

# STAKEHOLDERS' ENGAGEMENT

## For Long Term Transition Planning

2020  
**CiViTAS**  
Cleaner and better transport in cities

SUMP-PLUS





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# Introduction



Building and deploying a SUMP is a complicated endeavour that calls for a targeted and well-thought-out process of stakeholder engagement. Decisions with such far-reaching implications for a city and its residents require a methodical, open, and deliberate planning process. But why exactly is that?

Simply put, it considerably improves the quality of sustainable urban mobility measures. In order to jointly analyze local mobility problems, establish shared goals and targets, identify mobility strategies, and pick actions that enjoy broad support, a participatory approach is essential. There are clear benefits to doing so:

- Improves the quality of decision-making;
- Eliminates delays and cuts costs in implementation;
- Helps stakeholders understand their goals and the issues surrounding them;
- Gives stakeholders a sense of ownership over decisions and measures, which will make them easier to accept;
- Builds local capacity;
- Makes it possible for stakeholders and decision-makers to learn from each other by sharing information and experiences.

However, for this process to deliver all of the above, it is essential to, first of all, understand who are your stakeholders, how to engage them and when.

This course is developed by EIP within the scope of the SUMP PLUS project. This course aims at offering cities an overview of the most important steps to consider when conducting a stakeholder engagement process for long-term transition planning. The knowledge presented here derives mainly from the SUMP-PLUS project and the analysis of the engagement experience that the cities involved in the project had.





The SUMP-PLUS project is designed to address urban mobility-related challenges and to exploit new opportunities, by developing a strong, rigorous evidence base through co-created City Laboratories approach. This builds, in most cases, on the strengths of the existing SUMPs and SULPs or on developing such plans where they do not exist.

This approach is being demonstrated in six very diverse EU cities: Alba Iulia (RO), Antwerp (BE), Klaipėda (LT), Lucca (IT), Greater Manchester (UK), and Platanias (GR).

In SUMP-PLUS, EIP provided the cities with a set of engagement instruments (Mobility Forum, City Integrator and Citizens Engagement Platform) to be implemented which are meant to help them achieve their goals within SUMP-PLUS. Each of these instruments has a specific purpose, tackling different subjects and targeting a distinct set of stakeholders.

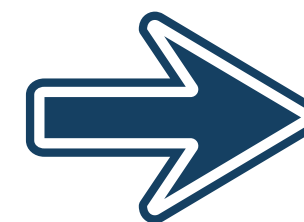
These instruments have been developed and implemented according to local needs and activities, to create better awareness and commitment to sustainable mobility among institutional stakeholders, private businesses, and citizens, as well as to help in building momentum for some of the core measures that cities plan to undertake or to generate new solutions and business models.

Their goal is to take engagement and participation practices in the six SUMP-PLUS cities to a higher level of development and implementation, tailored to the specific contexts.

These engagement instruments have not only played an integral role within the project's scope but have also supported the PLUS that cities needed in order to reach their goals. With the help of a well-laid-out plan for engaging stakeholders, all cities have succeeded to open the door to more targeted dialogue between them and their stakeholders which will lead to achieving a high level of impact in their long-term transition planning.

Throughout this course, the SUMP PLUS cities have also offered their insights on various aspects of the engagement process and how they have dealt with specific challenges. Are you curious what they have to say?

**Let's find out!**





1.

# How to map the stakeholders





# What is stakeholder mapping?

Stakeholder mapping is **critical for assessing the influence and interest** of project stakeholders. Knowing how to organize and manage stakeholders will have an impact on the result of your SUMP, and a proper stakeholder map can help you navigate your way around hurdles more efficiently.

A straightforward explanation of stakeholder mapping is the visual process of arranging all project stakeholders on a single map. The primary advantage of a stakeholder map is obtaining a visual picture of all the individuals that can influence your project and their relationships.

Stakeholder maps are made to help you figure out what's going on in your environment by showing who has the power to help your project. Stakeholder mapping is a collaborative process of research, debate, and discussion that draws on many views to identify a comprehensive list of significant stakeholders.

The process of stakeholder mapping is as important as the result, and the quality of the process depends heavily on the knowledge of the people participating. It is important to note, however, that different stages in SUMP design and implementation may require subsequent stakeholder mapping as you might find they differ based on the stage.

