

# Chapter 1

## Introduction



**Andree Woodcock**

**Abstract** The H2020 CIVITAS SUITS project was conceived by Professor Andree Woodcock and colleagues in 2014/15. It was scheduled to run between 2016 and 2020 but owing to the COVID-19 pandemic was extended to spring 2021. The aim of the project was to support capacity building of small–medium local authorities developing sustainable transport measures. This volume provides an account of the outputs of the project, in the form of chapters and recommendations for local authorities and consultants who are entrusted in delivering transport services which are inclusive, fit for purpose and enable accessibility for all. Although larger authorities are relatively well equipped to make these changes, smaller, more traditional local authorities may lack the knowledge, capacity and capability to plan, finance and implement sustainable transport measures at a time of great socio economic, technological and cultural change. Such authorities are also required to adopt new ways of working at the same time as designing and planning multimillion-euro transport projects which will support smart city developments and significantly improve the mobility of their citizens. At the heart of H2020 CIVITAS SUITS is a socio-technical approach, which recognises that capacity building is more than just providing training, and it is about empowering members of an organisation to be innovative. This volume has been written to inform designed to inform the daily practices of transport departments and stakeholder groups engaged in commissioning sustainable transport measures of working on Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans.

### 1.1 Introduction

The project, Supporting Urban Integrated Transport Systems: transferable tools for local authorities (SUITS), grant number 690650 was funded by the European Union (EU) under the H2020 programme as a Research and Innovation Action. It was, in response to the European H2020, 2015 call (MG-5.4–2015) to strengthen the

---

A. Woodcock (✉)  
Coventry University, Coventry, UK  
e-mail: [A.Woodcock@coventry.ac.uk](mailto:A.Woodcock@coventry.ac.uk)

© Transport for West Midlands 2023

A. Woodcock et al. (eds.), *Capacity Building in Local Authorities for Sustainable Transport Planning*, Smart Innovation, Systems and Technologies 319,  
[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-6962-1\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-6962-1_1)

knowledge and capacity of local authorities (LAs).<sup>1</sup> It aimed to provide small to medium LAs and associated stakeholders with a sustainable approach to capacity building in the transport arena, helping them to transform into resilient learning organisations able to meet future challenges and lead innovation in their cities.

The consortium (see Appendix 1) was drawn from European wide, academic partners and research establishments, local authorities, consultants and SMEs, many of whom have contributed chapters to this volume.

The project ran from 2016–2021. During this time, the 23 members of the consortium:

- understood the needs, challenges and barriers of LAs responsible for the development of sustainable transport systems and developed a transferable method to enable this understanding;
- developed material to address these needs;
- evaluated the usefulness of the project’s outputs in practice.<sup>2</sup>

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, the project was extended by 3 months until 2021 in order for evaluation with city partners to take place.

## 1.2 Organisation of Volume

This volume covers all aspects of H2020 CIVITAS SUITS project, but its focus is on introducing tools, methods and insights which can be used by practitioners to inform the development of sustainable transport measures.

Section 1.1 sets the scene for the project, describing its context, rationale and ambitions. SUITS had 2 main themes: supporting sustainable transport measures and small–medium local authorities. Although the project was set in Europe, the insights and methods are transferrable, to transport departments outside the EU who share similar problems.

Many LAs have, or are now developing, Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP) or Transport Master Plans. The material provided by SUITS does not require the development of a SUMP. Chapter 2 (Andree Woodcock) discusses the context in which these have been developed in Europe and why they may pose problems for a local authority.

---

<sup>1</sup> The terms local authority (LAs) and municipality are used interchangeably throughout this volume, reflecting the different terminologies used across EU.

<sup>2</sup> This evaluation was scheduled to take place in the final year of the project. However, all local authorities have been furloughed of significantly changed their working patterns during this time. Therefore, we have included our transferable evaluation procedure and specimen results which show impact.

In Chap. 3, Stefan Werland and Frederic Rudolph (Wuppertal Institute) set the project in the context of wider EU SUMP 2 initiative [1] and illustrate the strategies the EU has developed to support more integrated sustainable transport planning as a means of addressing climate and other challenges.

Section 1.2 focuses on delivering capacity change in local authorities. This forms the most extensive part of the volume in which we present the outputs of the project, how these were developed, validated and can be used to support capacity building.

Adopting a socio-technical approach, the first year of the project was spent trying to understand how local authorities (LAs) in the project (Coventry City Council/Transport for West Midlands (UK), Torino and Rome (Italy), Municipality of Kalamaria (Greece), Alba Iulia (Romania), Valencia (Spain) with follower cities in Palanga (Lithuania), Stuttgart and Erfurt (Germany)) were addressing the challenges associated with developing sustainable transport measures, the use of real time mobility data and more interdepartmental, and technologically supported ways of working. The larger LAs were taken as representative of larger cities across Europe. With larger departments, they had more time to engage with the project and pilot the tools and methods developed. Their experiences and practices were transferable to the three follower cities who could learn from the larger LAs and benefit directly from our proven outputs.

