Policy Framework and Roadmap for Integrated Sustainable Urban Mobility for the Western Balkans



Regional Climate Partnership
GERMANY – WESTERN BALKANS

german cooperation
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Kelmend Zajazi,
NALAS Executive Director

NALAS welcomes this policy framework as an important step towards strengthening sustainable urban mobility in the Western Balkans. The framework emphasises the vital role of Local Government Associations in enabling local governments to develop and implement their Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs) through capacity development, knowledge exchange, policy dialogue, and advocacy. By connecting local and national levels of governance, LGAs help foster effective multi-level governance and cooperation. This initiative has inspired NALAS and its members to further discuss and strengthen the role of LGAs in sustainable urban mobility planning, with the aim of empowering them to better serve local governments and contribute to more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient urban mobility systems across the region.



Dr. Alexander Erlewein,
Project Lead, GIZ

Climate change is already affecting how cities across the Western Balkans function, and urban mobility needs to be part of the adaptation response. Through the Regional Climate Partnership between Germany and the Western Balkans, GIZ supports partners in translating these challenges into practical action – from climate-informed urban mobility planning and decision-making tools to demonstration measures that can be replicated across the region. This Integrated Framework brings these elements together, providing a common basis for advancing sustainable, integrated and climate-resilient urban mobility across the Western Balkans. The aim is for climate-resilient mobility to become an integral part of urban development rather than a separate policy agenda.



Lidija Pavić-Rogošić,
director of ODRAZ/CIVINET Secretariat

Urban mobility in the Western Balkans is entering a new phase, shaped by growing expectations and obligations. The updated EU SUMP concept, the revised TEN-T Regulation and the Green Agenda are redefining what strategic, coordinated and EU-aligned planning means for cities. For many urban areas, this shift is both an opportunity to modernise mobility systems and a challenge to build the institutional capacity needed for change, often through partnerships that did not exist a few years ago. This publication builds also on our CIVINET experience, as we support cities navigating this transition, sharing knowledge, strengthening cooperation and respond confidently to new requirements.



Matej Zakonjček,
Director, Transport Community Permanent Secretariat

Sustainable urban mobility is increasingly becoming a shared priority across the Western Balkans, with stronger cooperation between cities, national administrations and regional partners. One concrete example is the Regional Clean Bus Platform, which brings together cities, governments and international financial institutions to support the transition towards cleaner public transport. The progress is clear, but so is the urgency: growing motorisation, increasing transport demand and the impacts of climate change mean that the region needs to move faster and be bolder. Strengthening SUMPs, investing in cleaner transport and resilient infrastructure, and translating policy commitments into action on the ground will be essential if cities are to stay ahead of these trends rather than continually catching up.

List of Abbreviations

LGA	Local Government Association
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
IFI	International financial institution
KPI	key performance indicator
MS	Member state
M & E	monitoring and evaluation
NALAS	Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe
NSSP	National Sustainable Urban Mobility Support Programmes
WB	Western Balkans
SEE	South-East Europe
SUMP	Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan
TC	Transport Community
TEN-T	Trans-European Transport Network

Glossary

CIVITAS Initiative promotes sustainable urban mobility (SUM) across Europe through knowledge exchange and cooperation, including a network of regional CIVINET platforms. Among them, CIVINET Slovenia-Croatia-South East Europe (CIVINET SIoCroSEE) brings together stakeholders from Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Republic of North Macedonia, as a key regional platform for collaboration. It facilitates the exchange of knowledge and best practices, capacity-building activities, and peer learning, while supporting the development and implementation of SUM policies and alignment with EU objectives, as well as fostering regional cooperation and participation in EU initiatives.

GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit) is a German federal enterprise providing technical assistance and policy support for sustainable development on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and other partners, with a strong focus on supporting alignment with EU policies and advancing climate, mobility, and governance reforms. Within this framework, GIZ implements the "Green Agenda for the Western Balkans – Supporting Western Balkan in the Climate Adaptation Process" (WB Adapt) project, which aims to strengthen climate resilience in the Western Balkans region by enhancing institutional capacities, improving governance frameworks, and integrating climate adaptation into key sectors, including sustainable urban mobility. The project contributes to the broader Green Agenda for the Western Balkans, aligned with the European Green Deal, supporting the transition towards a low-carbon, resource-efficient, and climate-resilient economy, while fostering regional cooperation and alignment with the EU acquis.

The Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe (NALAS) is a regional network representing 14 local government associations in SEE, focused on strengthening local governance and supporting local governments in delivering effective public services. NALAS promotes local autonomy and functional decentralisation, implements regional initiatives for its members, and supports associations in advocating for and representing local authorities vis-à-vis central governments. NALAS plays a key role in capacity development, policy dialogue, and knowledge exchange across the region, particularly in areas such as the green agenda, including sustainable urban mobility, circular economy, and climate resilience, while facilitating coordination between local governments, national authorities, and regional and international partners and supporting alignment with EU policies and standards.

The European Commission issued a Recommendation to Member States in 2023 on **National Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan Support Programmes (NSSP)**. They are policy frameworks implemented at national or regional level to support cities and municipalities (i.e. local governments) in the development and implementation of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs). They provide coordinated measures such as guidance, funding, capacity building, technical assistance and governance support, enabling a structured and consistent uptake of SUM planning across a country or region. In practice, NSSPs typically include the development of national guidelines and methodologies for SUMP preparation, training and knowledge exchange platforms, financial support schemes, advisory services, and mechanisms to improve data collection, monitoring and evaluation of urban mobility indicators. They also aim to strengthen coordination between different levels of government and policy sectors, ensuring alignment between mobility planning and related areas such as spatial planning, energy, climate, and public health, while defining national objectives, key performance indicators (KPIs), and institutional responsibilities.

Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) is a strategic, integrated planning framework designed to meet the mobility needs of people and businesses in cities and their functional urban areas, with the objective of improving accessibility, quality of life and environmental sustainability. It builds on existing planning practices and promotes a long-term, vision-led approach based on integration of transport modes, stakeholder participation, evidence-based decision-making, and continuous monitoring and evaluation.
Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) is an EU-wide, multimodal infrastructure network defined by EU Regulation 2024/1679, comprising rail, road, inland waterways, maritime, air and multimodal transport systems, including urban nodes, as well as related digital and alternative fuel infrastructure. It establishes a coordinated framework for the development, interoperability and efficient operation of transport infrastructure across Europe through a comprehensive, core and extended core network, with the aim of ensuring sustainable, seamless and high-quality transport connectivity across the Union.

Transport Community (TC) is an international organisation in the field of mobility and transport. It has 36 participants – the European Union member states represented by the European Commission, the six South East European Parties (the Republic of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*[1] , Montenegro, the Republic of North Macedonia, and the Republic of Serbia) and the three observing participants (Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine). The Treaty establishing the Transport Community aims to create a unified framework for cooperation in road, rail, inland waterway and maritime transport, while supporting the development of transport networks between the European Union and the Western Balkans. It is based on the progressive integration of regional transport markets into the EU system, in line with the EU acquis, including standards on interoperability, safety, security, traffic management, environment and public procurement. The Transport Community monitors the extension of the TEN-T comprehensive and core networks to the Western Balkans, identifying priority projects that support sustainable, balanced and integrated regional development. Its work is supported by the Permanent Secretariat in Belgrade, which provides administrative and technical support to governance bodies, monitors network perform

Urban nodes are cities within the TEN-T network that act as key points for sustainable, safe, efficient, and multimodal transport. They are responsible for ensuring the effective functioning of the TEN-T network by managing the impact of urban mobility measures on both passenger and freight traffic flows. Definitions as per TEN-T are a follows:

'Urban node' means an urban area where elements of the transport infrastructure of the trans-European transport network for passengers and freight, such as ports, including passenger terminals, airports, railway stations, bus terminals and multimodal freight terminals, located in and around the urban area are connected with other elements of that infrastructure and with the infrastructure for regional and local traffic, including infrastructure for active modes.

In order to be part of the trans-European transport network and to be listed in Annex II, an urban node shall have a population of 100 000 inhabitants or more, or, where no such urban node exists in a NUTS 2 region, it shall be the main node of that NUTS 2 region.

