



High-Level City Event “Leading Innovation for Impact”

Smart Cities World Congress (SCWG) and Tomorrow.Mobility World Congress
16-18 November 2021

Barcelona, Spain, 17 November 2021 –

The EIT Urban Mobility – an initiative of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) – was launched two years ago at the 2019 Smart City Expo World Congress in Barcelona. To highlight its second anniversary, EIT Urban Mobility brought together top elected officials and policy practitioners from several cities in Europe in two roundtable discussions to share their key priorities and ideas to advance sustainable mobility and foster the uptake of transport innovations.

A core mission of EIT Urban Mobility is to connect cities with start-ups and industry partners to generate new solutions to address challenging urban issues. This requires cities to take a leading approach to identify their most pressing needs and to be flexible and responsive to new innovations.

Panel I: Elected officials

Vision and priorities

Transporting people and goods are central to the functioning of a city. Being more efficient in facilitating individual mobility and the transport of goods has a vital impact on a city’s quality of life and its ability to attract investment and jobs.

Yet, traditional modes of car-centric transportation models also generate large externalities that must be tackled – such as noise and air pollution, urban heat islands, congestion. These externalities touch all parts of the city, thus causing a lot of complexity in implementing effective solutions.

The elected officials – from Barcelona (Spain), Milan (Italy), Thessaloniki (Greece), Vitoria-Gasteiz (Spain) and Izmir (Turkey) – set out their vision and priorities for urban mobility in the coming years:

- To strengthen their public transportation systems to be efficient, attractive, and well connected **regionally and with other modes of transport.**
- To construct the infrastructure for tomorrow’s mobility solutions: 15-minute **cities, electric buses, bicycle lanes, better use of waterways, etc.**



- To raise awareness and build a new culture of citizens **not using private vehicles**.

“It is possible to construct a dream that is different for our cities.” Arianna Censi, City of Milan

To achieve such an ambitious agenda will require different ways of thinking and working, and therefore innovation and speed are critical to urban mobility. Cities must build the capacity to shorten the cycle to learn and scale solutions, because the challenges they face are becoming increasingly urgent. They need to go faster.

“The mode of transportation we have developed over last years is not a valid model for any of our cities. It is certainly not a good fit with our ecological and sustainability goals that we represented on our 2030 agenda. We need to transition towards a more diverse model where public transport and multi-modality are at the centre. And we also need to be open to new solutions and innovative practices”. Laia Bonet, City of Barcelona

What does it take to scale innovation?

Partnerships with other stakeholders: City governments are at the core of promoting change and implementing transformative policies. However, a successful transition to sustainable mobility cannot happen without partnering closely with researchers, the business community, European institutions, and citizen groups.

International collaboration: The pandemic also spurred cities to form international relationships more than ever. The urgency and critical public health, economic and sustainability challenges posed by COVID-19 created fertile territory for cities to discuss challenges, share solutions and learn the do’s and don’ts’s from others.

Citizen engagement: Citizens are the producers, users, consumers, and owners of the cities they live in, and they must play an effective and meaningful role in innovation projects. Such engagement can take many forms, from actively participating and contributing their ideas to different and fun ways to bring people into the conversation. In Vitoria-Gasteiz, the city funded training workshops in schools to teach children how to bicycle in urban environments and conduct basic bicycle repairs.

A metropolitan and regional approach: Urban mobility issues are about much more than the city itself. Regional funding is often at the core of transportation infrastructure; and people are increasingly moving out of the city and commuting in. Strong regional connections and a comprehensive approach is necessary.

Investment and incentives: The public sector must invest in public transport and green mobility solutions if they are to truly succeed in the transition to more resilient, sustainable, and climate-change proof cities. In addition to investing in sustainable infrastructure, cities must also focus on how to attract people towards using that infrastructure. In this sense, well-designed incentives have a strong role to play to facilitate behaviour change. Whether it’s making ferry crossings free for people on a bicycle or providing subsidies to purchase electric bikes, economic bonuses and benefits can be effective in changing the culture of car dependency.



Panel II: High-level city officials

A second panel consisting of high-level city officials then convened to discuss how to turn these high-level vision and priorities into actual projects on the ground.

How to go from vision to action?

The planning practitioners were from Barcelona and its metropolitan area (Spain), Stockholm (Sweden), Prague (Czech Republic), Milan (Italy), and Helsinki (Finland), bringing together different perspectives from varied contexts. Together a few key messages emerged:

Planning for the future has to be flexible and account for the accelerating pace of change, such as with digitization and electrification. The most important thing is to have a clear set of goals, objectives, and strategies for the city. Thus, even if disruptive change happens, cities at least still have a clear direction on where they want to go and can adapt their activities accordingly.

Equally important is bringing citizens into the conversation to set the vision for their city. Having a credible participatory process is essential to give the city a mandate and to generate a common understanding of the desired outcome. Even if people do not agree with a specific idea or solution, they may be more willing to accept it if they agree with the foundation of how those decisions were made and what outcome they are ultimately meant to achieve.

Cities need to be able to pose precise questions to get better answers. This applies also to partnerships with industry and academia – to be challenge-driven and engage other partners such as companies and start-ups to help to creatively solve specific challenges that the city is facing. This also requires moving out of a mentality of pre-deciding on specific solutions, as opposed to thinking more broadly about the desired outcome and new and innovative ways to achieve it. It also means engaging private companies to be interested in the messiness and complexity of solving urban problems.

