban** and rural areas;
- Improving access to **transport** networks (European Commission 2012c).

3.3. Other Schemes supported by ERDF

3.3.1. JASPERS and JESSICA

JASPERS and JESSICA are support instruments for specific purposes⁵: **JASPERS** is a partnership between the EC, EIB, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the German Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW). It provides technical assistance for the 12 states which joined the EU in 2004 and 2007 and Croatia. This relates to the preparation of high quality, major infrastructure projects, to be submitted for financing under the Structural and Cohesion Funds; for example water, waste, energy and **urban transport** projects. JASPERS advice can cover review of documentation e.g. grant applications, project preparation and compliance with EU law. Evidence suggests that projects which have received support from JASPERS are approved significantly faster than those which have not (European Commission 2012c, JASPERS 2012).

As of 5 March 2012:

- 544 advice assignments had been completed since the start of operations in 2006. To give an example of elements of transport sector covered, JASPERS completed 61 assignments between 1 January and 7 July 2011, of which 26 related to air, maritime, road and public transport;
- JASPERS was working on 426 assignments;
- 301 JASPERS-supported applications had been submitted to the European Commission for consideration, of which 181 had been approved (JASPERS 2012).

JASPERS also organises conferences and workshops. In 2012 JASPERS is gradually setting up a networking platform. Its objectives will go beyond the EU-12, covering all Member States and pre-accession countries. The platform will enable an exchange of information and experience about JASPERS-related topics (JASPERS 2012).

JESSICA is a joint EC/ EIB initiative, developed in collaboration with the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB), supporting sustainable **urban development and regeneration**. Member States or regions (via designated MAs) can choose to recycle some of their ERDF allocations as **Urban Development Funds** (UDFs) or Holding Funds (investing in more than one UDF), in order to make repayable investments in projects. These investments may take the form of equity, loans and/ or guarantees (EIB 2012).

To use JESSICA, Member States or regions must include an urban agenda in their OPs (EIB 2012). The types of project supported may include **urban transport** (but there is no specific requirement to link urban transport projects to SUMP). Projects can cover: urban infrastructure, including transport, water and energy, heritage and cultural sites, redevelopment of brownfield sites, creation of new commercial floor space for SMEs, IT and/ or R&D sectors, specialised facilities in university buildings, and energy efficiency improvements (European Commission 2012c).

As of October 2011, €1.89 billion had been committed to 22 initiatives (19 HFs and 3 UDFs) in 11 Member States. 15 UDFs were operational by 30 June 2011, and a further 15 were

⁵ These are joint initiatives by the EC and financial institutions. Both instruments are no own funding sources, but the financial support by the EC is financed as part of the OPs, in case of JASPERS also the Cohesion Fund (JASPERS 2012).

expected to be active by the end of 2011. The first project investments were undertaken in Estonia, Brandenburg, Poland and Lithuania (Zaliwska 2011). It has not been possible to identify within the literature the specific urban issues covered by UDFs and Holding Funds and associated projects.

JESSICA also provides the following forms of support to stakeholders:

- Evaluation studies on the feasibility of implementing financial instruments in countries or regions
- JESSICA Networking Platform for exchanging information and good practice. This Platform organises events, horizontal studies providing guidance on operational matters, and Thematic Working Groups, coordinated by stakeholders to provide recommendations to the EC and its partners.

(Zaliwska 2011; EIB 2012).

3.3.2. INTERREG IVC

This programme has an ERDF budget of €320 million, with a total budget of around €400 million. It links to the ETC objective, at the level of interregional cooperation. INTERREG IVC supports regional and urban networks in sharing best practice and contributing to economic and regional development. The eligible programme area covers the 27 Member States plus Norway and Switzerland (European Commission 2007e).

There is a competitive process for allocating funds to projects, via four calls for proposals issued by the Joint Technical Secretariat for the programme (European Commission 2012c). There are two priorities: innovation and the knowledge economy and environment and risk prevention. Projects are expected to identify good practices within these priority areas. Two types of projects are supported (European Commission 2012e):

- Regional Initiative: partners cooperate to exchange experience in a relevant policy area, and
- Capitalisation: partners transfer already identified good practices to OPs.

INTERREG IVC involves 2,276 partners, with 90% of EU regions represented. 204 projects have been approved to date.

It is possible to search the programmes website's project and good practice database by key words. Searches using the terms '**urban**' and '**cities**' revealed 24 relevant projects, and 45 relevant practices. These are likely to be the minimum number of relevant projects/practices, since some other projects/practices may also have an urban dimension. The projects and practices identified are wide ranging in terms of urban issues addressed (European Commission 2012e).

The programme website's thematic classification includes **Energy and Sustainable Transport**. Database searches under this theme revealed eight transport-related projects, and at least 22 **transport**-related practices. Three of the projects are concerned with mobility management, the others cover a variety of issues including sustainable urban freight, multi-modal transport at ports, and flexible transport services in urban and rural areas (European Commission 2012e). Two of the good practices cover **urban transport/mobility plans**. The others relate to a range of topics including urban transport.

3.3.3. URBACT II

URBACT II is an OP with an ERDF budget of €53.3 million and a total budget of €68.9 million. It links to the ETC objective, at the level of interregional cooperation. URBACT II is an exchange and learning programme promoting **integrated, sustainable urban development**. It allows cities to cooperate to develop solutions to major urban challenges. There is a competitive process for allocating funds to specific projects, via three calls for proposals issued by the URBACT Secretariat (European Commission 2012f).

There are 44 projects involving 300 cities in 29 countries (the 27 Member States, plus Norway and Switzerland). There are two types of project: Thematic Networks and Working Groups. Both bring together public authorities for transnational exchange and learning, focussing on a specific issue. Most partners of Thematic Networks are cities, including Lead Partners. Working Group Lead Partners must be public authorities, although not necessarily a city; Working Group partnerships are more diverse than those of Thematic Networks (European Commission 2012f). Participating cities must set up a Local Support Group to strengthen the involvement of key stakeholders in regeneration, accompanied by an Action Plan to provide solutions to local issues (Piskorz 2009, p. 13; European Commission 2012f).

Projects cover a wide range of issues. They are grouped into nine themes: active inclusion, cultural heritage and city development, disadvantaged neighbourhoods, human capital and entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity, low carbon urban environments, metropolitan governance, port cities and quality sustainable living (European Commission 2012f). Much of the URBACT II website is structured around the nine themes, so it is not possible to obtain an overview of projects specifically relating to **transport** and **urban mobility**.

3.3.4. Regions for Economic Change

This initiative is a learning platform for regions, highlighting good practice in **urban** and regional development and innovation. (European Commission 2012f). The initiative consists of three major activities: fast track networks, a policy learning database and an awards scheme.

INTERREG IVC and URBACT II are integrated by assigning **Fast Track** status to some of their networks. These networks test innovative ideas and work on their rapid transfer to regional policies and programmes. The aim is to strengthen exchange of experience and better contribute to OP implementation. Networks must deliver action plans. The EC has given 11 INTERREG and 10 URBACT networks Fast Track status, following a competitive selection procedure. One INTERREG Fast Track Network relates to **mobility management**. The URBACT Fast Track Networks cover a range of **urban** issues. (European Commission 2010c, p.20; European Commission 2012f).

An online **Policy Learning Database** is available to policy makers, project staff and other practitioners. It includes:

- In-depth analyses of projects funded through cohesion policy;
- Analyses of specific, sectoral, regional or **urban** programmes.

(European Commission 2012f).