'Multimodal passenger hub' means a connection point between at least two transport modes for passengers, where travel information, access to public transport and transfers between modes are ensured, such as park-and-ride stations, and which acts as an interface within and between urban nodes and between urban nodes and longer-distance transport networks;

'Multimodal freight terminal' means a structure equipped for transhipment between at least two transport modes, or between two different rail systems, and for temporary storage of freight, such as terminals in inland or maritime ports, along inland waterways and in airports, as well as rail road terminals;

[1]* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

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1. Introduction

Urban mobility is a critical component of sustainable economic development, social inclusion, and environmental protection in the Western Balkans. As urban areas continue to grow and mobility demand increases, cities across the region face mounting challenges related to congestion, air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, road safety, and accessibility. Addressing these challenges requires a structured, integrated, and forward-looking approach to urban transport planning.

At the European level, the EU Urban Mobility Framework provides a strategic foundation for developing safe, accessible, inclusive, and zero-emission urban mobility systems. It promotes the adoption of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs) as a key planning instrument to ensure integrated, multimodal, and user-centric transport solutions.

In parallel, the revised TEN-T Regulation (EU) 2024/1679 introduces strengthened requirements for urban nodes, recognising their central role in ensuring seamless connectivity across the European transport network. Urban nodes with more than 100,000 inhabitants or main urban node in NUTS 2 region are required a.o. to develop and implement SUMPs in line with Annex V, addressing key aspects such as accessibility for all users, integration of long-distance and local transport flows, development of zero- and low-emission mobility, and efficient last-mile connections. Moreover, requirements to enhance coordination through national SUMP contact points, monitoring through respective indicator framework and the establishment of national SUMP support programmes form essential elements to ensure that urban nodes will not become corridor bottlenecks. In the Western Balkans, the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy (SSMS), endorsed by the Transport Community Ministerial Council in 2021, aligns regional transport policy with the EU Green Deal and the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy. It sets out a clear pathway towards a greener, safer, and more digital transport system, including specific objectives related to decarbonisation of urban transport, modal shift, deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure, and digitalisation of mobility services.

In addition, the **Declaration on Green Mobility for the Western Balkans**, endorsed at the Green Mobility Summit in Sarajevo in June 2024, provides an important political foundation for advancing sustainable urban mobility across the region. The Declaration sets out a shared vision for the progressive integration of the Western Balkans transport market into the European Union transport system and highlights the key role of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs) in aligning with the EU acquis, particularly in the context of the TEN-T urban nodes agenda. As such, it represents a strong political commitment by Regional Partners to accelerate the transition towards integrated, sustainable, and climate-resilient urban mobility systems, and serves as a key driver underpinning this policy framework.

Building on these frameworks, this SUMP Policy Framework aims to support regional partners in developing and implementing high-quality SUMPs and National Sustainable Urban Mobility Support Programmes aligned with EU acquis, best practices and EU SUMP methodology as per Commission Recommendation (EU) 2023/550 of 8 March 2023 and respective. The annex to this recommendation provides the updated concept for sustainable urban mobility plans to be adhered as best as possible in respective local context. It provides guidance for strengthening institutional capacities, improving coordination across levels of governance, and accelerating the transition towards sustainable, resilient, and smart urban mobility systems across the Western Balkans. The document is based on an assessment of existing policy, institutional, and financing frameworks, complemented by stakeholder consultations at regional and national levels. It identifies key gaps and challenges and proposes targeted recommendations to enhance governance structures, coordination mechanisms, funding approaches, and the integration of climate resilience into urban mobility planning, with the objective of supporting coherent and effective National SUMP Programmes (NSSP) development across the Western Balkans region. This document has been developed in cooperation of TCT Secretariat, GIZ, NALAS, CIVINET Slovenia-Croatia-SEE and EIB Advisory.

2. Policy context

EU policy framework for sustainable urban mobility

The EU has established a comprehensive and evolving policy framework to support the transition towards sustainable, low-emission, and integrated urban mobility systems. Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs) have become a central instrument within this framework, providing cities with a strategic and long-term approach to addressing mobility challenges while improving quality of life, reducing emissions, and enhancing accessibility for all users. Since their introduction in the **2013 Urban Mobility Package**, SUMPs have been progressively reinforced through key EU policy initiatives, including the **European Green Deal**, the **Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy**, the **New EU Urban Mobility Framework (2021)**, which collectively set the direction for decarbonisation, modal shift, and digitalisation of transport.

In parallel, the EU has developed harmonised methodological guidance to support implementation, notably through the **EU observatory on urban mobility and Guidelines for developing and implementing a SUMP**, ensuring a consistent, evidence-based, and high-quality approach to sustainable urban mobility planning across Europe.

Transition towards a more binding framework: the role of TEN-T

In recent years, the EU policy framework for urban mobility has evolved from predominantly guidance-based instruments towards more structured and increasingly binding requirements. This shift is most clearly reflected in the revised TEN-T Regulation (EU) 2024/1679, which elevates the role of urban nodes as critical interfaces between local, national, and European transport systems.

Under the Regulation, cities designated as urban nodes are required to **adopt and implement Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs) by 2027**, in line with the requirements set out in Annex V. These plans must include clear objectives, measures, and performance indicators, and their implementation is subject to monitoring and reporting at EU level.

At the same time, Member States are assigned a strengthened role in enabling this transition. They are required to establish **national SUMP support frameworks**, including:

- designated **national contact points**,
- structured **national SUMP support programmes**, and
- systems for **data collection, monitoring, and reporting** of urban mobility indicators.

This represents a significant step towards **institutionalising SUMP planning at national level**, moving beyond voluntary uptake towards a coordinated and accountable governance model.

The Regulation further reinforces key policy priorities by requiring urban nodes to ensure:
- multimodal integration, including the development of multimodal passenger hubs and freight terminals,
- deployment of zero- and low-emission mobility solutions, in line with AFIR requirements, and
- efficient urban logistics and last-mile connections, reducing congestion and emissions while improving the performance of the TEN-T network.

By linking urban mobility planning with core TEN-T infrastructure requirements and climate objectives, the Regulation effectively anchors local mobility planning within the broader European transport, energy, and climate policy framework.

Parameter description	Benchmark / Requirement	Deadline	Reference to TEN-T regulation
Existence of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP)	SUMP existing	2027	41.2.i
Existence of a national SUMP contact point	SUMP contact point existing	2025	41.4
Existence of a national SUMP support programme	SUMP national programme existing	2025	41.4
Existence of one multimodal freight terminal	≥ 1 multimodal freight terminal existing	2040	40.1.d
Existence of at least one multimodal passenger hub	≥ 1 multimodal passenger hub existing	2030	40.1.c.c
Availability of alternative fuels recharging and refuelling infrastructure (in accordance with Reg (EU) 2023/1804)	Yes/No	2030	41.1.a

Table 1: TEN-T urban mobility requirements

Role and requirements of SUMPs in TEN-T urban nodes

The **Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning (SUMP) Guidelines** for urban nodes, as set out in **Annex V of the TEN-T Regulation**, require cities to adopt a comprehensive and integrated approach to urban mobility. Furthermore, Annex to the Commission Recommendation (EU) 2023/550 on National Sustainable Urban Mobility Support Programmes, presents the updated SUMP concept. This updated concept reflects recent EU policy developments and provides a more structured and comprehensive approach to sustainable urban mobility planning. It is coherent with, and complementary to, the requirements set out in Annex V of the TEN-T Regulation, reinforcing key principles such as multimodality, integration with climate and energy policies, data-driven planning, and strengthened monitoring and evaluation. Together, these frameworks provide a consistent basis for guiding the development and implementation of SUMPs in line with evolving EU policy and regulatory requirements. SUMPs should prioritise accessibility for all users, including persons with disabilities, while promoting safe, sustainable, and zero- and low-emission mobility, with a strong role for public and active transport. They should be based on a clear long-term vision, supported by a realistic short-term implementation plan, and aligned with land-use and spatial planning. A key requirement is the integration of different transport modes to enable seamless, multimodal mobility for both passengers and freight, alongside measures to increase the modal share of sustainable transport. SUMPs must also ensure the efficient functioning of the trans-European transport network by addressing congestion, bottlenecks, and safety, particularly at urban nodes. In addition, they should be developed through a participatory approach involving all levels of governance, stakeholders, and citizens, and include clear objectives, targets, and performance indicators to enable effective monitoring and evaluation.

