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Flanders introduces new regulatory framework for Regional SUMPs

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Picture:



Region:

Western Europe

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Topic:

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Link:

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Body:

The Belgian Region of Flanders has introduced a new regional regulatory framework for Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs), which builds on its already extensive experience in this area.

Flanders has been a forerunner in promoting the concept of SUMPs: to date, more than 300 SUMPs are in place. This outstanding position on local mobility planning derives from a tradition of mobility policy that saw changes from the core idea of “the right to mobility” to the “provision of basic mobility” to mandatory SUMPs at the local level in the entire region. Flanders is keen to further improve its mobility policy and has looked at the performance of the latest principle of mandatory SUMPs that put responsibilities and competences on the local level. While there have been clear success stories, such as a policy shift in favour of sustainable mobility as well as cooperation between stakeholders, the actual level of modal shift that has occurred falls short of expectations.

In early 2019, Flanders has implemented a major change to its mobility policy by putting into force a new regulatory framework for regional mobility plans (R-SUMPs). The new framework establishes 15 transport regions that need to create and implement such R-SUMPs. Each region includes cities and municipalities that already influence each other from a spatial perspective. Together, the authorities involved will take on the challenge of providing user-oriented sustainable mobility through planning, implementation and evaluation.

The basic idea is to provide “basic accessibility” for all. This is defined as the ability to make use of important social functions using demand-oriented transport systems – in short to take part in social life. An integrated transport system of intermodal mobility is the backbone of providing basic accessibility. It works with four layers:

1. the rail network for international, interregional and intercity connections;
2. a core network of trams and bus lines connecting the main areas of cities and municipalities;
3. an additional network of bus lines feeding the core network taking account of peak times involving commuting and educational trips;
4. customised transport on demand at the neighbourhood level providing shared services, collective taxis or mobility as a service (MaaS) solutions.

The new approach based on regional mobility plans was tested during 2016 - 2018 with pilots in five of the new transport regions to ensure that the new regulation was well informed. The other 10 regions started with the development of regional SUMP's and the design of new public transport networks in the second half of 2018.

One of the pilot regions was Antwerp, which comprises 33 diverse municipalities and has a total population of more than 1 million people. The transport region's vision is set out for 2030 and calls on the implementation of multimodal accessibility. The target values for modal split is a 50/50 share between cars on the one side and public transport, walking and cycling on the other. Work on the vision saw extensive collaboration between municipalities, cities, mobility actors and civil organisations. This participatory nature is visible in the vision itself: it puts users at the centre and aims to make all trips safe, smooth, reliable and sociable, which is translated as the need to provide comfortable, high-quality and safe services and infrastructure. Ten ambitious objectives further detail the development of the region to become a smart, attractive and healthy place to live, work and in which to do business.

Flanders takes on the role of a forerunner once more with its new regulatory framework by moving the design of its future mobility from the local level to the regional sphere.

You can find the original article by Patrick Auwerx of Mobiel 21 with more details and background at the CIVITAS PROSPERITY website [here](#).

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