

## **Public transportation in sustainable urban mobility plans**

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Sustainable urban mobility plans (SUMPs) represent a highly debated and increasingly used tool in finding strategies for dealing with urban mobility. The common characteristics of SUMPs are connections to the city's other policies and strategies (i.e., connections to urban planning, environmental strategy, education, etc.), a comprehensive approach to mobility issues, and broad public involvement in its creation and territorial focus involving not only the city itself, but also outlying areas linked by transportation routes. A priority area addressed in all SUMPs is the development of public mass transportation and active transportation – namely the relationship between public mass transportation, bicycle traffic and pedestrian traffic on the one hand and private motor vehicle transportation on the other.

There are several specific aspects to the SUMP creation and approval process in the Czech Republic. First it is necessary to note that many cities and towns with over 50,000 residents have started to develop SUMPs mainly due to their need to use them to support projects prepared for co-financing from European structural and investment funds (specifically Operational Programme Transport, Specific objective 1.4 – Creating conditions to increase the use of electrically-powered public transportation in cities and Integrated Regional Operational Programme, Specific objective 1.2 – Increasing the share of sustainable forms of transport). During negotiations for the 2014–2020 programming period, however, representatives of the Czech Ministry of Transport (CMT) were able to agree to a possible compromise with European Commission officials: for now, cities could use sustainable urban mobility frameworks (SUMFs) to provide strategic rationale for their projects. SUMFs essentially represent the first phase in the complete SUMP and emphasises public transportation. However, it would be reasonable to expect that only fully-fledged SUMPs can be used to provide strategic rationale for projects for the programming period after 2020.

To verify SUMPs and SUMFs, the CMT set up a Commission for Evaluating Urban Mobility Documents (CEUMD). The commission is comprised not only of CMT staff, but also officials from the Ministry of Regional Development, Ministry of the Environment, Transport Research Centre, and the academic sector. The main role of the CEUMD is to confirm that the SUMPs and SUMFs that were written fulfil the requirements of documents of this nature, particularly with regard to compatibility with the Methodology for Developing Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans for the Czech Republic, which is a basic guidance document for this field.

In terms of future developments for SUMPs, it is necessary to take note of the challenges facing the CMT on the one hand and cities and other stakeholders on the other. It would be reasonable to state that the main challenge facing the CMT is the development of a new Urban and Active Mobility Concept. When drawing up this document, it will be necessary to both reflect the experience gained from creating and approving SUMPs and SUMFs thus far and to utilise results from ongoing international projects and professional groups. Another important topic will be finding sustainable mobility solutions in smaller cities and towns, which cannot apply the Methodology for Developing Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans for the Czech Republic in certain aspects. An essential part of all the CMT's sustainable urban mobility activities must also be an awareness campaign and work with the greater public. However, a suitable approach to publicity is also a task to be undertaken by cities, with the very first task necessarily focusing on maintaining awareness about sustainable urban development plans among political representatives. With regards to connections to other strategic documents, dovetailing with integrated strategies must be increased; currently this is a formality in most cases. In

terms of the development of public transportation, it is important to stress that Czech cities devote adequate attention of public transportation systems and occasionally they are accustomed to using it, which is a foundation on which to build for the future. However, there must be an increase in involvement by the regions, which should primarily represent the interests of smaller municipalities in outlying areas – and not only in regards to public transportation.