National Sustainable Urban Mobility Support Programmes (NSSP) To support the effective implementation of SUMPs, the EC has introduced the concept of NSSPs. These programmes represent a structured set of policy, technical, and financial measures aimed at strengthening governance, improving coordination across levels of administration, and facilitating the widespread uptake of SUMPs. NSSPs typically include the development of national guidelines and methodologies, capacity building and training programmes, quality assurance mechanisms, data collection and monitoring systems, and dedicated funding schemes. A key objective is to ensure vertical and horizontal coordination between national, regional, and local levels, and to integrate SUM planning with other policy areas such as spatial planning, energy, climate, and public health. Their importance has been increasingly recognised at EU level, notably through the 2023 EC Recommendation on NSSPs, which calls on MS to establish such programmes to strengthen governance and ensure coordinated uptake of SUMPs. In addition, the revised TEN-T Regulation requires MSs to establish national frameworks for SUM planning, including NSSPs, and to ensure the implementation of SUMPs in urban nodes, thereby reinforcing NSSPs as one of the key instruments for achieving EU transport, climate and network integration objectives.

Relevance for the Western Balkans

For the Western Balkans, these developments are highly relevant in the context of EU approximation and the implementation of both the EU's and Western Balkans Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy and the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans. The Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy sets a clear pathway towards a green, digital, and resilient transport system, with concrete actions on decarbonisation, modal shift, digitalisation, and the deployment of zero- and low-emission mobility solutions. In particular, **Flagship 3 – "Making interurban and urban mobility more sustainable"** – emphasises the central role of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs) in delivering integrated, multimodal, and user-centric mobility systems, improving accessibility, and accelerating the transition to clean urban transport.

At the regional level, the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans further reinforces these priorities, with the transport pillar led by the Transport Community, focusing on decarbonisation, sustainable urban mobility, and alignment with key EU policies and legislation. Within this framework, SUMPs are recognised as a key instrument to operationalise policy objectives at city level and ensure coherence with national and regional priorities.

Regional Partners continue to face significant urban mobility challenges, including congestion, air pollution, and limited availability of sustainable transport options, while also striving to align their policies, planning practices, and institutional frameworks with EU standards. These developments create not only an opportunity but also increasing pressure to move beyond project-based and fragmented approaches towards more structured, strategic, and institutionalised national frameworks for SUMP planning.

Towards an integrated framework in the Western Balkans

The ongoing efforts to revise the Framework for Integrated Sustainable Urban Mobility for the Western Balkans reflect this need for alignment and systematisation. The framework builds on key EU policies and regulatory developments, including TEN-T, WB Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy, the Green Agenda, and climate-related policy packages, and aims to provide a strategic reference for harmonising national and local approaches to SUM planning. It promotes the establishment of concrete implementation mechanisms, such as national coordination structures, harmonised monitoring systems, common indicators, and structured financing approaches. In doing so, it supports the transition towards integrated, multi-level governance systems in which SUM planning becomes an integral part of broader transport, climate, and urban development policies across the Western Balkans.

3. State of SUM planning and supporting frameworks in the Western Balkans

Legislative and regulatory framework for SUM planning

Urban mobility policy in the Western Balkans is not comprehensively regulated at the national or regional level; instead, only selected elements are addressed through sectoral legislation. Existing policy frameworks - such as national transport strategies, decarbonisation policies, air quality and energy efficiency legislation, and land-use planning requirements - provide partial support for the preparation and implementation of SUMPs. However, these frameworks are typically not integrated into a coherent legal or regulatory system for SUM planning, which limits their effectiveness in guiding cities towards structured and consistent SUMP development.

Key legal provisions that are common in more advanced SUMP frameworks - such as mandatory adoption of SUMPs, requirements for their regular revision, obligations for monitoring and evaluation, and formal quality assessment procedures - are largely absent in the Western Balkans. This results in a fragmented and non-binding policy environment, where the development of SUMPs depends largely on external initiatives rather than national legal obligations. Furthermore, other EU laws such as Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Regulation, that support faster rollout of alternative fuel infrastructure and Clean Vehicle Directive, that could support changing of outdated fleet have also not been adopted.

Legal act/Regional Partner	Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Kosovo	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia
TEN -T Regulation (EU) 2024/1679	N	N	N	N	N	N
Integrated SUMP policy framework (dedicated act or included in other legal acts)	N	N	N	N	N	N
Clean Vehicles Directive 2009/33/EC[2]	N	N	N	N	N	N
Alternative Fuels Regulation 2023/1804[3]	N	N	N	N	N	N

Table 2: Transposition of legislation relevant for Sustainable Urban Mobility

[2] Directive on the Promotion of Clean and Energy-Efficient Road Transport Vehicles.
[3] Regulation ensuring a minimum deployment of alternative fuel infrastructure. As part of the Fit for 55 package, the European Commission proposed a new Regulation on alter native fuels infrastructure, repealing the previous Directive

Nevertheless, some progress is visible at the regional level. The Declaration for Green Mobility of South-East European Parties and Observing Participants, endorsed at the Green Mobility Summit in Sarajevo in June 2024, includes recommendations aimed at improving SUM at both local and national levels. In addition, the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy for the Western Balkans, developed by the TC, represents an important step towards a more coordinated regional policy approach, promoting sustainable, multimodal and climate-aligned transport systems and explicitly supporting the development and uptake of SUMPs across the Western Balkans. Furthermore, through the ProSUMP GIZ project, LGAs from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Montenegro, and Kosovo have developed SUMP webpages and proposed amendments to the Law on Local Self-Government in each country, as well as an Integrated Transport Law based on Slovenia's model, presenting an opportunity to modernize legal frameworks and better align with EU standards.

At the same time, the revised TEN-T Regulation introduces important new requirements, making it mandatory for urban nodes on the core and comprehensive networks to develop and implement SUMPs. In addition, EU MSs are required to report on progress, and access to EU transport funding is increasingly linked to the existence of compliant SUMPs. These developments significantly increase the relevance of establishing appropriate national legal and policy frameworks in the Western Balkans, including NSPs, to ensure alignment with EU requirements and to support effective implementation of SUM planning.

National guidelines and methodological frameworks

The development of SUMPs in the Western Balkans is not systematically supported by national guidelines or methodologies covering the full SUMP cycle. Where guidelines do exist, they are in most cases based on direct translations or adaptations of EU-level SUMP guidelines, with limited contextualisation to national institutional, legal, and planning frameworks. As a result, cities often lack clear, locally relevant guidance on how to apply SUMP principles in practice, particularly in relation to governance arrangements, data availability, and alignment with national policies.

Progress has been made with TCT Clean Bus and Clean Fleet initiative, where representatives of Ministries of Transport have been nominated as Clean Bus and national SUMP contact point.

The absence of comprehensive national guidance represents a significant barrier to the consistent and high-quality development of SUMPs. Without structured methodologies adapted to the Western Balkans context, SUM planning processes may remain fragmented, vary significantly in scope and quality, and depend heavily on external expertise. This also limits the ability of national authorities to ensure comparability, monitor progress, and support cities in improving their planning approaches over time.

In addition, SUMP development is generally not supported by specific national guidelines addressing key components of urban mobility policy, such as walking, cycling, public transport, parking management, urban logistics, road safety, or the integration of climate resilience and adaptation measures. The lack of such thematic guidance makes it more difficult for cities to develop comprehensive and balanced SUMPs, and to translate strategic objectives into concrete, implementable measures.

Strengthening national guideline frameworks - potentially as part of NSSPs - would therefore be essential to support more consistent, high-quality and context-sensitive SUM planning across the Western Balkans, while also facilitating alignment with EU methodologies and policy requirements.

State of SUMP development

Most of the Regional Partners are gradually moving towards a SUM planning approach; however, this process is still largely taking place without systematic support from the national or regional level and with limited examples of fully developed SUMPs at the local level. While the uptake of SUMPs has increased in recent years across the region, it continues to vary significantly between Regional Partners. Most of existing SUMPs are still of the first generation, with no cities in the Western Balkans yet reaching second- or third-generation SUMP development stages.

At the same time, there is no comprehensive national-level database systematically monitoring the status and implementation of SUMPs across Regional Partners. Current tracking is largely supported through external initiatives, such as databases maintained by GIZ, while more detailed economy-level information is typically provided through project-based assessments.

Key barriers to SUMP development and implementation remain consistent across the region. These include limited cross-administrative coordination, insufficient national support frameworks and regulatory structures, lack of political commitment, limited institutional and technical capacity, and challenges related to data availability and use. In addition, there is still a strong dominance of traditional transport planning approaches focused on motorised traffic, as well as low awareness of sustainable mobility concepts among decision-makers. A further constraint is the shortage of local expertise for preparing and implementing SUMPs.