In Chap. 4, Sofia Kalakou (VTM, with colleagues Miriam Pirra, Ana Diaz and Sebastian Spundflasch) introduce a transferable methodology for discovering capacity gaps in LAs and discuss a set of ‘generic gaps’ in transport departments which may impede the design and implementation of sustainable transport measures such as gaps in knowledge, ways of working, trust and openness to innovation. This highlights at an operational level the problems which local authorities face when trying to redesign and modernise their transport systems. This is followed by a more in-depth description of key challenges by Sebastian Spundflasch and Heidi Krömker at TUIL (Chap. 5), and how these challenges were further validated.

From the information provided from this analysis of transport departments, Anne Marie Nienaber (Coventry University) adapted Kotter’s [2] model of organisational change to transform the somewhat traditional and conservative departments into ones that were willing to be open and innovative. This 6-step process, described in Chap. 6 (Nienaber, Spundflasch and Soares), was followed by SUITS cities during the project. It can now be claimed that this is a proven, sustainable and transferable approach which can be easily implemented by transport and other local authority departments. It is also supportive of the SUMP process [1].

Chapter 7 authored by Anastasia Founta and Olympia Papadopoulou (from Lever Consult) introduces the capacity building, based on their work developing and delivering standalone capacity training modules to LAs. The final topics were ones which emerged from our needs assessment and related to topics not covered by previous material (e.g. on the Eltis website<sup>3</sup>). An introduction to these topics forms the central portion of this volume. Full copies of the training manual and training material

---

<sup>3</sup> The Urban Mobility Observatory. <https://www.eltis.org>.

are available and downloadable as the SUITS capacity building programme.<sup>4</sup> Each chapter provides an introduction to the subject for those joining transport departments or having to design and implement sustainable transport measures. The authors provide a more detailed discussion of innovation and implementation of sustainable transport measures.

Chapter 9, coauthored by Janet Saunders and colleagues from the local authorities, provides examples of the ways in which sustainable transport measures have been implemented in SUITS cities, with reflections on outcome and impact, challenges and lessons learnt.

This is complemented by Chap. 10 (coauthored by Andree Woodcock, Sebastian Spundflasch, Frederic Rudolph, Kain Glensor, Keelan Fadden-Hopper and Katie Miller-Crolla) which focuses on one particular sustainable transport innovation, Mobility as a Service, which at the time of the project was of especial concern to local authorities.

The following chapters provide sound introductions to a range of topics where gaps in capacity were noted. Chapter 11 looks at ways in which the social impact of transport measures can be measured (Andree Woodcock and Janet Saunders, Coventry University).

Chapter 12 reviews data collection and analysis tools, and describes trials conducted in Kalamaria and Turino to exemplify how mobility data can be used, visualised and integrated to inform decision making. This is authored by the lead of the technical work package, Miriam Calvo (ITENE) and her colleagues Miriam Pirra, Marco Diana, Fotis Liotopoulos and Ferenc Tilesch, from Politecnico di Torino, SBOING and LogDrill, respectively.

The next three chapters (13–14) focus on financing sustainable transport measures:

- Innovative public procurement processes to implement sustainable mobility policy (Stefan Roseanu, INETCO) (Chap. 13).
- In Chap. 14, Olga Feldman (Arcadis) discusses innovative financing mechanisms for sustainable transport and mobility, along with the challenges and risks associated with each.
- Iana Dulckaia and Francesco Bellini (EUROKLEIS) in Chap. 15 outline new business models and partnerships for sustainable mobility and the transport sector. They provide the business model canvases for contemporary transport measures (such as e-bikes) as a means of increasing the potential longevity of new market entrants.

The final section of this volume documents some of the impacts and reflections by project members.

Chapter 16 by Eileen O’Connell, Director of Interactions and evaluation manager of SUITS discusses in Chap. 8 the approach taken to evaluation of process and impact within the project. Chapter 17 by Ann Marie Nienaber and Katerzyna Gut (Coventry

---

<sup>4</sup> SUITS capacity building programme. <https://www.suits-project.eu/capacitybuildingprogram/>.

University) provide a snap short of the impact of COVID-19 on our LAs in 2020 and how the work of the project helped them to become more resilient, and some of the issue that have been raised regarding city planning and transport.

Chapter 18 looks at the experiences of transport departments as part of EU projects, based on the consortium's experience of over 50 Framework 7, H2020 and CIVITAS projects. This is essential reading for transport planners and researchers who might be invited to join EU projects. Chapter 20 summarises the impact of the project and addresses ways in which the work needs to be taken forward.

In making the most of this volume, readers are invited to use individual chapters to enhance understanding or implement processes within their own organisation. We have also produced many online free to use resources in the languages of consortium members (e.g. in terms of implementation, data usage and organisational changes). The final section is more reflective in nature and provides essential reading for any city invited to take part in an EU funded project.

The book as a whole is the only detailed account of the SUITS project.

Andree Woodcock  
Principal Investigator of SUITS  
[www.suits-project.eu](http://www.suits-project.eu)



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement no 690650.

## References

1. Rupprecht Consult: Guidelines. Developing and Implementing a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (2014). [http://www.eltis.org/sites/default/files/guidelines-developing-and-implementing-a-sump\\_final\\_web\\_jan2014b.pdf](http://www.eltis.org/sites/default/files/guidelines-developing-and-implementing-a-sump_final_web_jan2014b.pdf). Accessed 10 Sep 2020
2. Kotter, J.P.: Leading Change. Harvard Business School Press, Boston (1996)