“Our role in this is to articulate our needs and our goals in the long-term and the short-term. We have found different ways to collaborate where we can be challenge-driven and make calls on issues that we would like our academic and industry partners to solve, and that’s quite fruitful.”

Karin Ekdahl Wästberg, City of Stockholm

Pilot projects are important for experimentation, learning and economic development, especially if they are embedded in the long-term strategic thinking and planning of cities. Pilot projects can contribute to a continuous adaptation and fine-tuning of these strategies by taking on board lessons learned and a deep understanding of why certain pilots fail. This is necessary as part of the process, especially if the end goal is to integrate innovative approaches on a more structural basis.

“The keywords of our approach are listening, experimentation and fine-tuning – always under the umbrella of our sustainable urban mobility plan (SUMP).” ***Valentino Sevino, AMAT Milan***



*“If you’re always applying tactical solutions, you will win some battles but not the war. You need a strategy to win the war, and you need to define what is the war. Climate change, pollution, safety, healthy cities.” **Àngel López, City of Barcelona***

Procurement reform is core for cities to transition to innovation. The innovation cycle has sped up so much that cities often find themselves in the position of reactive policy making, responding to what is happening in their city, rather than proactively defining the agenda and the solutions. Cities must be equipped with the tools and capacity to keep apace and manage the faster rhythm of the industry, and more flexible procurement processes and different methods to have a creative dialogue on tender documents are critical to allowing cities to do so.

“What we want is to move into proactive policy making and that entails being in a constant dialogue with the private sector on the things coming to the market that will be disrupting the status quo. We cannot be deciding alone about things that involve the entire spectrum of actors.”
Petr Suška, City of Prague

Employee training and development has become one key aspect for cities to try to cope with this fast pace of innovation. Cities are focusing on upskilling their own teams of city employees to operate in a world of accelerated change.

Main takeaways

Cities are on the front line on climate work and transport decarbonisation. They are a driving force behind innovation to tackle and solve the mobility problems of today and focus on innovative ideas that lead to concrete results for a more sustainable future.

To achieve the global and local sustainability goals and make the shift to more sustainable urban mobility we need also strong collaboration across all segments of the society to change mindsets, embrace change, and create impactful solutions to improve quality of life.

Together, urban leaders and transport experts, businesses, and researchers are shaping the EIT Urban Mobility eco-system for smart, green, and integrated transport solutions for the future of urban mobility and liveable urban spaces.

With the above main takeaways, the City Club - the platform for cities of the EIT Urban Mobility for collaborating, sharing best practice, upscaling ideas and putting them to work – will develop its strategic roadmap and key activities for the year 2022 and beyond to foster new collaborations across the eco-system and lead innovation action for more impact at the local level.



Participants

Panel I: Elected officials

Moderator:

- **Rob van Gijzel**, Chairman of the EIT Urban Mobility Supervisory Board and former Mayor of Eindhoven, the Netherlands

Panellists:

- **Laia Bonet**, Deputy Mayor for the 2030 Agenda, Digital Transition, Sports, Territorial and Metropolitan Coordination and International Relations. City Councillor for Mobility, **City of Barcelona, Spain**
- **Arianna Censi**, Deputy Mayor for Transport, **City of Milan, Italy**
- **Konstantinos Zervas**, Mayor of **Thessaloniki, Greece**
- **Ana Oregi**, Councillor for Climate Action, Mobility and Public Space, **City of Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain**
- **Tunç Soyer**, Mayor of **Izmir Metropolitan Municipality, Turkey**

Panel II: High-level city officials

Moderator:

- **Georgia Ayfantopoulou**, Deputy Director of the Hellenic Institute of Transport (HIT)/CERTH, Greece

Panellists:

- **Àngel López**, Head of Mobility Strategies, **City of Barcelona, Spain** and **Chair of EIT Urban Mobility's City Club**
- **Joan Maria Bigas**, Head of the Mobility and Transport Unit, **Barcelona Metropolitan Area, Spain**
- **Karin Ekdahl Wästberg**, Innovation director, **City of Stockholm, Sweden**
- **Petr Suška**, Member of the Board and Smart City, Innovations and Project Management Section, **City of Prague, Czech Republic**
- **Valentino Sevino**, Head of Mobility Planning Area, **AMAT (Environmental Mobility and Territory Agency), City of Milan, Italy**
- **Stefano Riazola**, Director of Mobility, **City of Milan, Italy**
- **Santtu von Bruun**, Head of Unit Innovation and New experiments, **City of Helsinki, Finland**

Videoclip messages by:

- **Anjes Tjarks**, Minister for Transport and Mobility Transition, **Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg**
- **Andrew Harijgens**, Alderman Sustainability, Mobility and Culture, **City of Helmond**



About the City Club

City Club is EIT Urban Mobility's platform for local authorities for sharing best practice, upscaling ideas and putting them to work. This is a collaborative community of towns, cities and metropolitan area authorities. The members share a powerful vision for sustainable urban mobility and liveable urban spaces. The City Club is at the core of the EIT Urban Mobility, which builds on understanding and solving some of the most critical challenges connected to transport and mobility in urban areas through an open innovation community approach.

The current City Club members are: Municipality of Amsterdam, Barcelona City Council, AMB – Barcelona Metropolitan Area, City of Copenhagen, Municipality of Eindhoven, Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, Municipality of Helmond, City of Helsinki, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, Municipality of Lublin, Municipality of Milan, City of Munich, City of Stockholm, Ville et Eurométropole de Strasbourg, City of Stuttgart, Toulouse Métropole, ZTM – Public Transport Authority Warsaw.