According to the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy for the Western Balkans – Progress Report 2025 and 2024, prepared by the Transport Community, recent economy-level developments illustrate both progress and remaining gaps. In **Albania**, Tirana is leading urban mobility transformation through concrete measures such as the deployment of electric buses, expansion of cycling infrastructure, establishment of pedestrian zones, and preparation of a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system, while its SUMP is under development with GIZ support. Durres, as a major TEN-T urban node, is increasingly integrating urban mobility planning with port development and multimodal access, creating opportunities for improved last-mile freight and passenger transport. Municipalities Durres, Vlora, Tirana, Elbasan have established a new partnership from 2025, with GIZ under the Sustainable Urban Transport in Albania (SUTi) project, aimed at enhancing the planning, delivery, and monitoring of bus services. Other cities, including Shkodra, and Belsh, are in earlier stages, focusing on cycling infrastructure and public transport improvements. At the national level, the draft Transport Strategy 2030 promotes wider SUMP adoption.

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, GIZ, along with programmes such as Interreg and ADRION, has supported the development of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs) in several cities, including Sarajevo, Bijeljina and Zavidovići, with some municipalities already having adopted their plans or currently in the adoption phase. These initiatives have been complemented by additional regional and EU-funded projects, which have also supported SUMP-related activities in cities such as Gradiška and Prijedor, as well as earlier efforts in Banja Luka. While progress has been made, the level of implementation and formal adoption varies across municipalities, reflecting differing institutional capacities. Sarajevo is a leader in the implementation of its SUMP, with over €200 million invested in new trams and trolleybuses, expansion and reconstruction of tram infrastructure, the extension of the trolleybus network towards the suburban settlement of Vogošća, adaptive traffic management, key road links, 30 km of new bike lanes, alternative transport such as the Trebević cable car and an inclined elevator, and a growing ecosystem of shared mobility services.

In **Kosovo**, Prishtina developed its SUMP with funding from the municipal budget and support from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), achieving assembly approval in 2019. Additionally, other cities like Gračanica and Ferizaj have worked on their SUMPs, supported by GIZ, though many plans are still awaiting adoption. The UNDP has also been involved in facilitating SUMP development in cities like Prizren and Suhareka, highlighting Kosovo's ongoing commitment to implementing sustainable transport initiatives across its municipalities.

In **Montenegro**, efforts are focused on strengthening the strategic framework, with the update of the national Transport Development Strategy (2019–2035) and accompanying action plans expected to more explicitly integrate sustainable and smart mobility principles and improve coherence between national and local planning processes. The development of SUMPs has also been supported by GIZ, with Podgorica finalising its plan in 2020. Cities such as Rožaje and Kolašin adopted their plans in 2020 and March 2021, respectively. Tivat, another Montenegrin city, participated in the PolySUMP initiative, which provides a broader, integrated framework for regional sustainable mobility planning. Montenegro is now preparing a second-generation SUMP for its capital, Podgorica, to further align with EU urban mobility frameworks by integrating sustainable practices.

In **North Macedonia**, a comprehensive, programme supported by the World Bank is advancing SUMP development in municipalities such as Kavadarci, Prilep, Kočani, Strumica and Struga, following a structured approach that includes institutional setup, baseline analysis, scenario development and action planning, combined with capacity building measures such as training and e-learning platforms.

In **Serbia**, 8 cities (Belgrade, Aleksinac, Kruševac, Valjevo, Niš, Bajina Bašta, Vranje and Šabac), have officially adopted SUMPs, while 5 others (Kragujevac, Pirot, Svilajnac, Čajetina, and Užice) are at various stages of preparation. Under the Local Infrastructure and Institutional Development Project (LIID), additional SUMPs will be developed in 28 more cities, divided into two phases (11 in the first batch and 17 in the second), with a revision of the Šabac SUMP also foreseen.

As of April 2026, Sarajevo and Elbasan became the first cities in the Western Balkans to receive the EU Mission Label under the EU Mission for Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities (100 Net Zero Cities Mission), validating their Climate City Contracts and opening access to specialized EU funding and private investment, while Podgorica remains an active member working toward the same certification.Overall, these developments confirm uneven progress across the region, with leading cities and pilot initiatives emerging, but with systemic challenges persisting, particularly in terms of institutionalization, national support frameworks and scaling up SUMP implementation. This underlines the need for stronger and more structured national approaches - such as NSPs - to ensure consistent and effective uptake of SUM planning across the Western Balkans.

Cross-sectoral cooperation and institutional leadership

SUMP is inherently a cross-sectoral process, requiring coordinated input from sectors such as spatial planning, public health, environment, road safety, and economic development. However, in the Western Balkans context, even ministries responsible for transport currently play a limited role in supporting or guiding local SUMP processes. As a result, SUMP is not yet effectively recognised or implemented as a cross-sectoral policy issue at the national level. Ministries and agencies responsible for transport and related sectors are generally aware of the concept of SUMPs, but often lack a clear understanding of their scope, added value, and practical application in urban planning. Significant gaps remain in terms of knowledge of SUMP methodologies, measures, and tools, as well as in recognising their relevance for broader policy objectives. Furthermore, there is typically no dedicated national body responsible for coordinating, assessing, or monitoring the preparation and implementation of SUMPs.

In this context, the TC Secretariat already plays an important and increasingly visible role in promoting SUM in the region, including through policy development, regional coordination, and support to the implementation of EU-aligned transport frameworks. Through initiatives such as the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy for the WB and related activities, the Secretariat contributes to raising awareness, facilitating knowledge exchange, and supporting the integration of SUMPs into broader transport policy discussions. Looking ahead, it has strong potential to further strengthen its role as a regional coordination platform, supporting the development of national frameworks such as NSPs, enhancing capacity building, and fostering alignment with EU requirements, particularly in relation to TEN-T urban nodes and sustainable mobility objectives.

At the local level, some initial institutional arrangements have already been tested. With GIZ support, Advisory Boards of the Mayors for Sustainable Urban Mobility have been established in selected municipalities, helping to strengthen political ownership, cross-sectoral coordination, and strategic guidance for SUM planning and implementation.

Promotion, awareness and knowledge exchange

The situation in this area has significantly improved across all Regional Partners over the past year, reflecting increased recognition of the importance of SUM planning and more structured efforts to disseminate knowledge and information. With the support of GIZ, Local Government Association Associations of Municipalities (LGAs) - including SOGRS (Republika Srpska- Bosnia and Herzegovina), ALLA NAMA (Albania), the Union of Municipalities of Montenegro, and AKM (Kosovo) - have developed dedicated sections on their websites providing key information on SUMPs. These platforms typically include introductory materials, guidelines, relevant policy documents, and examples of good practice, serving as an important first entry point for local authorities interested in developing SUMPs. The Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SCTM) in Serbia, as one of the most active LGAs in the region, had already established such a platform prior to this support.

Promotion and awareness-raising play a critical role in the early stages of SUMP uptake, particularly in regions where the concept is still relatively new and not yet fully embedded in institutional practices. Increasing awareness among local, regional, and national stakeholders helps build a common understanding of the benefits of SUM, including improved quality of life, reduced congestion and emissions, and more efficient use of public space. It also contributes to stronger political support, which is essential for initiating and sustaining SUMP processes. Without adequate promotion, SUMPs risk being perceived as isolated technical exercises rather than strategic planning tools with cross-sectoral relevance.

Some of the LGAs have already started to move beyond information provision by facilitating knowledge exchange between cities, including through workshops, peer-learning activities, and networking among practitioners. These efforts are particularly important for translating general awareness into practical implementation capacity. For other LGAs, expanding towards more active roles in knowledge exchange and capacity building remains a key task for the near future. Strengthening these functions will be essential to ensure a more systematic and consistent uptake of SUMPs across the region.

In addition, sustainable urban mobility planning has been incorporated into the curriculum of transport planning studies at the University of Belgrade, strengthening long-term knowledge development in the field.

Financial frameworks and funding mechanisms for SUM planning

Resources available to cities in the Western Balkans for the preparation of SUMPs remain limited and are largely dependent on external support. In most cases, funding is provided through EU-funded projects or by international donors such as GIZ, UNDP, the World Bank and others. While a small number of cities and municipalities have developed SUMPs using their own financial resources, these remain isolated examples rather than a systemic practice. At present, there are generally no dedicated funding mechanisms at national or regional level specifically designed to support the preparation or implementation of SUMPs, except for Serbia, where a more structured approach is emerging. Under the Local Infrastructure and Institutional Development Project (LIID), additional SUMPs will be developed in 28 cities.

