#SUMPsforBSR

Examples from pilots of BSR projects: engaging citizens in the collection of data | 4.3.2026

SUMPs for BSR project, co-funded by the Interreg BSR programme, is supporting transition to sustainable urban mobility planning.

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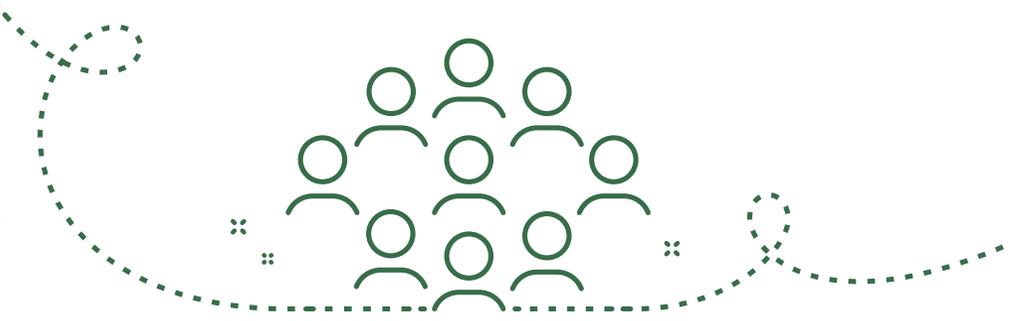Interreg
Baltic Sea Region

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SMART GREEN MOBILITY
SUMPs for BSR

CLIMATE-NEUTRAL SOCIETIES

Why and how to engage citizens in mobility data collection?

- **Why engage citizens?**

  - Adds to data quality (insight into people's motivations and reasons) and local relevance

  - Supports inclusive, evidence-based planning

  - Builds trust and acceptance of mobility interventions among citizens

- **How citizens can be engaged?**

  - Through technical tools or citizen science approaches (e.g. sensors, devices with GPS, manual counting)

  - Digital engagement platforms (e.g. online surveys, mapping exercises)

  - Participatory workshops, panels, focus groups, etc.

  - Open mobility data platforms to engage citizens

Citizens as data collectors

A citizen science approach that engages citizens in data collection activities. The benefits include:

- potentially low cost (citizens contribute their time, personal devices, etc.)

- scalability (sample size or geographic scope can be increased quickly)

- high representability (can include various types of users, track different routes during odd hours, etc.)

- potentially better coverage for micro-mobility (traditional systems tend to undercount light modes)

- opportunity for co-benefits in recruitment (partnerships with schools, employers, etc. expand reach and reduce recruitment costs)

Pilot in Ljubljana, Slovenia where local residents used traffic-counting sensors to measure traffic. Source: WeCount project
https://urban-mobility-observatory.transport.ec.europa.eu/resources/case-studies/wecount-project-advancing-sustainable-mobility-through-citizen-science_en

Citizens as data collectors 2

Real life examples:

- Gävle (Sweden): **Citizens used GPS-enabled mobile app to record their daily trips**, corrected mode classification, and provided feedback on usability - making them active co-producers of mobility data.

- Panevėžys (Lithuania): **School communities (students, parents, teachers) participated in on-site counts of cyclists and bike rack users** for SUMP monitoring.

- Greifswald (Germany): The city tested **sensor devices mounted on bicycles to collect data on overtaking distances, vibrations and air quality**.

- Citizen-science analogue (external example): The WeCount project **equipped residents with traffic-counting sensors to produce neighbourhood-level mobility data**, demonstrating a scalable model for bottom-up mobility monitoring. (Source: https://urban-mobility-observatory.transport.ec.europa.eu/resources/case-studies/wecount-project-advancing-sustainable-mobility-through-citizen-science_en)

The sensor device in Greifswald's active mobility pilot. Author: Mario Pesch.

Citizens as data providers
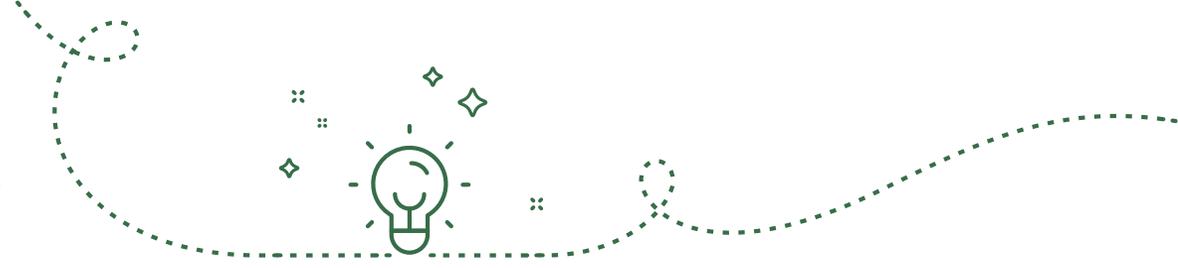
Citizens sharing their mobility experiences and insights via various methods (workshops, surveys, etc.).

The benefits include:

- explains the root causes of mobility behaviour – revealing also non-trips (e.g. why someone prefers a certain route and avoids another)

- captures the real-life experience of people (e.g. issues with crowding, driver behaviour, lighting, etc.)

- validates quantitative findings (e.g. explains the findings in sensor/app data)

- helps understand micro-level problems (e.g. high curbs, dangerous places)

- includes people underrepresented in digital/passive data (e.g. people without smartphones, elderly, people with disabilities)

Citizens as data providers 2

Real life examples:

- **Citizens provided input via QR-code feedback surveys attached to bike parking installations**, contributing qualitative data about safety, comfort, and infrastructure needs (Greifswald)

- **People offering feedback on their mobility experience during workshops and discussions** (Turku)

- **Students provided workshop insights, map-based problem spots, qualitative viewpoints on safety and cycling barriers** (Gdynia)

- Indirect feedback collection (external example): In the GreenSAM project, **elderly residents' questions regarding bike sharing on the city helpline were noted and used as input to plan mobility infrastructure changes** (Tartu, GreenSAM project)

Cycling promotion campaign activities in Gdynia. Weekly cycling breakfast for campaign participants (above) and citizen´s panelists in the Turku pilot area (below). Photos by the City of Gdynia, Sustainable Mobility Unit; and Oona Uusitalo.

Learning materials

Dive deeper into the world of collecting, analysing and using walking and cycling data

- **Practical tools**, such as the HEAT tool (2020) – a useful, reliable tool for municipalities to calculate the health and economic benefits of increasing the share of cycling and walking.

- **Guidelines** for Year-Round Active Mobility Monitoring Guidance (2024), SUMP practitioner briefings on cycling and walking (2019), walking & cycling policy options toolkit (2025), instructions to carry out different data collection tools (GreenSAM)

- **Case studies** from the SUMPs for BSR partner cities' pilots on active mobility data collection

Link to the learning materials

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Thank you!