It is possible to search the database by theme. The territorial dimension of regional development theme includes a sub-theme on **urban areas**. There is also a **transport** theme. Searches of the **urban** sub-theme and **transport** theme revealed 166 projects, which are wide ranging in terms of urban and transport issues addressed.

Since 2008, "**RegioStars**" Awards have been offered to particularly innovative projects. The aim is to identify good practices in regional development which could inspire other regions. This occurs via an annual, competitive selection procedure. Between 2008 and 2010, 16 awards were assigned. In 2010 the EC introduced a "**CityStar**" category, which covers one or more **urban** topics, including integrated approaches to sustainable urban development, sustainable energy in cities and integrated clean **urban transport** projects (European Commission 2010c, p.20; European Commission 2012f).

3.3.5. ESPON

ESPON is an OP with an ERDF budget of €35.3 million and a total budget of €47 million. It links to the ETC objective, at the level of interregional cooperation. ESPON supports policy development regarding territorial cohesion by "(1) *providing comparable information, evidence, analyses and scenarios on territorial dynamics and* (2) *revealing territorial capital and potentials for development of regions and larger territories contributing to European competitiveness, territorial cooperation and a sustainable and balanced development*". There is a competitive process for allocating funds to specific projects. To date there have been ten calls for proposals issued by the ESPON Coordination Unit (ESPON 2012).

A project overview is available, presenting ongoing projects as of July 2012 (ESPON 2011, 2012). There are four types of project:

- 25 **Applied Research Projects** on a variety of cross-thematic and thematic issues providing evidence on European territorial trends and policy impacts;
- 22 **Targeted Analyses** based on demand from national, regional and local stakeholders;
- 10 projects relating to a **Scientific Platform** for territorial analyses contributing to the ESPON knowledge base;
- 5 **Transnational Networking Activities** that raise awareness of and exploit ESPON results at the transnational level (ESPON 2011, foreword).

Regarding the projects presented in the overview:

- At least 26 projects appear to have an **urban** dimension, 13 of which are in the Applied Research category;
- At least 7 projects appear to have a **transport** dimension, four of which are in the Applied Research category;
- 1 Targeted Analysis has an **urban mobility** dimension. It is called "Best Development Conditions in European Metropolises: Paris, Berlin and Warsaw" (BEST METROPOLISES). The project looks at processes of urban development, focussing on Berlin, Paris and Warsaw. The aim is to gather information and knowledge for use in planning and management of metropolitan areas. A major output envisaged is a practical "toolbox" of solutions to tackle problems related to metropolitan living conditions, **mobility** and governance. The project stakeholders come from public departments of the three cities.

3.4. ESF Support for Operational Programmes (OPs)

According to the ESF website the Fund has 15 priority areas (European Commission 2012h). None of the priority areas specifically mentions cities or transport. However, the ESF has been used to support education, training and employment in deprived urban areas. There is an emphasis on social inclusion of disadvantaged people through involvement of local communities, local companies and local employment initiatives. The ESF budget is €76 billion, 21.9% of the total cohesion policy budget. 22 Member States have planned support to urban areas in 77 out of 117 OPs and through 126 out of 633 Priority Axes (European Commission 2010a, p. 7; European Commission 2010b, p. 237).

The ESF website contains priority and project databases, but they are structured by priority area, so it is hardly possible to search for or readily identify urban, transport, or urban mobility themed projects.

3.5. Cohesion Fund Support for Operational Programmes (OPs)

The Cohesion Fund covers Member States whose Gross National Income per inhabitant is less than 90% of the Union average. The Cohesion Fund budget is €70 billion, 20.2% of the total cohesion policy budget. For the current programming period the Fund covers Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain. It has a focus on **transport** and environmental projects (European Commission 2012c, specifically the fields of 'The Funds/ Cohesion Fund' subsections).

Transport-related priorities are as follows:

- Sustainable development, including clean urban transport, traffic management, and intermodal transport systems and their interoperability;
- Investments in TEN-T, including access to these networks. These investments are important in enhancing the accessibility of urban areas and inter-urban mobility (European Commission 2010c, p. 29).

3.6. Links and Synergies between Cohesion Policy and Urban Mobility Policy

As described above, urban mobility policy within the Member States deserves attention since increasing car ownership combined with economic growth, which is concentrated around major urban centres, leads to various problems.

Beyond social and territorial cohesion, cohesion policy also aims at improving the competitive position of the European Union as a whole, and the weakest of its 271 regions in particular. By doing so it aims at stimulating economic growth, which in the past has gone along with growing transport demand. However, a further aim of urban mobility policy is to make mobility more environmentally and socially sustainable. Economic growth often leads to an increase in car ownership with its negative effects in terms of quality of public transport, air pollution, noise etc., which contradicts the efforts to increase sustainability. On the other hand, improving public transport accessibility and urban quality of life may, in turn, support economic growth. Consequently, there are positive and negative interactions between cohesion policy and urban mobility policy.

Urban transport projects can alleviate environmental problems in urban environments. Similar to the aim of SUMPs (see 2.3.2) a study carried out for the EC recommends that funding *"is made dependent on citywide plans to combat urban congestion"*. An integrated approach addressing transport, energy and environmental issues at the same time is thought to be effective in this respect (ECORYS et al. 2006, p. 80).

The 2011 Transport White Paper includes three optional measures, which relate to urban mobility:

- *"Establish procedures and financial support mechanisms at European level for preparing Urban Mobility Audits, as well as Urban Mobility Plans, and set up a European Urban Mobility Scoreboard based on common targets. Examine the possibility of a mandatory approach for cities of a certain size, according to national standards based on EU guidelines.*
- *Link regional development and cohesion funds to cities and regions that have submitted a current, and independently validated Urban Mobility Performance and Sustainability Audit certificate.*
- *Examine the possibility of a European support framework for a progressive implementation of Urban Mobility Plans in European cities."* (European Commission, 2011d, p. 26f.)

Thus it clearly points to the link of urban mobility policy with cohesion policy and it addresses the instruments of SUMP in particular.

The previous sections have established that the ERDF and Cohesion Fund OPs provide a major link between these two policy fields. The analysis of OP documents highlights that the urban dimensions of OPs in the convergence regions are strongly related to improving urban infrastructure, including transport. Although being of low financial importance compared to convergence regions, 60 out of 115 RCE OPs plan infrastructural investments in promoting clean and sustainable public transport. These focus on improving access to urban mobility systems and attractiveness of public transport, traffic management and transport planning (European Commission 2008b, pp. 19, 30-31). However, for the convergence OPs the Commission states in terms of the urban dimension that they *"do not necessarily follow the principles of integrated development"* (European Commission 2008b, p. 20). Therefore, it calls on the national MAs *"to give priority to projects that enhance the resource efficiency of transport"*, such as clean urban public transport and non-motorized transport (CEE 2011, p. 3).

Moreover, in the 2007-13 programming period instruments cover traditional OPs which include investments in urban, transport and urban mobility projects or financial instruments. This diversification of cohesion policy support provides flexibility in meeting the needs of regions. Overall **there is a complex system of support with a number of instruments relevant to urban, transport and urban mobility projects, with varying priorities and conditions**. Therefore, it may be challenging for potential beneficiaries and other stakeholders to absorb and understand the different forms of support, and the interconnections between them.