This lack of structured financial support represents a major barrier to the wider uptake and quality of SUMPs in the region. Developing a SUMP requires not only technical expertise but also financial resources. Without predictable and accessible funding, many local authorities are unable to initiate or sustain such processes. Moreover, reliance on project-based or donor funding often leads to fragmented and uneven progress, with activities driven by external timelines and priorities rather than local or national strategies.

Financial support is also a key driver of political commitment and institutionalisation. When national or regional funding schemes are in place, they can act as strong incentives for cities to develop SUMPs, improve their quality, and align them with national and EU policy objectives. In addition, stable funding frameworks enable better planning continuity, facilitate the development of local expertise, and support the transition from planning to implementation of measures. The absence of such mechanisms in most Regional Partners highlights the need for establishing structured financing approaches - potentially as part of NSPs - that would combine national resources, international funds, and other financing instruments to ensure a more systematic and scalable development of SUM planning across the region.

Monitoring and evaluation

There are currently no established national or regional monitoring and evaluation frameworks in the Western Balkans to systematically assess the preparation and implementation of SUMPs. No minimum standards or quality criteria have been defined that SUMPs should meet, and there are no formalised procedures for reviewing or validating SUMP quality. Monitoring and evaluation of SUMP implementation is not compulsory, and there is a lack of structured mechanisms to track progress, assess impacts, or ensure continuous improvement of SUM planning processes.

In addition, no mandatory or commonly recommended national indicators related to SUMP development and implementation have been defined. This limits the ability of national authorities to collect comparable data, evaluate policy effectiveness, or align local SUM planning outcomes with broader national objectives,

including those related to decarbonisation, safety, and accessibility. The absence of monitoring frameworks also reduces accountability and makes it difficult to demonstrate the benefits of SUMP implementation, which in turn can weaken political support. Establishing standardised monitoring and evaluation systems - potentially within NSPs - would therefore be critical for ensuring quality control, enabling benchmarking across cities, and supporting evidence-based policy development in the Western Balkans.

Advisory services and technical support structures

Despite the complexity of SUMP-related processes, structured national support in the form of advisory services, technical assistance, or dedicated expert bodies is largely absent across the Western Balkans. Cities often rely on external consultants or donor-funded projects for the preparation of SUMPs, which can limit knowledge retention and the development of long-term institutional capacity at the local and national levels.
Some initial steps have been taken to address this gap. For example, through the GIZ-supported project SUMSEEC II - precursor to the ProSUMP initiative - LGAs were supported in establishing a pool of SUM experts. This represents an important foundation for building regional expertise and supporting cities in SUM planning processes. However, these efforts remain limited in scale and are not yet embedded in permanent institutional structures.

To strengthen organizational structures in local governments with a focus on sustainable urban mobility, tailored proposals for new institutional setups were developed, including clearly defined job descriptions, formal amendments to rulebooks on internal organization and job systematization, and improved coordination mechanisms between departments responsible for transport, spatial planning, climate, and sustainable development. These changes also introduced dedicated roles and responsibilities for climate adaptation and the resilience of urban transport systems. Implemented through the support of the GIZ's ProSUMP and WB Adapt projects across the Western Balkans, the most notable progress was achieved in Sarajevo, Banja Luka, Zavidovići, Aleksinac, and Elbasan.

Strengthening advisory and support mechanisms - such as national competence centres, expert networks, or helpdesks - would be essential to ensure consistent, high-quality SUM planning across the Western Balkans. Such structures could provide ongoing technical guidance, support capacity building, facilitate knowledge exchange, and reduce reliance on external expertise, particularly if integrated into broader national frameworks such as NSSPs.

There is also the potential to take advantage of material relating to existing Technical Support activities in SUMP and NSSPs that have taken place across EU Member States[4] (provided by EIB-JASPERS) with a view to adapting this information as part of the supports to the Regional Partners in the Western Balkans.

Key gaps and rationale for a Western Balkans SUM planning framework

The assessment of SUM planning across the Western Balkans highlights a number of systemic gaps that limit the effective and consistent development and implementation of SUMPs. While progress has been achieved in recent years, particularly at the level of individual cities and through externally supported projects, SUM planning remains largely fragmented and insufficiently embedded within national policy, regulatory, and institutional frameworks.

Key challenges include the absence of coordinated national governance structures, limited and non-systematic funding mechanisms, lack of adapted national guidelines and methodologies, insufficient monitoring and data systems, and weak institutional and technical capacity at both national and local levels. In addition, SUM planning is not yet fully recognised as a cross-sectoral policy priority, which limits its integration into broader transport, climate, and urban development strategies. Furthermore, current SUMP documents only marginally address climate adaptation and resilience, despite the fact that EU policy increasingly emphasises the need to systematically integrate climate resilience across all sectors and infrastructure systems. As a result, the development of SUMPs is often driven by external initiatives rather than national strategic priorities, leading to uneven progress and limited scalability.

[4] https://jaspers.eib.org/knowledge/events/sustainable-urban-mobility-plan-sump-training-sessions

These findings demonstrate the need for a more structured, coordinated, and institutionalised approach to SUM planning in the Western Balkans. Establishing comprehensive national frameworks - supported by clear governance arrangements, financing mechanisms, technical guidance, and monitoring systems - is essential to ensure consistent and high-quality implementation of SUMPs. In this context, the development of NSPs, complemented by a regional framework for integrated sustainable urban mobility, represents a key step towards aligning Regional Partners with EU policy and regulatory requirements and enabling a more systematic transition towards SUM systems.

4. Framework for Integrated SUM in the Western Balkans

4.1 System Logic and Overall Approach

The development of an integrated framework for SUM in the Western Balkans aims to establish a **coherent, multi-level system for sustainable urban mobility planning** in the Western Balkans, aligned with EU policy developments, including the revised TEN-T Regulation and the European Green Deal. Building on EU policy developments, including the revised TEN-T Regulation and the concept of NSPs, the framework provides a structured approach to support the preparation, implementation, and monitoring of SUMPs.

At its core, the framework introduces **National Sustainable Urban Mobility Support Programmes (NSSPs)** as the central operational mechanism to translate EU requirements into structured national systems and effective local implementation.

The framework follows a clear **system logic:**

- **EU policy requirements** (TEN-T, Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy, Green Deal) define the direction
- **National frameworks (NSSPs)** translate these into operational systems on national level
- **Cities develop and implement SUMPs** as the primary planning tool
- **Monitoring and evaluation systems** ensure performance, compliance, and continuous improvement

This creates a closed-loop system, ensuring that planning, implementation, and policy refinement are continuously aligned.

The framework is guided by key principles of integration, ensuring coherence across transport, climate, energy, and spatial planning; multimodality, enabling seamless connectivity across transport modes; sustainability and decarbonisation, contributing to climate neutrality; accessibility and inclusiveness, ensuring mobility for all users; data-driven planning, supporting evidence-based decision-making; and multi-level governance, promoting coordination across national, regional, and local levels.

4.2 Objectives and Scope

The objective of the framework is to support Regional Partners in establishing **comprehensive, NSSP-based national systems** that:

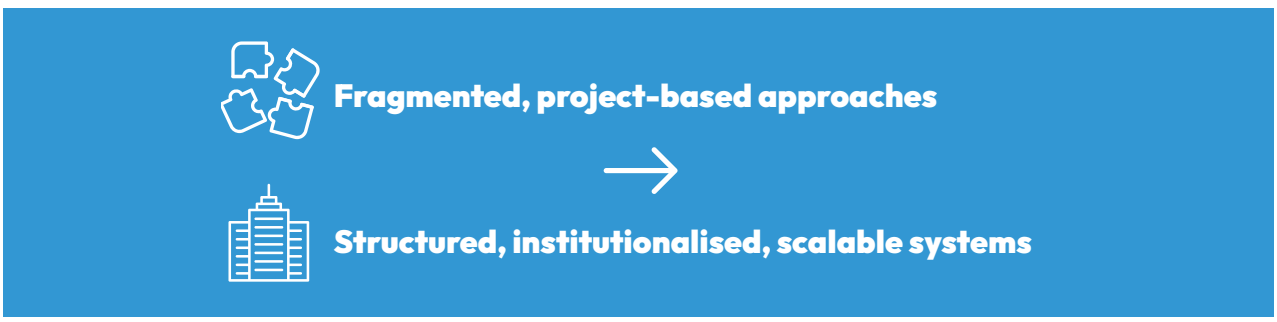
- Enable **systematic development and implementation of high-quality SUMPs**, particularly in, but not limited to, TEN-T urban nodes, while also supporting smaller cities and municipalities in developing sustainable urban mobility approaches.
- Ensure alignment with **EU regulatory, policy, and methodological frameworks**
- Strengthen **institutional capacity and governance structures**
- Provide **stable financing and technical support mechanisms**
- Integrate mobility planning with **climate, energy, and spatial policies**

