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Title of the presentation

Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans in Europe: a comparative analysis in selected Member States

Abstract (400-500 words)

Definition of the problem

Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP) represent a new tool for city planning fostering effective, coordinated and consistent initiatives in European Member States (MSs) in line with the general guidelines provided by the European Commission (EC). In fact, SUMP, as stated in the EC guidelines, "should build on existing planning practices and take due consideration of integration, participation, and evaluation principles". Indeed, a SUMP constitutes a comprehensive framework including present plans and provides a clear vision and reachable targets. Given its inherently strategic nature, it can, *de facto*, display substantially different forms and characteristics in each Member State. This work assess the effective adoption of the most innovative SUMPs' principles in the different national frameworks, through a systematic comparative analysis of five key criteria.

Methodology

The paper adopts a comparative approach in the analysis of the countries considered, when investigating the urban planning national legislation and guidelines. The comparison performed is based on five, sufficiently distinguishable and measurable, criteria: i) stakeholders engagement, ii) policies' coordination, iii) long-term and sustainable vision, iv) cost internalization and valuation tools, v) specific provisions for freight transport. In section one, the essay describes the present challenges of urban mobility policies and the Commission's long-term strategy. In section two, SUMP is described and commented with respect to its main objectives and measure-types. Section three identifies the tools adopted by twenty-one MSs so to promote sustainable urban planning in MSs, among all those currently put in place with specific reference to the urban transport sector.

Section four analyses these plans, checking for the presence of the previously selected criteria, which represent the minimum requirements for SUMP to be considered effective from a EC perspective. Through this comparison the paper investigates whether the nationally available strategic planning tools, implemented both before and after the publication of the EC guidelines, can be considered coherent and well grounded on the same principles determined at a EU level.

Expected results and future research

In section five, the research shows that only few measures put forward in SUMP's guidelines have been formally implemented in MSs procedures, and suggests that a strong effort is still required from the Commission in order to reach its cohesion objectives. Nevertheless, the detailed inspection of the various planning tools indicates a broader understanding of the SUMP tool by the vast majority of the EU Members. Moreover, national experts, involved by the EC through its MS Expert Group on Urban Mobility, established in October 2014, are actively contributing to the dissemination of relevant best practices adopted within their countries. In order to address in a conscious and effective way this lack of coordination, the paper systematically individuates the main inefficiencies at local level for the implementation of the new solutions envisaged in the SUMP guidelines. The approach adopted, through the selection of five simple and easily comparable criteria, aims to provide a new tool, useful to properly identify the areas of potential improvement. Future research will analyze the specific causes of those inefficiencies, questioning both the adequacy of the measures adopted at European level as well as the capacity of directly transferring them to the interested local authorities.