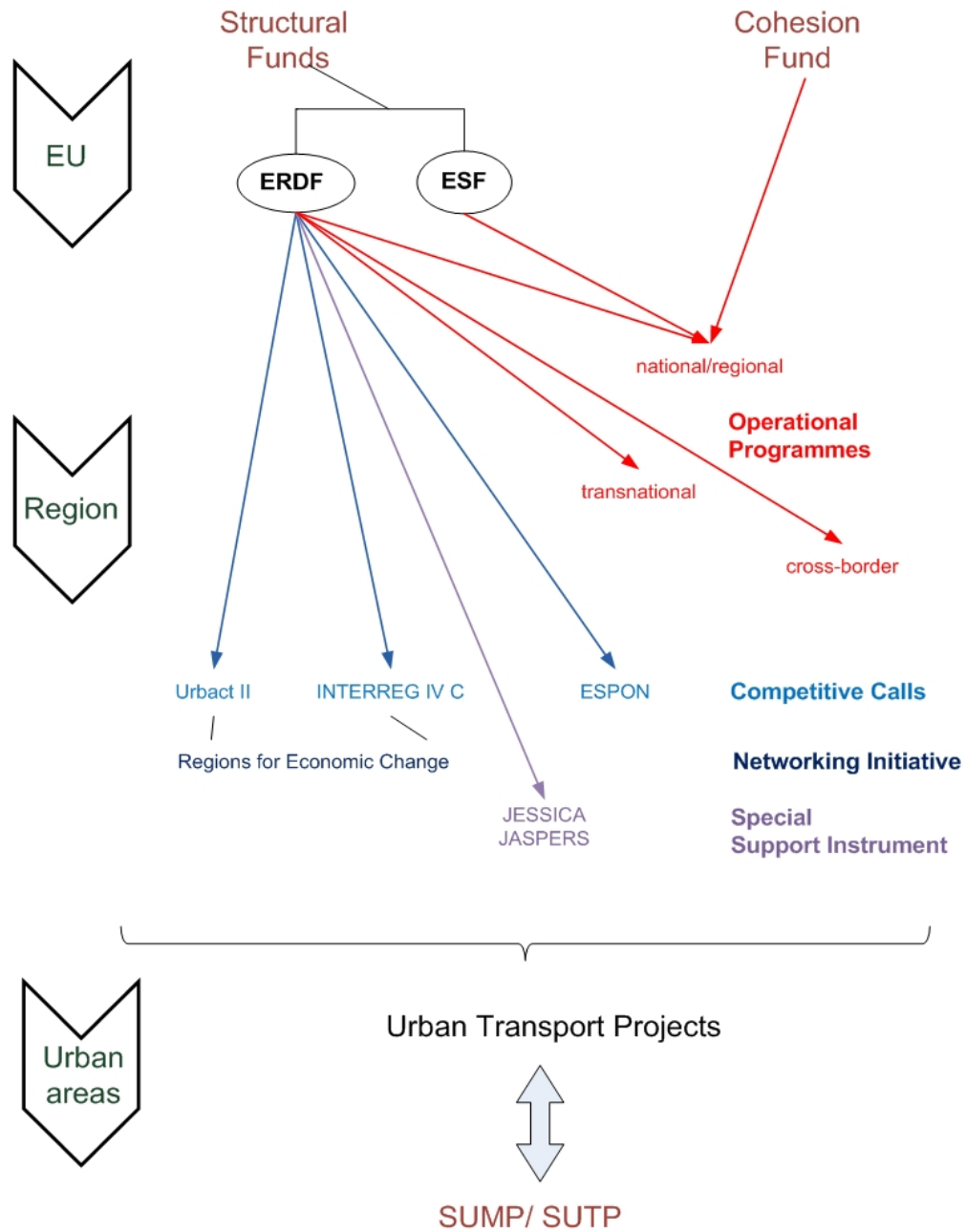
While, in general terms, a large amount of information exists about cohesion policy instruments, a review of the pertinent literature indicated some issues regarding availability of information about support for cities, transport and urban mobility:

- Many papers analysing dimensions of cohesion policy support over 2007-13 are a few years old. They provide information about the level of investment allocated to urban and transport measures. There are also some publicly available case studies and result papers of individual projects. However, there appears to be limited high level, overview information or evaluation concerning actual expenditure on urban and transport measures, and associated progress and impact of implementation.
- Information is presented in different ways by different sources, so it is difficult to compare levels of support for cities, transport and urban mobility across different types of instruments. Some instruments have priorities that do not specifically mention urban, transport or urban mobility dimensions. Therefore, it is hard to readily identify the extent to which funded projects cover these areas.

The ERDF and the Cohesion Fund are the main cohesion policy instruments providing support for cities, general transport and urban mobility. Many OPs do have an urban or transport dimension, but there is limited information on the extent to which urban mobility is supported. Hence, the case studies in the following chapter 43 should help to provide further insights into this. It is also recommended to improve the provision of regular information about expenditure on and impact of urban, transport and urban transport/mobility projects in cohesion policy.

The following Figure 4 illustrates the relationship between the European cohesion policy and the funding of urban transport projects via the spatial level of regions; the following table provides an overview of the support for cities, transport and urban mobility within cohesion policy.

Figure 4: Overview of the linkage between European cohesion policy and urban transport projects



Source: Authors.

Table 2: Summary of support for cities, transport and urban mobility within cohesion policy

Instrument	EU budget (€)	Key features	Support for cities, transport and urban mobility		
			Cities	Transport	Urban mobility
ERDF – national / regional OPs	193 bn	Strengthens economic, social and territorial cohesion, via OPs listed in approved NSRFs	Strong urban dimension. €10 bn allocated to urban development in over half of OPs.	Strong transport dimension 28.3% of both ERDF + Cohesion Fund allocated to transport.	Lack of high level, overview information. 60/115 RCE OPs focus on urban transport, including access to urban mobility systems
ERDF – transnational OPs	1.8 bn	Promotes European territorial cooperation, covering large areas. 13 programmes.	Lack of high level, overview information. Issues covered include sustainable urban development.	Lack of high level, overview information. Issues covered include accessibility.	Lack of high level, overview information.
ERDF –cross-border OPs	5.6 bn	Promotes European territorial cooperation, operating along EU internal borders. 52 programmes.	Lack of high level, overview information. Issues covered include urban-rural links.	Lack of high level, overview information. Issues covered include access to transport networks.	Lack of high level, overview information.
ERDF – JASPERS	Not known	Technical advice to new States and Croatia, to prepare infrastructure projects for funding by Structural and Cohesion Funds, 544 completed and 426 current advice assignments as of March 2012.	Includes urban transport projects.	Example of types of projects covered: 61 assignments completed January to July 2011, of which 26 related to transport.	See previous cells.
ERDF – JESSICA	1.9 bn (at Oct 11)	Recycling ERDF allocations for urban development/ holding funds, 15 UDFs operational at June 2011; Networking Platform.	All projects have an urban dimension.	Types of project supported may include urban transport. Lack of information on specific issues covered by projects.	See previous cell.
ERDF –	320 m	Regional/ urban networking regarding regional development, via	Projects and good practices classified by themes which do	Thematic classification includes Energy and	3 projects relate to mobility management. 2