4.3 National Sustainable Urban Mobility Support Programme-Based System Architecture

Role of National Sustainable Urban Mobility Support Programmes

National SUMP Support Programmes (NSSPs) represent the central implementation instrument of the framework, translating strategic policy objectives into coordinated and effective action on the ground. They serve as the key bridge between national and regional policy priorities and local delivery, ensuring that cities and municipalities are systematically supported in the preparation, implementation, and monitoring of high-quality Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs). This support is not exclusively related to larger cities or TEN-T urban nodes but can also enable smaller cities and municipalities to access guidance, capacity-building, financing opportunities, and tailored planning tools in line with their size and capacities.

By establishing clear governance structures, dedicated support mechanisms, and stable financing and monitoring systems, NSSPs enable a fundamental shift in how urban mobility planning is approached. They facilitate the transition from fragmented, project-based and donor-driven interventions towards structured, institutionalised, and scalable national systems, capable of delivering consistent, long-term results aligned with EU standards and policy objectives.



Core Components of National Sustainable Urban Mobility Support Programmes

NSPs operationalise SUM planning through a set of interrelated components that together form a comprehensive national support system:

1. **Governance and coordination:** establishment of national coordination structures, including National SUMP Contact Points and inter-ministerial bodies, ensuring cross-sectoral leadership and multi-level cooperation
2. **Policy and regulatory framework:** development of legal and policy frameworks supporting SUM planning, including alignment with TEN-T requirements and integration into broader transport, climate, and urban policies
3. **Technical and methodological support:** development of national SUMP guidelines and methodologies adapted to local contexts, including thematic guidance for key policy areas
4. **Capacity building and advisory support:** provision of training programmes, expert networks, and advisory services to strengthen institutional and technical capacities at national and local levels
5. **Financial support mechanisms:** establishment of structured funding schemes supporting SUMP preparation and implementation, including incentives linked to quality and performance
6. **Monitoring, evaluation and data systems:** development of national indicator systems, data collection mechanisms, and reporting frameworks to support evidence-based policymaking and compliance with EU requirements
7. **Promotion and knowledge exchange:** implementation of awareness-raising activities, national platforms, and peer-learning mechanisms to support uptake and dissemination of good practices

These are not standalone actions; rather, they function as an integrated support system, where each component reinforces the others to ensure coherent, effective, and sustainable implementation.

4.4 Governance and Institutional Roles

Effective NSSP implementation requires clear governance arrangements and strong institutional leadership at the national level. This includes the designation of lead institutions, the establishment of cross-sectoral coordination mechanisms, and the definition of roles and responsibilities across different levels of administration:

- **National level**

At the national level, ministries and relevant agencies are responsible for establishing NSSPs, defining policy and regulatory frameworks, ensuring coordination across sectors, and providing financial, technical, and monitoring support. In this context, Local Government Associations (LGAs) can play an important role in capacity development and advocacy, particularly in representing the positions and needs of local governments during the planning phase at the national level, including within the development of NSSPs.

- **Local level (cities/municipalities)**

At the local level, cities and municipalities play a central role in the preparation, implementation, and monitoring of SUMPs. They are responsible for translating strategic objectives into concrete measures, engaging stakeholders, collecting data, and implementing mobility solutions, including public transport improvements, active mobility infrastructure, and urban logistics measures. Their capacity and commitment are essential for the effective functioning of NSSP-based systems.

- **Regional level (TC, GIZ, NALAS, CIVINET Slovenia – Croatia - SEE, IFIs)**

The development and implementation of NSPs in the Western Balkans is supported by a network of regional organisations and international partners providing complementary expertise, coordination, and capacity-building. The Transport Community (TC) plays a central role in ensuring alignment with EU policy and regulatory frameworks, facilitating ministerial-level coordination, and strengthening institutional capacities. GIZ contributes through technical assistance, capacity building, and the development of pilot initiatives and methodologies. NALAS supports the strengthening of Associations of Local Governments, enabling them to provide structured support to local governments, while CIVINET Slovenia–Croatia–SEE acts as a regional knowledge platform, promoting peer learning, exchange of good practices, and stakeholder engagement. International financial institutions (IFIs), including the World Bank, EIB, and EBRD, provide critical support through financing, as well as technical assistance in project preparation, feasibility assessment, and implementation. Together, these partners complement national efforts and contribute to the development of coherent, effective, and scalable NSSP systems across the region.



Figure 1: NSSP as a shared delivery system

This ensures vertical coordination (between national and local levels) and horizontal coordination (across policy sectors such as transport, environment, spatial planning, and energy). They also provide the framework for integrating SUM planning into broader policy agendas and for ensuring consistency between strategic planning and implementation.

4.5 Expected outcomes of the framework

The implementation of the framework is expected to result in the establishment of structured, NSSP-based SUM planning systems across the Western Balkans.

Key expected outcomes include:

- the establishment of fully operational **National Sustainable Urban Mobility Support Programmes (NSSP)** in Regional Partners
- systematic and increased uptake of high-quality SUMPs, particularly in TEN-T urban nodes
- improved governance and coordination across sectors and levels of administration
- the introduction of stable and predictable funding mechanisms for SUM planning
- the development of national monitoring and evaluation systems aligned with EU requirements
- strengthened institutional and technical capacities at both national and local levels
- enhanced regional cooperation and knowledge exchange

The development of a standardised SUMP approach across the region will also provide a consistent and **comprehensive view of the investment pipeline in Urban Mobility** which has been missing to date. Although some attempts have been made to understand regional investment pipelines, the information remains incomplete and somewhat fragmented[5]. Furthermore, through the specification of standardised output templates for the investment plan (in the relevant guidance documents), this can allow SUMP outputs to be incorporated into an **investment dashboard** which can provide easy reference to investment priorities, sectors, outcomes, budget forecasts and timelines across the region.

5. Implementation roadmap

5.1 Strategic Logic and System Approach

The transition towards integrated, sustainable urban mobility systems in the Western Balkans requires a shift from **fragmented, project-based interventions** towards a **coherent, system-based approach to planning, financing, and delivery.** This transformation cannot be achieved through isolated actions or individual projects, but through the establishment of a **structured and institutionalised framework** that aligns national policy objectives with local implementation.

At the centre of this approach are the **National Sustainable Urban Mobility Support Programmes (NSSPs)**, which function as the **operational backbone of the system**. NSSPs are designed to translate EU policy requirements—particularly those stemming from the TEN-T Regulation and the European Green Deal—into **coordinated national frameworks** that provide cities with the necessary tools, resources, and guidance to develop and implement Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs). The Transport Community Treaty Secretariat benefiting support of other associations such as NALAS, CIVINET and international stakeholders such as GIZ and IFIs (EBRD, EIB/JASPERS, World Bank etc) can act as the regional coordinator for the NSSP, leveraging the ongoing role of the Secretariat in capacity building and promotion of sustainable transport policy. This will ensure coordinated delivery of NSSP activities across the Western Balkans and would incorporate representatives from the Regional Partners into decision-making. In this context, the Secretariat could also play a role in ensuring a minimum level of consistency and quality of SUMPs across the region, by promoting common standards and facilitating the integration of the latest European Commission guidance and methodologies into national and local practices.

[5] World Bank Urban Mobility Initiative: April 2024

The implementation approach follows a clear system logic, in which different layers of governance and intervention are sequentially activated and mutually reinforcing. At the national level, governments establish the policy, regulatory, and institutional conditions required to enable SUM planning. National level agencies execute this step in close cooperation with Local Governance Associations and cities and municipalities to ensure participatory approach and realistic actions and objectives. These conditions are operationalised through NSSPs, which integrate key system components, including governance arrangements, technical guidance, financing mechanisms, capacity-building programmes, and monitoring systems.

