



# PROSPERITY



## TRAINING TOPIC SUMMARY

Achieving political and  
internal buy-in in the SUMP  
process

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# 1 Introduction

## About the training topic

The most fundamental impediment to start a SUMP transformation in many cities is often not the lack of solutions, planning skills or resources but rather a **missing culture for innovation and transformational governance**, and a **low degree of political momentum to foster such a culture**. There is a strong need to identify ways to inspire cities to take action at the **political level**. And moreover, to commit to sustainable urban mobility goals.

As SUMP is about a long term vision on the liveability of cities, a **broad and stable long-term commitment** is a prerequisite. Politicians and all local actors/stakeholders should be **pulling in the same direction**; formulate a strong vision, adopt effective strategies, overcome barriers for action, and make significant progress in the development and implementation of the SUMP.

**Selling the SUMP idea** effectively is one of the basic preconditions to:

- 1) Create ownership of the SUMP across the city’s organisation aiming at cross-sectoral awareness and responsibility, broad political commitment and external support of, for example, the media, higher level decision makers and finally also the public.
- 2) Ensure financing, continuity and overall success in the long-run.

Some **barriers to political and internal buy-in** concern the internal relations within the city, while others relate to outside actors, higher levels of decision making, overarching (framework) conditions or cultural differences. For example, it is difficult for some European cities to create and maintain political agreement to invest in a public transport system that is regarded by many citizens as obsolete in times of affordable auto-mobility for all.

The theme of ‘buy-in’ certainly also relates strongly to how **institutional cooperation** (and communication and stakeholder involvement are being dealt with. This is most important when improving the acceptability of the SUMP, creating ownership among institutional stakeholders and the public, and helping to acquire funding and long-term strategic developments.

## Learning objectives

Participants of this training module will be equipped with knowledge of benefits, challenges and solutions of political and internal buy-in. More specific, the training course will:

- Help cities to gain insights on the topic, and help them to remove political barriers that prevent the take up of SUMP. The training provides answers to...
  - *How to understand buy in from perspective of politicians and stakeholders?*
  - *How to understand political processes in your city/country?*
  - *How to initiate such a buy in process?*
- Create awareness of the potential impact of political leaders in creating a political momentum for SUMP by showing ‘good (role models) and bad examples’
- Equip city representatives with knowledge on how to build and maintain good institutional cooperation as a way of aiming at a solid internal buy-in of the SUMP
- Provide a platform to share thoughts, ideas and practical experiences, revealing valuable insights on the role of politicians and key-stakeholders in the buy-in of SUMP

## Target audience for this training topic

For the above mentioned reasons, the **target group of this module** can be more diverse (and adapted to the theme) than other CIVITAS PROSPERITY training modules. NFP’s might specially also target **politicians and decision makers, as well as cross sectoral staff** (other city departments - colleagues).

### Main trainers

Main trainers for topic area are Patrick Auwerx (Mobieli 21) and Prof Tom Rye (Edinburgh Napier University). Coaching on the topic will be provided by the champ city Sint-Niklaas (BE).

## 2 Basic topics of the training

### 2.1 What do we understand as ‘buy in’?

Buy-in is rather difficult to understand for not native English speaking professionals. Buy-in is commonly used in the economical and merchandising sector, this is what is referred to in dictionaries. However – in the framework of SUMP policies – it should be seen as the outcome of a successful SUMP decision making process, where the **SUMP is known, jointly supported, promoted and being funded and implemented by various departments and key politicians in the involved city**. At that moment, (responsible) politicians, stakeholders and the public have BOUGHT INTO your plan.

### 2.2. BUY in in the SUMP planning cycle

Buy in is not a separate, nor a well delineated element in the SUMP development process. However, it is of main importance to watch over buy-in from the start and throughout almost the entire cycle and various milestones. The four most important **keys “to buy into SUMP”** are **commitment, decision making, management and communication**.



### 2.3 Political buy-in

Although decisions often are prepared by city’s departments and staff, most of the time it is the politicians that finally decide. Politicians can be driven by various motivations, it is good to understand what they want, what they fear, where they commit to, what message they spread and what their agendas are. Cultural differences and history might also play a role in whether a key politician becomes the mouthpiece for change that is needed in SUMP, or – to the contrary – defends a conservative transport policy...

Lack of political buy-in is a big problem here and there, it hampers real transition that is needed in SUMP policy, and it can block the SUMP process from the beginning or turns it in the wrong direction for several reasons. Role model cities, information giving (effects and impact) and showing personal and societal benefits of SUMP to media and public (instead of spreading prejudices - e.g. you cannot drive your car anymore...) might help the ‘doubters’ to become more aware and choose real sustainable change as the sole solution. Expressing a clear vision, gaining widespread commitment and setting an example for others are ingredients for success amongst real SUMP ambassador-politicians.