Instrument	EU budget (€)	Key features	Support for cities, transport and urban mobility		
			Cities	Transport	Urban mobility
INTERREG IVC		projects funded by competitions. 122 current projects as of May 2012.	not mention urban issues. At least 24 projects and 45 practices have an urban dimension.	Sustainable Transport. 8 projects and at least 22 good practices relate to transport.	good practices cover urban mobility plans.
ERDF – URBACT II OP	53.3 m	Exchange and learning in order to promote urban development, via projects funded by competitions. 44 current projects (May 2012).	All projects have an urban dimension.	Lack of high level, overview information - projects classified by themes which do not mention transport.	Lack of high level, overview information - projects classified by themes which do not mention urban mobility.
ERDF – Regions for Economic Change	Not known	Fast tracks INTERREG IVC and URBACT II networks to transfer results to OPs; Policy Learning Database; awards for innovative projects	10 URBACT networks have Fast Track status. City-Star award category covers urban topics.	Lack of high level, overview information. City-Star award topics include integrated, clean transport.	One INTERREG network relates to mobility management.
ERDF – ESPON OP	35.3 m	Analysis of territorial dynamics, capital and development potential, via projects funded by competitions. 62 projects at Nov 2011.	At least 26 projects appear to have an urban dimension.	At least 7 projects appear to have a transport dimension.	One project has an urban mobility dimension.
ESF – national/ regional OPs	76 bn	Assistance in the social and employment area via OPs listed in approved NSRFs.	Has been used to support employment and training in deprived urban areas. 22 states support urban areas in 77/ 117 OPs.	Lack of high level, overview information.	Lack of high level, overview information.
Cohesion Fund	70 bn	European transport networks and environmental projects, via convergence OPs listed in approved NSRFs.	Priorities include clean urban transport, inter-urban mobility.	Strong transport dimension. Combined ERDF/ Cohesion Fund budget for TEN-T is € 44.2 bn.	Lack of high level, overview information.

Source: Authors.

4. CASE STUDIES

KEY FINDINGS

- On the basis of a set of balanced selection criteria as well as a ranking of the cohesion policy budget allocated to urban mobility within the Operational Programmes, **eight case study regions** were chosen: Barcelona (ES), Cluj Napoca (RO), Halle (D), Krakow (PL), Liverpool (UK), Rennes (FR), Strasbourg/ Kehl (FR/D), Tallinn (ET).
- **Sustainable transport projects** were identified in every case study; however, sometimes these were limited to one project only; some **projects are funded independently** from the SUMP.
- The example of Tallinn shows that support by the EU does not necessarily lead to effective sustainable urban mobility planning; **governance issues are of special importance** in inexperienced regions.
- Examples of good collaboration between stakeholders in charge of SUMP, OP and OP projects were found in Krakow, Liverpool, Cluj Napoca and Strasbourg.
- Little evidence of any linkage between SUMP and OP projects was found in Rennes and Barcelona.

4.1. Choice and overview

Regulation EU 1828/ 2006 contains a detailed list of expenditure codes for the OPs. According to Annex II, Part A, the following priority theme codes cover urban mobility:

- No. 25: Urban Transport (within the group "Transport");
- No. 52: Promotion of clean urban transport (within the group "Environment protection and risk prevention").

The aim of the study was to further clarify the links and synergies between cohesion policy and SUMPs. Accordingly, for this study a total of eight case study regions and cities were chosen from within a group of the 20 largest OPs (in terms of cohesion policy decided allocations to projects combined for the urban transport related codes 25 and 52) for each of the three cohesion policy objectives. Within this group the following selection criteria were applied:

- Existence of sustainable transport projects which are co-funded by the OP;
- Balance between the three cohesion policy objectives;
- Balance between different city sizes, membership in CIVITAS Forum Network or Covenant of Mayors;
- Geographical balance throughout the European Union, and

- Involvement of cities with a SUMP⁶;
- Involvement of OPs with JESSICA support.

This selection process resulted in the choice of the following eight case studies. Four cases belong to convergence regions:

- Cluj Napoca (Romania);
- Halle (Germany);
- Krakow (Poland);
- Tallinn (Estonia);

Three cases fall into the category of Regional Competitiveness and Employment (RCE) regions:

- Barcelona (Spain),
- Liverpool (United Kingdom),
- Rennes (France),

And one cross-border region under the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) objective:

- Strasbourg/ Kehl (France/ Germany).

These eight case studies represent a wide variety of example projects and beneficiaries. However, although the selected projects all are guided by the objective to improve sustainable urban mobility, only two third of projects identified in the OPs officially constitute a part of a sustainable urban mobility plan or equivalent transport development plan. Key data on these case studies are provided in Table 3. The main findings of each case study are described in the following sections.

4.2. Barcelona

OP name	OP objective	EU Budget	Budget for codes 25 + 52	SUMP name	SUMP authority
'Catalonia' (Spain)	RCE (ERDF)	€679 million	€46.2 million	Urban Mobility Masterplan (PMU)	Municipality of Barcelona

Urban Transport Project:

- Bus-HOV lane on the C-58 motorway (€115.5 million in total).

⁶ According to the criteria derived in chapter 2. However, though in the text referred to as SUMP for convenience of the text flow, not all plans de facto fulfill all of the SUMP criteria used.

The OP 'Catalonia' was developed by the Ministry of the Treasury when the SUMP for Barcelona, the PMU, was already implemented. The PMU fulfils all criteria of a SUMP. Other stakeholders involved in the development of the SUMP were the local transport authority ATM, the neighbouring municipalities and the regional and national government. However, there is no evidence that the PMU was considered when drawing up the OP.

Only a few linkages can be identified between the SUMP and the OP in Barcelona. Just one transport-related OP project was already mentioned in the SUMP, i.e. the high-occupancy vehicle (HOV)-bus lane which has been chosen as a project example. Although the Catalan government is fully responsible for this project – also in terms of funding along with OP funds-, the Municipality of Barcelona is involved in some design and implementation issues (e.g. the category of vehicles that are allowed to use the bus lane).

Apart from the cooperation regarding the HOV-bus lane, no evidence of any other communication and/ or potential linkages between the Ministry and the Municipality of Barcelona as MA and SUMP authority has been found.

The main reason identified for the small number of linkages between the SUMP and the OP project in Barcelona is the fact that the initiator of the project is a different governmental body to the manager of the SUMP. In addition, the OP and the chosen project have a much broader geographical scope than the SUMP (i.e. the whole region of Catalonia).

4.3. Cluj Napoca

OP name	OP objective	EU Budget	Budget for codes 25 + 52	SUMP name	SUMP authority
'Regional Operational Programme' (Romania)	Convergence (ERDF)	€3,726 million	€111.8 million	Strategic Development Plan for Cluj Napoca Municipality (SDP)	City of Cluj Napoca

Urban Transport Projects:

- Network of hire and self service bicycle stations (€4.1 million in total);
- Modernisation of the tram route Manastur - Rail Market (€18.1 million in total).

The 'Regional OP' was developed by the North West Regional Development Agency (RDA) as part of the Ministry of Development, Public Works and Housing (MA), before the local Strategic Development Plan (SDP) was implemented. With the exception of the overall sustainable mobility principles, it does not fulfill the SUMP criteria. Other stakeholders involved were the OP manager including the growth pole coordinators.

There is a clear link between the OP and two plans concerned with urban transport, i.e. the SDP for Cluj Napoca Municipality and the SDP for the North West Region. The development of the SDP for Cluj Napoca Municipality took into account the OP's SWOT analysis for the North West Region, but tailored the identified strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats to the existing local situation. It acts as an umbrella under which urban mobility, transport-related, social infrastructure and business-related projects co-exist. The SDP implements at a local level the projects prescribed at a strategic level by the OP priority axis 1 and its key areas of intervention.

There are regular meetings between Municipality representatives and the growth-pole coordinators of the North West RDA to discuss project implementation. However, the MA would like to work more closely with local authorities in the region on procurement and contracting processes.