Once these enabling conditions are in place, cities and municipalities are positioned to act as primary delivery agents, developing and implementing SUMPs that translate strategic objectives into concrete measures, investments, and services. This includes interventions such as the development of multimodal transport systems, deployment of zero-emission mobility solutions, and improvement of urban logistics and accessibility. A defining feature of this approach is the integration of monitoring, evaluation, and feedback mechanisms, which ensure that implementation is continuously assessed and refined. Data collected at the local level feeds into national systems, enabling evidence-based policy adjustments and strengthening accountability. In this way, the framework establishes a closed-loop system, in which planning, implementation, and policy refinement are dynamically linked.

Importantly, the approach recognises that effective implementation requires **multi-level governance and strong coordination across sectors**. Urban mobility intersects with a wide range of policy areas, including transport, energy, environment, and spatial planning. NSSPs therefore play a critical role in ensuring both vertical coordination (between national and local levels) and horizontal coordination (across policy domains), thereby reducing fragmentation and enhancing policy coherence.

The result is a system that is not only aligned with EU requirements, but also capable of delivering **tangible improvements in mobility, accessibility, and environmental performance**, while strengthening institutional capacity and long-term resilience.





Figure 2: overview of NSSP system

5.2 Phased Transformation Model

The implementation of the framework is structured around a **phased transformation model**, reflecting the progressive nature of system development. Rather than attempting to achieve full system maturity from the outset, Regional Partners are supported in building their SUM planning systems incrementally, ensuring that each stage establishes the foundations for the next.

The first phase (short term 0–1 year): focuses on **institutionalisation and system foundation**. At this stage, the priority is to establish clear governance structures, define institutional responsibilities, and ensure alignment with EU policy frameworks. This includes the designation of National SUMP Contact Points, the establishment of inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms, ensuring vertical consultation with local governments benefiting support of local governance associations, and the initial integration of SUM planning into national policy agendas. The objective is to create a credible and operational baseline, signalling political commitment and enabling coordinated action.

The second phase (medium term 1–3 years): centres on **system operationalisation and capacity deployment**. Building on the institutional foundations, NSSPs are developed and activated as functional systems. This involves the introduction of national guidelines and methodologies, the establishment of financing mechanisms, and the deployment of capacity-building and advisory support structures. During this phase, cities—particularly those within TEN-T urban nodes—begin to actively engage in the preparation of SUMPs. The emphasis is on ensuring that the system is not only formally in place, but also effectively usable by local authorities.

The third phase (long term 3+ years): focuses on **system consolidation, scaling, and integratio**n. At this stage, SUM planning becomes embedded within national policy frameworks and institutional practices. Financing mechanisms are stabilised, monitoring and reporting systems are fully operationalised, and SUMP implementation is expanded across all relevant urban areas. The system transitions from being externally supported to nationally owned and sustained, ensuring long-term continuity and impact.

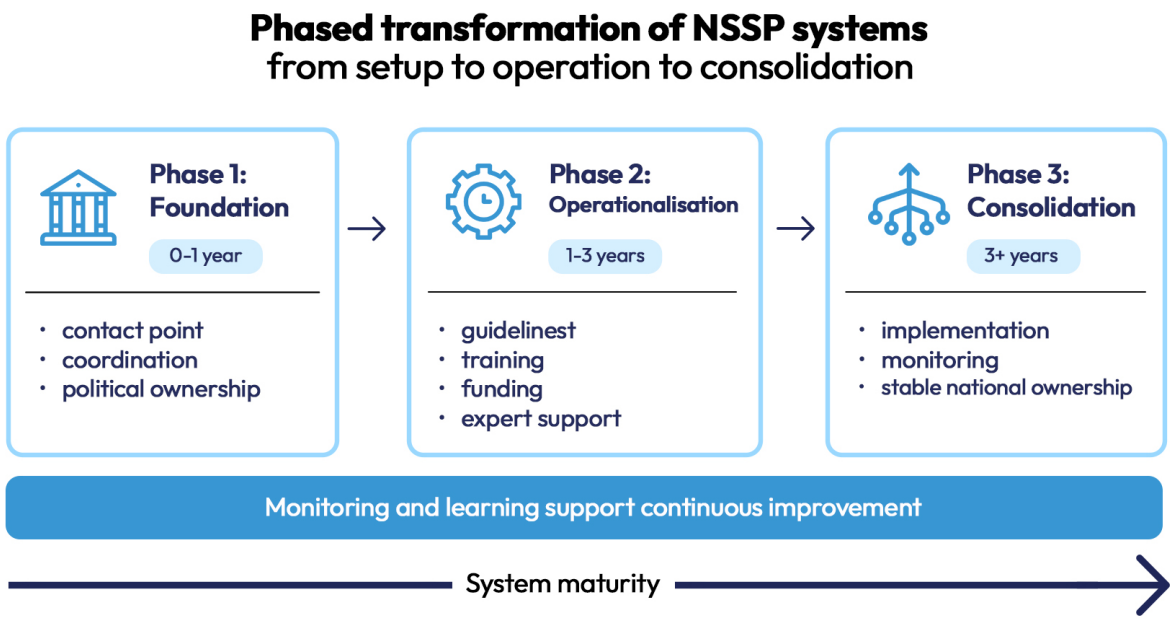


Figure 3: Roadmap logic

Across all phases, implementation is supported by continuous learning and adaptation. Monitoring and evaluation systems provide regular feedback, enabling adjustments to policies, funding mechanisms, and implementation approaches. This ensures that the system remains responsive to evolving needs and aligned with EU policy developments.

Furthermore, Core Components of National SUMP Support programme have been translated into strategic objectives to be achieved and presented as such in the roadmap, those strategic objectives are:

a. Ensure effective governance and coordination of SUM planning systems
b. Establish a coherent policy and regulatory framework for SUM planning
c. Provide structured technical and methodological support for SUMPs
d. Strengthen institutional and technical capacity at all levels of governance
e. Establish sustainable financing mechanisms
f. Enable data-driven decision-making through robust monitoring and evaluation systems
g. Promote knowledge exchange and increase awareness of sustainable urban mobility
h. Support effective SUMP preparation and implementation
i. Ensure continuous improvement and long-term system sustainability

By structuring implementation in this way, the framework enables Regional Partners to manage complexity, prioritise actions, and deliver results in a sequenced and sustainable manner, ultimately supporting the transition towards integrated, multimodal, and climate-resilient urban mobility systems.

5.3 Roadmap for establishment and operationalisation of National SUMP Support Programmes

Strategic Objective	Priority Action	Lead Institutions	Supporting Partners	Key Deliverables / Outputs	Time Horizon
Ensure effective governance and coordination of SUM planning systems	Designate National SUMP Contact Points	National authorities	TCT Secretariat	National SUMP Contact Points established	0–12 months
	Establish inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms between government bodies such as Ministry of Transport, Environment, Spatial planning etc	National authorities	TCT Secretariat, NALAS LGAs, Cities / municipalities	Cross-sector coordination mechanism operational	0–12 months
	Define standing institutional structure and body to ensure cross-sectoral governance	National authorities	TCT Secretariat, NALAS LGAs, Cities / municipalities	Clear governance framework and responsibilities	0–12 months
	Establishing regional NSSP coordination mechanism and platform	TCT Secretariat, CIVINET, GIZ, NALAS, IFIs	National authorities, LGAs Cities / municipalities	Regional governance framework established	0-24 months
Establish a coherent policy and regulatory framework for SUM planning	Define legal basis for SUM planning	National authorities	TCT Secretariat, GIZ, LGAs, Cities / municipalities	Legal framework for SUM planning established	0–24 months
	Align national frameworks with TEN-T requirements	National authorities	EC, TCT Secretariat	Alignment with TEN-T obligations ensured	0–24 months
	Integrate SUM into national transport and climate strategies	National authorities	TCT Secretariat, GIZ, LGAs, Cities / municipalities	SUM integrated into policy frameworks	0–24 months
	Link SUMPs to funding and strategic policy instruments	National authorities	TCT Secretariat, IFIs	Policy–funding linkage established	0–24 months
Provide structured technical and methodological support for SUMPs	Develop national SUMP guidelines	National authorities	TCT Secretariat, GIZ, CIVINET, LGAs, Cities / municipalities	National SUMP guidelines developed, including proportionate approaches and guidance for urban nodes as well as smaller cities and municipalities	1–3 years
	Adapt EU methodologies to national context	National authorities	TCT Secretariat, GIZ	Context-adapted methodologies for urban nodes as well as smaller cities and municipalities	1–3 years
	Provide thematic guidance for specific fields such as public transport, cycling, integration with land use planning etc	National authorities	TCT Secretariat, GIZ, CIVINET	Thematic guidance available	1–3 years