## 2.4 Internal buy in

Internal buy-in is all about institutional cooperation and composing the SUMP partnerships needed for an integrated and holistic SUMP approach. Achieving effective internal buy-in is a complex but stepwise process of sharing knowledge, resources, consent, power... The training course will organise exchange on common barriers of internal buy-in and how to overcome them when creating a SUMP project governance plan.

## 2.5 Practise oriented

This training module will be less (in depth) ‘theoretical’ – as some theories, tools and tips (communication and stakeholder involvement) are also part of the CSI module. By integrating statements from leading role model politicians, showing bad examples and providing operational institutional frameworks the training session comes to reality proof. Interactive group work, role playing and - in some cases - live story telling by the champ city make it highly interesting for decision makers and multi-disciplinary staff of participating cities

# 3 Conclusions

We hope that this set of notes and the presentation are useful and help you to learn something about ‘buy in’ that you can apply in your own city’s SUMP. Sources of more detailed information are in the table below. If you have questions, please address them to Patrick Auwerx [patrick.auwerx@mobi21.be](mailto:patrick.auwerx@mobi21.be) or Tom Rye [t.rye@napier.ac.uk](mailto:t.rye@napier.ac.uk). Note that the PROSPERITY project ends in August 2019 and so after that date we cannot guarantee to answer although we will do our best).

# 5 Available training materials

On the specific topic of Buy-in there is rather limited training material available. Most sources below are in general about decision making, internal cooperation, management of projects/strategies...

Source	Content & Description
EU ELTIS Guidelines	<p>Official EU Guidelines ‘Developing and Implementing a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan’. Explains the whole SUMP process, including these elements that are of importance for politicians and (internal/external) stakeholders abecoming ‘bought into’ a SUMP...</p> <p><a href="http://www.eltis.org/guidelines/sump-guidelines">http://www.eltis.org/guidelines/sump-guidelines</a>)</p>
EU Ch4llenge Manual on Institutional cooperation	<p>User Manual</p> <p>Quick Facts brochure</p> <p>Institutional cooperation – working jointly together with institutional partners in the context of SUMP</p> <p><a href="http://www.sump-challenges.eu/kits">http://www.sump-challenges.eu/kits</a> (pdf downloads available)</p>
EU Ch4llenge Online Course “Institutional cooperation	<p>Full online learning material. Originally offered as a moderated course as part of the EU CH4LLENGE project. Based on the manual above, includes 7 units and several modules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unit 1: Introduction</li> <li>• Unit 2: Background and context</li> <li>• Unit 3: Preparing well for institutional cooperation</li> <li>• Unit 4: Identifying the relevant partners</li> <li>• Unit 5: Involving institutional stakeholders</li> <li>• Unit 6: Agreement on responsibilities</li> <li>• Unit 7: Conclusion</li> </ul> <p><a href="https://www.mobility-academy.eu/course/view.php?id=54">https://www.mobility-academy.eu/course/view.php?id=54</a></p>
EU Guidemaps – Successful Transport decision-making	<p>Manual – Handbook</p> <p>Successful transport decision-making - A project management and stakeholder engagement handbook (2004)</p> <p>Volume1: Concepts and Tools</p> <p>Volume2: Fact sheets</p> <p><a href="http://www.eltis.org/sites/default/files/case-studies/documents/guidemaps_volume_1_colour_1.pdf">http://www.eltis.org/sites/default/files/case-studies/documents/guidemaps_volume_1_colour_1.pdf</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.eltis.org/sites/default/files/case-studies/documents/guidemaps_volume_2_colour_2.pdf">http://www.eltis.org/sites/default/files/case-studies/documents/guidemaps_volume_2_colour_2.pdf</a></p>
EU Prospects Decision Makers’ Guidebook	<p>Manual – Guidebook</p> <p>Developing Sustainable Urban Land Use and Transport Strategies - Decision makers’ Guidebook (2005)</p>

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EU CIVITAS Catalyst	<p>CIVITAS Catalist Brochure</p> <p>CIVITAS Cities Speak Out ( stories about transport transition by several role model mayors</p> <p><a href="http://civitas.eu/content/civitas-catalist-civitas-cities-speak-out">http://civitas.eu/content/civitas-catalist-civitas-cities-speak-out</a></p>
EU CIVITAS Prosperity	<p>Video stories</p> <p>SUMP Ambassadors are enthusiastic personalities who share their interesting stories, findings and lessons learnt from their personal experience with sustainable urban mobility planning</p> <p><a href="http://sump-network.eu/ambassadors/">http://sump-network.eu/ambassadors/</a></p>