The two OP project examples play a role in improving local transport infrastructure and access to public transport, and in increasing urban mobility. As such, they contribute to the SDP for Cluj Napoca Municipality and inform the development of the SUMP, to be finalised in July 2013. The Municipality plans to use JASPERS as the support instrument for the development of this SUMP. Until the SUMP is finalised, the SDP is the guiding document in relation to sustainable urban mobility.

While the Municipality manages the implementation of the chosen OP projects, project monitoring and evaluation are carried out by the North West RDA. It successfully provided support and guidance to the Municipality's representatives, particularly during the process of application for project funding in a collaborative process. Municipality representatives confirmed that the two projects studied would not be implemented and completed without OP financing.

4.4. Halle (Saale)

OP name	OP objective	EU Budget	Budget for codes 25 + 52	SUMP name	SUMP authority
'Saxony-Anhalt' (Germany)	Convergence (ERDF)	€1,932 million	€22.2 million	Transport Policy Vision, Transport Development Plan (VEP), under development	City of Halle

Urban Transport Project:

- Major road reconstruction 'Delitzscher Strasse'/ 3rd main section of tram line Halle-Neustadt-central station (€4 million in total).

The OP 'Saxony-Anhalt' was developed by the Ministry of Finance of the federal state of Saxony-Anhalt, after the City of Halle had already implemented the Transport Policy Vision. The current Transport Policy Vision ('Verkehrspolitische Leitbild') was published in 1997 after comprehensive citizen involvement. It highlights measures to promote sustainable transport. One of these measures is the extension of the tram line to the district Büschdorf combined with the extension and reconstruction of a major road in Halle (Delitzscher Strasse).

The follow-up document, the Transport Development Plan 2025 (VEP), is currently being developed in an integrated and participative way involving citizens, local initiatives, organisations and associations; a draft will be available in 2013. However, it is conceivable that the VEP will only partly fulfil the criteria of a SUMP. For instance, short term objectives and costs or benefits are currently not discussed. .

Neither of the plans played a role for design of the OP. Moreover, the concept of SUMP/ SUTP is not known by either the local transport authority or the MA. Even though "*clean urban transport projects will be carried out*" according to the OP, hardly a single example

could be identified. As for Halle, only the chosen transport infrastructure project of tram extension can be regarded as a sustainable transport measure. It is also part of the Transport Policy Vision. However, only the transformer station as one technical item of this project is co-funded by the OP. Instead, the OP focuses on small towns and rural areas, mainly to adjust the standard of road construction throughout the federal state of Saxony-Anhalt.

Based on a general statement of the beneficiary experienced with OP projects it seems that the stakeholders in Halle have not yet established a routine to deal with the procedures involved in obtaining OP funding, such as reporting and audit requirements. A clear system of processing and communication between OP Manager and beneficiaries has not been established yet; i.e. there are no regular meetings. However, the SUMP manager hopes that the auditing of local transport planning within the QUEST project will help to improve sustainable transport policy and planning, especially regarding the expected problems associated with a shrinking population.

4.5. Krakow

OP name	OP objective	EU Budget	Budget for codes 25 + 52	SUMP name	SUMP authority
'Infrastructure and Environment' (Poland)	Convergence (ERDF, Cohesion Fund)	€27,914 million	€2,014 million	Integrated Plan of Development of Public Transport	City of Krakow
'Lesser Poland'	Convergence (ERDF)	€1,290 million	€27.1 million		

Urban Transport Projects:

- Development of a system of urban traffic management (IEOP: €11.1 million in total);
- Construction of the tram node Dietla-Starowińska Street together with the tram line Sebastiana-Blich Street and Post Office node (Regional OP: €8.2 million in total).

The OP 'Infrastructure and Environment' (IEOP), valid for the whole country, was developed by the Ministry of Regional Development. At around the same time the Integrated Plan of Development of Public Transport (2007-2013) was set out by the City of Krakow. It partly fulfils the criteria of a SUMP. Other stakeholders involved were the neighbouring municipalities, the regional and national government, the main railway company, the Directorate for State Roads and Highways, the public transport companies and non-governmental organisations.

Another relevant OP for Krakow is the Regional OP for Malopolska (OP 'Lesser Poland'). The SUMP was developed because, within the Regional OP for Malopolska, there is a condition requiring the projects receiving support from this OP to be consistent with the SUMP. There is a constant communication between the SUMP managers and the beneficiaries of the chosen OP transport projects.

In addition, many of the projects described in the SUMP are co-financed by the national and regional OP; without this co-funding, implementing these SUMP projects would last much

longer and in some cases it is likely that only parts of the projects would be implemented. The SUMP is regularly revised to take new projects of both OPs into account. Thus, managers of the SUMP are cooperating with beneficiaries of the OP transport projects considered (at a project level). Since the SUMP is not monitored (yet), no linkages have been found with respect to monitoring/ implementation of both programmes.

4.6. Liverpool

OP name	OP objective	EU Budget	Budget for codes 25 + 52	SUMP name	SUMP authority
'North West England' (UK)	RCE/ Phasing In (ERDF)	€756 million	€36.3 million	Local Transport Plan (LTP)	Local transport authority (Merseytravel)

Urban Transport Projects:

- Knowledge Quarter public realm Mount Pleasant (€11.1 million in total)⁷;
- Green travel plans (€8.2 million in total).

The OP 'North West England' was developed by the NWDA, the former MA, before the SUMP for Merseyside, the third Local Transport Plan, began to be implemented in April 2011 by *Merseytravel*, the local transport authority. The LTP fulfils all criteria of a SUMP. Other stakeholders involved were the Liverpool City Council and the neighbouring Metropolitan Borough Councils.

The LTP, the City Centre Movement Strategy (CCMS), the OP and the project examples have comparable objectives. They were mutually influenced since the OP specifically focuses on LTP priorities with regard to transport measures in Merseyside. Transport-related OP projects are proposed in a bottom-up way by the local transport authority and local authorities, which are also involved with the LTP. The ERDF Programme Delivery Northwest is part of the MA. It has a Merseyside Subcommittee (with *Merseytravel* representation), which meets regularly and oversees the ring-fenced ERDF allocation to Merseyside.

All transport-related OP projects in Merseyside have significantly contributed to the LTP and Merseytravel staff checks that the LTP's objectives are aligned with regional, national and European policies. As largely the same *Merseytravel* staff are involved in the LTP and transport-related OP projects on Merseyside, OP project managers have contributed to LTP design and ongoing implementation. Both project examples received co-funding from the LTP.

JESSICA has provided an Urban Development Fund for Merseyside, Chrysalis. The Liverpool City Council plays a co-ordinating role bringing together local stakeholders involved in JESSICA supported projects which will focus on commercial developments. With regard to planned JESSICA investments, Liverpool City Council is aware of the LTP and there has been contact with LTP staff. The first phase of JESSICA-supported projects will not formally

⁷ Public realm improvements and reductions in traffic in Knowledge Quarter of Liverpool City Centre, including new cycle parking facilities, upgrading key traffic junctions with pedestrian priority, introducing bus priority on Mount Pleasant, improved signage, lighting and street furniture.

be part of the LTP or its budget. However, as initial projects will relate to commercial development, they will have transport infrastructure requirements. Mobility will be considered as part of the planning process.

The LTP, OP and OP project examples all monitor progress against output. There is an LTP implementation strategy, through which OP project staff are made aware of LTP monitoring requirements. While the MA will consider reports on the impacts of Merseyside OP transport projects once they have all been completed (most will end in 2012), for this study data from the 2nd LTP annual report 2010-11, OP interim evaluation report from 2010 and interviews were compared. They suggest that the impacts of the 2nd LTP, OP and two OP project examples reinforce each other.