## Key Message

**Mapping can be broken down into three main steps:**

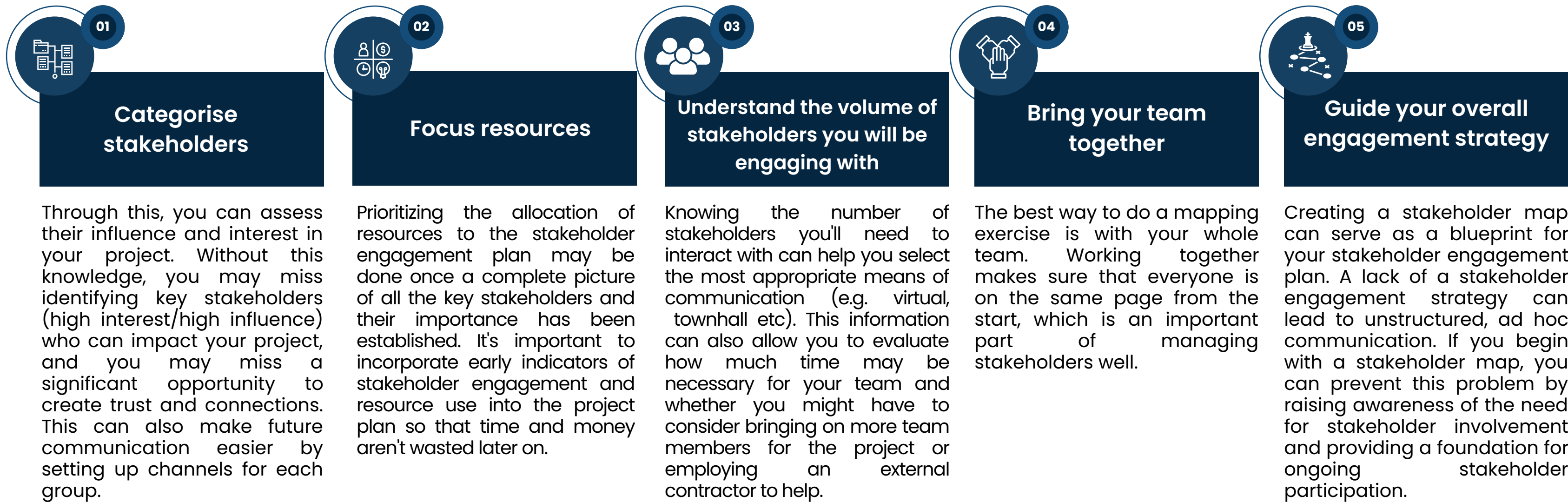
- **Identifying:** listing relevant groups, organizations, and people
- **Analyzing:** understanding stakeholder perspectives and interests
- **Grouping:** ranking stakeholder relevance and identifying issues



# Why is stakeholder mapping important?

Mapping out who has a vested interest in seeing a SUMP succeed is crucial. Most initiatives, in reality, have many different people with vested interests in the outcome. Having identified all parties involved, you'll be more equipped to manage their expectations. City representatives need to communicate with key stakeholders to gain insight. Insights provided by stakeholders will be crucial to the SUMP's success. Moreover, including the stakeholders in the initial phase of developing the local vision for sustainable mobility would boost their sense of accomplishment.

The **benefits of stakeholder mapping** should not be overlooked. These make it easier to:





# Approach for stakeholder mapping.

Stakeholder mapping is a visual analytical tool which helps you to better understand the often complicated interplay of issues and relationships by showing where stakeholders stand when evaluated by the same key criteria and compared to each other. This should generally be done at the beginning of the process. However, it would be beneficial to also be revisited throughout the process of designing and implementing the SUMP.

As mentioned, the Stakeholder's mapping process is usually approached through three main steps: **identifying, analysing, and grouping.**

## **a. Identifying:**

A project can have many stakeholders from various organisations and fields. Keep in mind that the list you make will also depend greatly on your goals and your previous experiences.

Considering this, and to make the identification process as comprehensive as possible, the best way to make a preliminary list of relevant potential stakeholders is to start by drafting a list of questions that will help you set up a mental guide for what to think about when thinking about potential stakeholders.

## Example of questions:

- Who will be affected by the SUMP?
- Who will be able to change how the project turns out?
- Who might be in favor of it and who might be against it?
- What kind of partnerships could be made to support the SUMP design and implementation?
- Whose opinions or concerns about the topic might not be heard?
- Who will be in charge of managing the project's results?
- Whose participation or lack of participation can help or hinder the results?



**b. Analysing:**

This step should help you figure out why stakeholders might want to take part in the process of engagement. Try to go over the preliminary list and select those who are affected by transport and mobility issues (either positively or negatively), as well as those with power or expertise in influencing transport and mobility projects and those who have a say in how decisions are carried out or have a stake in the issue.

To further help you in the analysis, consider answering some of the following questions:

- What are your stakeholders goals in terms of sustainable mobility??
- Where do they stand? Will they gain or lose from designing and implementing the SUMP?
- What kind of power do they have?
- Are they willing to take part to take part in the process of designing and implementing the SUMP?
- Will they be willing to offer something?
- Are they able to make a difference?