Strengthen institutional and technical capacity at all levels of governance	Establish expert pools and develop advisory services	National authorities / LGAs	TCT Secretariat, NALAS, GIZ, CIVINET	Expert pools established	1–3 years
	Organise training programmes	National authorities / LGAs	TCT Secretariat, GIZ, CIVINET	Training programmes delivered	1–3 years
	Strengthen local capacities	National authorities / LGAs	NALAS, CIVINET	Advisory services operational	1–3 years
Establish sustainable financing mechanisms	Establish funding schemes	National authorities	EC, IFIs, TCT Secretariat GIZ	Funding schemes established	1–5 years
	Enable co-financing mechanisms	National authorities	EC, EIB, EBRD, WB, other IFIs	Co-financing mechanisms operational	1–5 years
	Ensure SUMP quality and performance through independent audit, linked to funding	National authorities	EC, TCT Secretariat, GIZ, IFIs	Performance-based funding criteria	1–5 years
	Enable cities to access financing	National authorities	IFIs	Cities enabled to access finance	1–5 years
Enable data-driven decision-making through robust monitoring and evaluation systems	Define national KPI framework	National authorities	TCT Secretariat, GIZ, NALAS	KPI framework established	1-3 years
	Establish reporting systems	National authorities	TCT Secretariat, GIZ, NALAS, LGAs, Cities / municipalities	Reporting systems operational	1-3 years
	Create national SUMP databases	National authorities	TCT Secretariat, GIZ, NALAS	National databases established	1-5 years
	Ensure local data collection and reporting	Cities / municipalities	National authorities	Data collection and reporting operational	1-5 years
Promote knowledge exchange and increase awareness of sustainable urban mobility	Implement awareness campaigns	NALAS / LGAs	National Authorities, CIVINET, GIZ, TCT Secretariat	Awareness campaigns delivered	1–3 years
	Establish knowledge platforms (working groups, web knowledge exchange platforms)	NALAS / LGAs	CIVINET, GIZ, TCT Secretariat	Knowledge platforms operational	1–3 years
	Facilitate peer learning and exchange	NALAS / LGAs	CIVINET, TCT Secretariat	Peer learning activities implemented	1–3 years
Support effective SUMP preparation and implementation	Prepare and adopt SUMPs	Cities / municipalities	National authorities, GIZ, CIVINET, NALAS, IFIs	SUMPs adopted	3+ years
	Implement mobility measures and investments	Cities / municipalities	IFIs, national authorities	Mobility measures implemented	3+ years
	Ensure stakeholder engagement	Cities / municipalities	CIVINET, NALAS	Stakeholder engagement ensured	3+ years
	Collect and report implementation data	Cities / municipalities	National authorities	Implementation data reported	3+ years
Ensure continuous improvement and long-term system sustainability	Conduct evaluations	National authorities / LGAs	All partners	Evaluation cycles completed	Continuous
	Update NSSPs and SUMPs	National authorities / cities/ municipalities	All partners	Updated frameworks and plans	Continuous
	Integrate lessons learned	National authorities / cities/ municipalities	All partners	Lessons integrated into policy and practice	Continuous

Annex 1 Current state of play- SUMP development in Western Balkans

No	Regional Partner	National SUMP contact point	National SUMP support programme	City/ Municipality	SUMP Development Support	SUMP Adopted by Local Assembly (Year)
1	Albania	Yes, Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy	No	Tirana	GIZ, 2020	Published*
2				Elbasan	GIZ, 2020 SUMP Report	Published*
3				Belsh	GIZ, 2020 SUMP Solution	Published*
4				Gramsh	GIZ (SUMP Solution)	Published*
5				Librazhd	GIZ (SUMP Solution)	Published*
6				Klos	GIZ (SUMP Solution)	Published*
7				Mat	GIZ (SUMP Solution)	Published*
8				Shkoder	GIZ (SUMP Solution) SUMP in preparation (Cosimo Chiffi)	In progress
9				Peqin	GIZ (SUMP Solution)	Published*
10				Cerrik	GIZ (SUMP Solution)	Published*
11				Durres	Interreg, SUMPort, 2019	Published*
12	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Yes, Ministry of Communications and Transport of Bosnia and Herzegovina	No	Sarajevo (Canton of Sarajevo and City)	GIZ	Yes, 2020
13				Banja Luka	First SUMP proposal Interreg - LIR Evolution as project partner, DANUBE Transnational Programme, Project CHESTNUT (not adopted) UNDP-completed	Yes, 2025
14				Bijeljina	GIZ	Yes, 2020
15				Zavidovići	GIZ	Yes, 2020
16				Gradiška	City of Gradiška as project partner in ADRION Programme, Project SMILE, document "SUMP for City of Gradiška" made by LIR Evolution as technical expertise	Yes
17				Prijedor	Agency PREDA, project partner in ADRION Programme, Project SMILE, document "Sustainable Mobility Legal and Policy Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina", technical expertise LIR Evolution	Yes
18				Tešanj	Interreg IPA ADRION, Local Authorities on the path to a sustainable Urban Mobility in the Adriatic/Ionian region (LAMO)	In procedure

19	Kosovo	Yes, Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport	No	Pristina	Municipal budget & EBRD	Assembly-approved, supported by municipal budget, 2019
20				Gračanica	GIZ (SUMP solution)	Assembly-approved, 2019
21				Ferizaj	GIZ (SUMP solution)	Published*
22				Gnjilane	GIZ (SUMP solution)	Published*
23				Podujeva	GIZ (SUMP solution)	Published*
24				Prizren	UNDP	N/A
25				Mitrovica South	UN HABITAT	Published*
26				Suhareka	UNDP	N/A
27	Montenegro	Yes, Ministry of Transport	No	Podgorica	GIZ	Yes, 2020
28				Rožaje	GIZ	2020
29				Kolašin	GIZ	2021
30				Berane	Municipal budget	in preparation
31				Bar	Municipal budget	in preparation
32				Tivat, Kotor, Herceg Novi, Cetinje - Poly SUMP	Global Environment Facility (GEF), UNDP Towards Carbon Neutral Tourism in Montenegro	NA
33	North Macedonia	Yes, Ministry of Transport	No	Skopje	IPA - II SUMP generation - cancelled due to political chages	2011 first generation
34				Ohrid	GIZ (SUMP solution)	Published*
35				Veles	Jovan Hristoski University Mother Teresa, Skopje, North Macedonia Goran Jovanovic APPIA DOO Ljubljana, Slovenia Andon Petrovski 24 ING DOOEL Bitola, North Macedonia Olivera Petrovska 24 ING DOOEL Bitola, North Macedonia	2020
36				Bitola	GIZ (SUMP solution)	2019
37				Butel	TBC	2022
38				Kumanovo	GIZ + municipal budget	2021
39				Kavadarci	GIZ (SUMP solution), World Bank project on SUMP currently ongoing	Published*
40				Karposh	GIZ (SUMP solution)	Published*
41				Prilep	World Bank project on SUMP currently ongoing	
42				Kočani	World Bank project on SUMP currently ongoing	
43				Strumica	World Bank project on SUMP currently ongoing	
44				Struga	World Bank project on SUMP currently ongoing	

45	Serbia	Yes, Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure	No	Belgrade	City Budget	Yes, 2020
46				Aleksinac	municipal budget	Yes, 2021
47				Kruševac	City Budget	Yes, 2017
48				Pirot	GIZ	Published*
49				Užice	National budget (Ministry for Regional Development), final draft	Initiated in November 2023, in progress
50				Šabac	GIZ	Dec-20
51				Čajetina	SCTM, SIDA	No
52				Valjevo	EU Interreg	Yes, 2019
53				Niš	EIB	No, still in preparation
54				Vranje		Yes
55				Bajina Basta		Yes
56				Kragujevac	UN HABITAT	in preparation
57				Pirot	GIZ, SUMP solution	in preparation
58				Svilajnac		in preparation
59				Čajetina	SCTM, SIDA	in preparation
60				Užice	National budget (Ministry for regional development) final draft	in preparation

Presented to mayor's office and used by relevant departments (no formal adoption due to lack of legislation).