There is a good level of co-operation between Merseytravel and relevant OP project managers. From the viewpoint of the local transport authority, transport-related OP projects in Merseyside in general had a very positive impact on the LTP and it would not have been possible to achieve measures within the LTP timeframe without ERDF co-funding.

Both the MA and beneficiary interviewees were happy with the level of co-operation between the MA and OP project staff. However, some concerns were raised about clarity and consistency of advice given by the MA and the nature of ERDF reporting requirements. The process of transferring the MA function from the North West Regional Development Agency (NWDA) to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) seemed to have affected advice provided.

4.7. Rennes

OP name	OP objective	EU Budget	Budget for codes 25 + 52	SUMP name	SUMP authority
'Brittany' (France)	RCE (ERDF)	€301.7 million	€30.9 million	Urban Mobility Plan (PDU)	Rennes Métropole

(Urban) Transport Projects:

- TGV Rapid train link to Brittany (€259 million in total);
- 2nd metro line/ support public transport projects (€1186 million in total).

The 'Brittany' OP was developed by the Prefecture of the region of Brittany. At around the same time the Urban Mobility Plan (PDU; 2007-2017) was elaborated by Rennes Métropole, taking into account the content of the OP. The PDU fulfils all criteria of a SUMP. Other stakeholders involved in the development of the SUMP were the neighbouring municipalities, the regional government, the railway company SNCF and the local bus and metro company.

When drawing up the SUMP, Rennes Métropole considered the OP (proposal). However, the managing authority of the OP only became aware of the SUMP after the OP was approved. Also, following the start of the implementation of the OP no further communication (regarding linkages, progress, monitoring, etc.) has taken place between the authorities of the SUMP and the OP.

Moreover, in Rennes only the second example project, the new metro line, is included in the SUMP. For this project the only communication that has taken place between the various stakeholders has been regarding the financing of the project. The first OP project (TGV rapid train link) is not included in the SUMP, although it indirectly contributes to one of the objectives formulated in the SUMP, i.e. increasing multi-modality in the metropolitan area of Rennes.

A potential reason for the few linkages identified between the SUMP and both OP transport projects in Rennes may be the different geographical scopes of both instruments. The SUMP is exclusively focused on the Rennes Metropolitan Area, while the OP covers the region of Brittany as a whole. Due to these different geographical scopes, the operators of both instruments are not inclined to have close contact.

4.8. Strasbourg

OP name	OP objective	EU Budget	Budget for codes 25 + 52	SUMP name	SUMP authority
'INTERREG IV A Upper Rhine' (France/Germany/Switzerland)	ETC (ERDF)	€67 million	€4.9 million	Urban Mobility Plan (PDU)	Urban Community of Strasbourg (CUS)

Urban Transport Project:

- Cross-border extension of Line D of tram network Strasbourg/ Kehl (€98.5 million in total).

Whereas the OP 'INTERREG IV Upper Rhine' by the Alsace Regional Council (MA) has been in place since 2007, the revised integrated urban transport plan (PDU), developed by the Urban Community of Strasbourg (CUS), has just been adopted by the CUS Council. It fulfils all criteria of a SUMP. As in Rennes, one driver for the PDU development process is the national regulation on integrated transport planning as the key to getting transport funding from the central government. The plan also considers the transport interactions with the East and does not stop at the Rhine, which constitutes the border to Germany. The OP was not explicitly taken into account during the development process, but there was an awareness of the funding opportunity of the cross-border tram extension by EU funds. Beyond this, the CUS, the City of Kehl and other public and private funding sources are used to finance this project.

The involvement of the stakeholders in the development phase of the SUMP comprises all municipalities of the CUS, the regional and national government, the department and civic associations. Additionally on the German side, the neighbouring City of Kehl and the transport associations are involved.

Due to the long tradition of cross-border projects and the French-German history of the Alsace region, the collaboration of the MA with the local transport authorities on the German and the French side can be described as excellent. However, the linkage is generally less strong for OP projects with a larger budget, such as the projected tram extension, because the INTERREG IV A – programme limits its co-funding to those costs which occur additionally resulting from the cross border extension of the projects

An important beneficial element for OP projects is the strength of the personal relationships between the Alsace Regional Council, the CUS and the City of Kehl, which is also supported by regular meetings in the technical working group and the steering committee. Moreover, a joint technical secretariat, implemented in the Alsace Regional Council and responsible for questions around project funding from the OP, ensures smooth project handling and an ongoing flow of communication.

4.9. Tallinn

OP names	CP objective	EU Budget	Budget for codes 25 + 52	SUMP name	SUMP authority
'Development of Economic Environment' (Estonia)	Convergence	€1,463 million	€129.7 million	Development Strategy/ Transport plan	City of Tallinn
'Living Environment' (Estonia)	Convergence	€1,549 million	€22.4 million		

Urban Transport Project:

- Reconstruction of Tramline No.4 to be adjusted to the new vehicle fleet (OP 'Living Environment'; €22.2 million in total).

The 'OP for the Development of Economic Environment' and the 'OP for the Development of Living Environment', both valid for the whole country, were developed by the Ministry of Finance. At around the same time the Development Strategy for Tallinn's Mobility Environment (2007-2013), labelled as a SUTP, was set out by the City of Tallinn. Indeed, the 'Development Strategy' fulfils most of the criteria of a SUMP. In 2010 the 'Transport Plan for the City of Tallinn and its vicinity' was published by another department of the City of Tallinn. In neither of the plans were the OPs taken into account. While drafting the plans, many stakeholders have been consulted, including the regional authority and the university. Moreover, citizens had the opportunity to participate and several round table discussions took place.

The two transport plans were partly developed with monetary and technical support by the EU (the SUTP has been developed within the PILOT project). However, they were not adopted as official development documents in the end, because they do not comply with existing statutes concerning a development document issued by the City Council. Consequently, both plans serve as internal documents only.

It can be stated that there is currently no link between OP funding and the contents of the SUTP; the chosen tram reconstruction OP project is not explicitly mentioned therein. Generally, a dynamic relationship based on communication between the MA and transport authority exists. However, it does not seem to be based on long-term strategic vision and planning, but rather on seeking pragmatic solutions to use provided funding efficiently.

Since many urban transport projects including projects not connected to the OP are currently carried out in Tallinn, an innovative funding approach has emerged: savings of CO₂ generated from transport measures and the sale of 'assigned amount units' of CO₂ emitting allowances under the European Trading Scheme (EU ETS) to Spain. The revenues were invested in new tram vehicles.

4.10. Synthesis of case studies

The selection of the eight case studies proved useful for the study objectives. They include the whole range of cases: from virtually no cooperation and communication between OP and SUMP planning in Halle to continuous cooperation in which the objectives and guidelines of the larger spatial level, i.e. the OP, are usually taken into account at lower scale spatial levels, i.e. planning integrated urban transport by a (partial) SUMP in Krakow.

If the objective is a strengthened interlinkage between cohesion policy implemented by an OP and sustainable urban mobility, three important lessons can be drawn from the case studies. First, strategic and more high-level issues should be laid down by the OP as this will usually cover a larger scope, i.e. a country or a region and will thus consider the wider regional aspects in the surroundings of an urban area for which a SUMP should be set up.

Second, the actual urban mobility projects must be developed from the bottom up at the local level, strictly following a participatory and integrative approach. How these fit the strategic objectives and high-level issues needs to be discussed between the actors at the two levels, e.g. the managing authority of the OP and the planning authority of the SUMP.

This already implies the third lesson to be learnt: communication between managing and planning authorities of the OP and the SUMP needs to be ensured and facilitated. Different approaches of how to establish such communication have been identified in the case studies. A strategic approach that would always be feasible is to set up institutions (such as a coordination board) with members from both the managing and planning authorities as well as the beneficiaries of the OP and SUMP. In other cases communication was safeguarded by institutional relations existing prior to the establishment of the OP and SUMP. Finally, cooperation could also be implemented by persons involved in both the OP and the SUMP.

Table 3 summarises the main technical information concerning the eight case studies.

Table 3: Technical information of the Case Studies

City Region/ Country	CP Objective/ SCF	OP Projects analysed in the case studies	Beneficiaries	MA	Project part of SUMP ?	Interviews
Barcelona/ Spain	RCE (ERDF)	Bus HOV lane	TABASA Infra- structures i Serveis de Mobilitat (Catalonian Government)	Ministry of the Treasury	Yes	OP officer, SUMP manager, beneficiary
Cluj Napoca / Romania	Convergence (ERDF)	Network of hire and self service bicycle stations Modernisation of the Tram Route from Manastur to the Rail Market in Cluj County	Municipality	Ministry of Development, Public Works and Housing; North West RDA	Yes	OP officer, transport authority, two bene- ficiaries
Halle/ Germany	Convergence (ERDF)	Tram extension within a major road reconstruction	Municipality, Transport Authority	Ministry of Finance of Saxony-Anhalt	Yes	OP officer, transport planner, beneficiary
Krakow/ Poland	Convergence (ERDF, Cohesion Fund)	System of urban traffic management	Municipality	Ministry of Regional Development	Not formally, but aligned with SUMP	OP manager SUMP, manager, two bene- ficiaries
		Construction of tram lines	Municipality		Yes	
Liverpool/ UK	RCE/ Phasing In (ERDF)	Knowledge Quarter public realm Mount Pleasant	Liverpool City Council	Department for Communities and Local Government	Not formally, but aligned with SUMP	OP officers, local transport authority, two bene- ficiaries
		Green travel plans	Merseytravel		Yes	
Rennes/ France	RCE (ERDF)	TGV Rapid train link to Brittany	Various departments in Bretagne (Ille- et-Vilaine, in particular)	Prefecture of the Region of Brittany	No	OP officer, SUMP manager , beneficiary (Department Ille-et- Vilaine)
		Metro system extension in Rennes	Rennes Métropole		Yes	
Strasbourg/France (OP covers also part of Germany and Switzerland)	ETC (ERDF)	Cross-border extension of Tramline D to Kehl	Urban Community of Strasbourg; Munic. of Kehl (Germany)	Alsace Regional Council	Yes	OP Officer, transport planner, two bene- ficiaries
Tallinn/ Estonia	Convergence (ERDF, Cohesion Fund)	Renovation of tram tracks	Municipality	Ministry of Finance	Not formally, but aligned with SUMP	OP officer, transport planner, beneficiary

Source: Authors.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The aim of the study was to examine the role of cohesion policy for urban mobility in Europe. In doing so, special focus was placed on the instrument of sustainable urban mobility/ transport plans (SUMP/ SUTP). Since an official EU wide definition for a SUMP or a SUTP does not exist, the criteria elaborated within the ELTISplus Guidelines have been applied (Rupprecht Consult 2011b, 2011c). It was found that only a small number of the analysed plans fulfil all criteria.

Several challenges of sustainable urban transport are identified in the literature as well as by policy-makers: congestion, air pollution, GHG emissions, noise, traffic safety, ageing, social exclusion and urban sprawl. Consequently, the European Commission issued documents to support cities in making their transport systems more sustainable. The Action Plan on Urban Mobility proposes to accelerate the development and implementation of SUMPs. The term has been taken up by the 2011 Transport White Paper, linking it to cohesion policy. This study contains eight case studies about cities/ regions in which both an OP and a "SUMP" exist, with the objective of gaining a clear insight about the nature and quality of the link between cohesion policy implemented by an OP and sustainable urban transport policy.

In general, the case study analysis has shown that the **linkage between EU cohesion policy instruments, first and foremost the ERDF, and local or regional urban mobility planning is present in all cases**, not meaning that always a link with a SUMP exists. One reason for a good performance and cooperation is the existence of national legislation or guidelines concerning SUMPs in the respective Member States. If the funding from central government is associated with an integrated transport plan (France, England), the SUMP was linked to the support of sustainable mobility projects by the OP in the cases investigated. However, in other cases projects are co-funded by the OP, but they are not part of the integrated transport plan and this does not constitute a criterion for the MA's decision about the funding of the project.

In most cases local or regional urban mobility/ transport plans could not be directly considered when developing the OP or deciding the co-funding of specific projects. This was often due to the fact that no plan existed when the OP was drawn up. A good example of integration is Liverpool, where a representative of the transport authority participates in the MA's Merseyside subcommittee to help ensure transport-related OP projects in Merseyside fit with the SUMP.

As for local transport planners it has been found that the OP often directly or indirectly influenced the plan. However, in a few cases the planners were not aware of the content and the funding options of the OP, and therefore did not consider it when drawing up the urban transport/ mobility plan. One reason could be the difference in the geographical scope of OPs and urban transport plans; OPs are always focussed on regional/ national development while the local plans consider urban conditions, sometimes including the surrounding municipalities. Therefore, OP transport projects (e.g. regional/ national transport infrastructure) are often only indirectly related to urban mobility. In broad terms the objectives of the OP and SUMP are comparable, especially if the OP promotes measures to enhance sustainability.

However, lack of collaboration between OP and SUMP authorities is sometimes a problem identified in those case studies where the stakeholders are new to cohesion policy. In these case studies a time delay between drawing up and implementing urban transport plans is observed and expected, so that in Estonia and Romania the MAs decided not to link the OP funding to the existence of a SUMP. However, in these cases it was planned to do this in the next funding period. Limited evidence could be found for linkages between monitoring/enforcing the SUMP and the OP projects.

The aim to support *sustainable* urban mobility projects by the OP was achieved to a different extent in the case study regions. At one end of the scale there is Halle (Saale) in Saxony-Anhalt, whose OP is very much focused on improving road infrastructure and hardly addresses any sustainability issues; at the other end, sustainable urban mobility projects play an important role within the OPs in Liverpool and Krakow.

The Liverpool case study also demonstrates the **value of the bottom-up approach to OP implementation**, i.e. applications for specific projects are made by the same local stakeholders who were involved with the SUMP. In this way SUMP managers can inform the OP manager and ensure the OP and the SUMP reinforce each other. This approach appears to be an important element of making cohesion policy work effectively.

The diversification of cohesion policy support into different objectives and different sources also provides flexibility in meeting the needs of regions. However, it does mean that there is a complex system of support with a number of parallel instruments that are subject to varying priorities and conditions. Therefore, it is often challenging for potential beneficiaries and other stakeholders to absorb and understand the variety of potential instruments, and the interconnections between the different forms of support. The complexity of the system and its lack of clarity could present obstacles to potential beneficiaries applying for Structural and Cohesion Funds.

However, in Krakow a close relation between the OP and SUMP was found. Indeed, the SUMP was developed because within the Regional OP for Malopolska there was a condition requiring the projects receiving support from this **OP to be consistent with the SUMP**. In addition, many of the projects described in the SUMP are (co-)financed by OP budgets and the SUMP is regularly revised to take new OP projects into account.

The Liverpool case study revealed that **well developed regional and local governance arrangements** had been put in place by the MA, the local transport authority and other relevant local authorities. This facilitates co-operation between the OP and its projects and mobility planners. Similar findings are drawn from the Strasbourg case study: Due to the well-established structure of a joint technical secretariat, a working group and a steering committee, a high level of understanding and trust has been developed over time among the German and French stakeholders involved in cohesion policy.

ERDF **administrative, reporting and audit requirements** provide some useful assurance that EU co-financed projects are managed effectively and the expenditure is properly reported. However, in some case studies they are **considered too bureaucratic** by the OP project staff (beneficiaries). The effort involved in reporting, making financial claims etc. is perceived to have become even larger in recent years. This is a particular problem in cases where personal relations between the people involved are weak and regular communication is lacking. Thus there is a need to ensure accountability, while setting administrative requirements at a sensible level which does not detract unduly from time available for project delivery.

Having the **same staff involved in SUMP and OP projects** facilitates co-operation between the OP and its projects and sustainable urban mobility planners. Better co-operation maximises the effect cohesion policy has on sustainable urban mobility planning.

In addition, cohesion policy arrangements may be affected by changes in the organisational structure of the MAs, decided by national government. The Liverpool case study referred to the transfer of the North West England OP MA from the North West Regional Development Agency to the Department for Communities and Local Government. This occurred while both OP project examples were ongoing. A transition board was set up to manage the process. Before this change of institutional set-up the link between OP and SUMP was well developed and it might be useful and interesting to monitor if this will continue with the new structure.

An important factor is the **awareness and experience of the local transport authority concerning the funding options offered by the Structural and Cohesion Funds**. The Merseytravel ITA model (Liverpool) is an example of a strong local transport authority with a well developed transport policy, integrated with other policy areas. It seems to be important that information and communication activities are carried out, possibly by the MA, to raise awareness at the local transport authority level.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that public availability and quality of information about the OPs vary widely. This is also reflected in the quality and quantity of information provided on the internet by the MAs. In some cases it is just a few web-pages, which seems not sufficient to make local authorities of a region aware of the potentials of collaborating with the respective OP(s) covering their region.

6. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Our policy recommendations can be divided into regulatory recommendations and those concerning questions of governance. In addition, a comparison with the recommendations outlined in the 2011 White Paper (European Commission 2011d) as well as those in the cohesion policy reform proposals is provided.

6.1. Regulations and guidance

In order to overcome the lack of information, especially among the transport authorities, it is suggested to provide an interactive, internet-based guide to the different forms of cohesion policy support as applicable to each region. This could cover, for instance, how the different forms of support interrelate and which specific forms of support are suitable for which stakeholders (beneficiaries). Moreover, a simple guide or diagram should be produced by individual MAs illustrating what administrative forms are currently required and how they are used and considered.

It is also recommended to improve the regular provision of overview information about expenditure on and impact of urban, transport and urban transport/ mobility projects in cohesion policy. This should be high level, overview information collated and produced by the EC, drawing on existing information reported by projects. This should not result in additional reporting requirements for project staff.

OP managers suggested establishing communication on a regular basis, e.g. in the form of round table discussions between the local and regional stakeholders and the transport planners, at an early stage of the development of new OPs for the forthcoming programming period 2014-2020. This would help to set (urban mobility) priorities, enable discussions of project ideas and channelling of money to the projects by addressing the objectives of both the OP and the SUMP prior to the beginning of the next funding period. It is recommended that the European Parliament demands such an institutional setting.

When deciding on funding of an urban transport project by an OP, it is recommended that a SUMP should already be in place and that the relevant transport project should be consistent with it. This ensures alignment of goals at an early stage of the project planning process. In case there is no integrated urban transport plan in place yet, its development should be required in order to get funding for urban transport projects from an OP.

However, since no common definition exists, the quality and existence of SUMP in the Member States differ a lot. It is therefore recommended that the European Commission should be encouraged to issue a guideline about the elements and implementation of SUMP, taking into account the subsidiary principle and the planning authority of municipalities. When linking them to the OPs, enough flexibility must be kept in order to make allowance for the regional situation (e.g. the stage of development of the transport infrastructure). The SUMP itself should be integrated in a comprehensive urban development strategy, since transport is closely interlinked with the urban structure.

Finally, the rising problem of shrinking population should be taken into consideration when regulations are reviewed. In many cities it is not the construction of new (transport) infrastructure that needs to be financed but the deconstruction/ reorganisation of urban infrastructures to fit the declining population. Thus, the funding of adjustments to existing (transport) infrastructure rather than only growth-oriented new constructions should be considered.

6.2. Governance

In relation to governance, we suggest making the coordination between MAs of OPs and authorities responsible for the SUMPs mandatory even if there may not be an obvious link between an OP transport project and urban mobility. If the OP focuses on improving inter-regional or national transport, there may be a difference between the objectives of the OP and the SUMP: the authorities may not be aware of potential overlap and conflicts of each other's activities and plans, and they may often be located quite far apart. Coordination of their activities should improve the effectiveness of both policies, as urban transport is undoubtedly affected by these larger scale measures.

In order to implement such coordination in practice, we suggest that the European Commission helps to establish an institutional setting, comparable with the Joint Technical Secretariat of the cross-border cooperation programmes, to encourage communication between the MA and the SUMP managers – among other potential beneficiaries – as a basis for successful projects. Moreover, if there are major changes associated with an MA (e.g. an MA function transferring from one body to another, or significant restructuring of the MA's organisation), a sufficient number of staff should be retained in order to ensure continuity.

6.3. Comparison with the White Paper and the Cohesion Policy Reform Proposals

The 2011 Transport White Paper proposed by the European Commission lists measures, which are most relevant to the link between SUMP and cohesion policy. It is recommended that the European Parliament supports these initiatives to improve the integration between SUMP and cohesion policy.

Consequently, our recommendation that a SUMP should be required to get OP funding for urban transport projects is consistent with the White Paper recommendations. Moreover, a 'European support framework', consisting of external stakeholders helping cities with improving and implementing SUMP, linking them to European Cohesion Policy and helping MAs to develop an OP with a focus on sustainable development/transport is strongly encouraged.

The current programming period will run until 2013. The new proposals are designed to reinforce the strategic dimension of the policy and to ensure that EU investment is targeted at Europe's long-term goals for growth and jobs ("Europe 2020"). One important proposal has been made by the European Commission concerning the draft Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) (COM(2011)615/2, 14th March 2012). In Article 9 it suggests the allocation of the Structural and Cohesion Funds to certain thematic objectives. Of these, No.7 reads "promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures". Annex IV specifies this objective by defining certain ex-ante conditionalities. The existence of a comprehensive national plan is required, which appropriately prioritises the investment in the core TEN-T, in the comprehensive network and in secondary connectivity (including public transport at regional and local level. (European Commission 2012a: COM(2011)615/2, p. 140).

Thus, it is proposed that cohesion policy funding for sustainable transport measures will depend on the national policy of the Member States. Sustainable urban transport is limited to the secondary function for the TEN-Ts. The creation of a link to national transport plans bears the danger of limiting the role of sustainable urban transport to its secondary connectivity function.

Another key element of the future Cohesion Policy is to promote “Integrated Sustainable Urban Development” (European Commission 2012a). It aims at strengthening the role of cities in cohesion policy. It is proposed to tackle urban challenges by combining the actions supported by the urban-specific sectoral investment priorities, of which one is to promote sustainable urban mobility, and embed them in the integrated urban development strategy of the city.

This proposal is in line with the recommendations of this study, although it is thought that sustainable urban mobility should play a more prominent role within integrated sustainable urban development.

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