If you know what stakeholders could work together, it will be easier to persuade them of the benefits of the process.

**c. Grouping:**

Within this last step, clusters of stakeholders with shared interests, capabilities, and/or importance to the issue should be identified. This can help you gain a better understanding of potential conflicts as well as highlight potential holes in the stakeholder selection. An influence-interest matrix approach to grouping them can be most valuable since it classifies stakeholders based on how much they care about the topic and how much power they have over it. The most important thing is to involve as many stakeholders as possible who have a lot of power and a lot at stake.

	Low influence	High influence
Low stake	Lowest-priority stakeholder group.	Useful for decision making opinion forming and brokering.
High stake	Important stakeholder group, perhaps in need of empowerment.	Most critical stakeholder group.

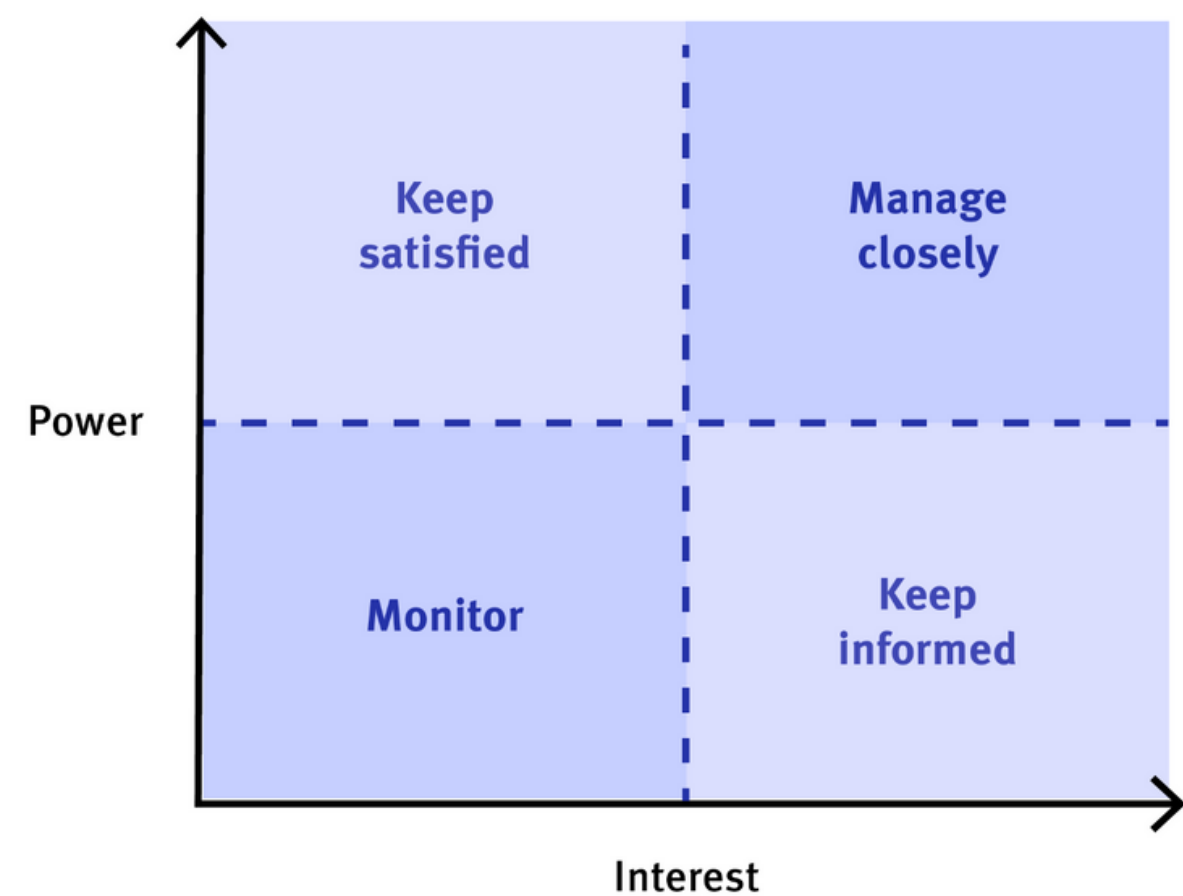
However, stakeholders can be grouped in multiple ways depending on how broad your objectives are. Some examples can be found in the next slides.





# Example:

**The Power-Interest Matrix:** This technique helps you to visualise SUMP stakeholders, their level of interest, and how much power they have to change a SUMP's path. A stakeholder power-interest map identifies, investigates, and aligns project participants. The matrix shows "power" on the Y-axis and "interest" on the X-axis.



NNGROUP.COM **NN/g**

Source: Nielsen Norman Group – Stakeholder analysis

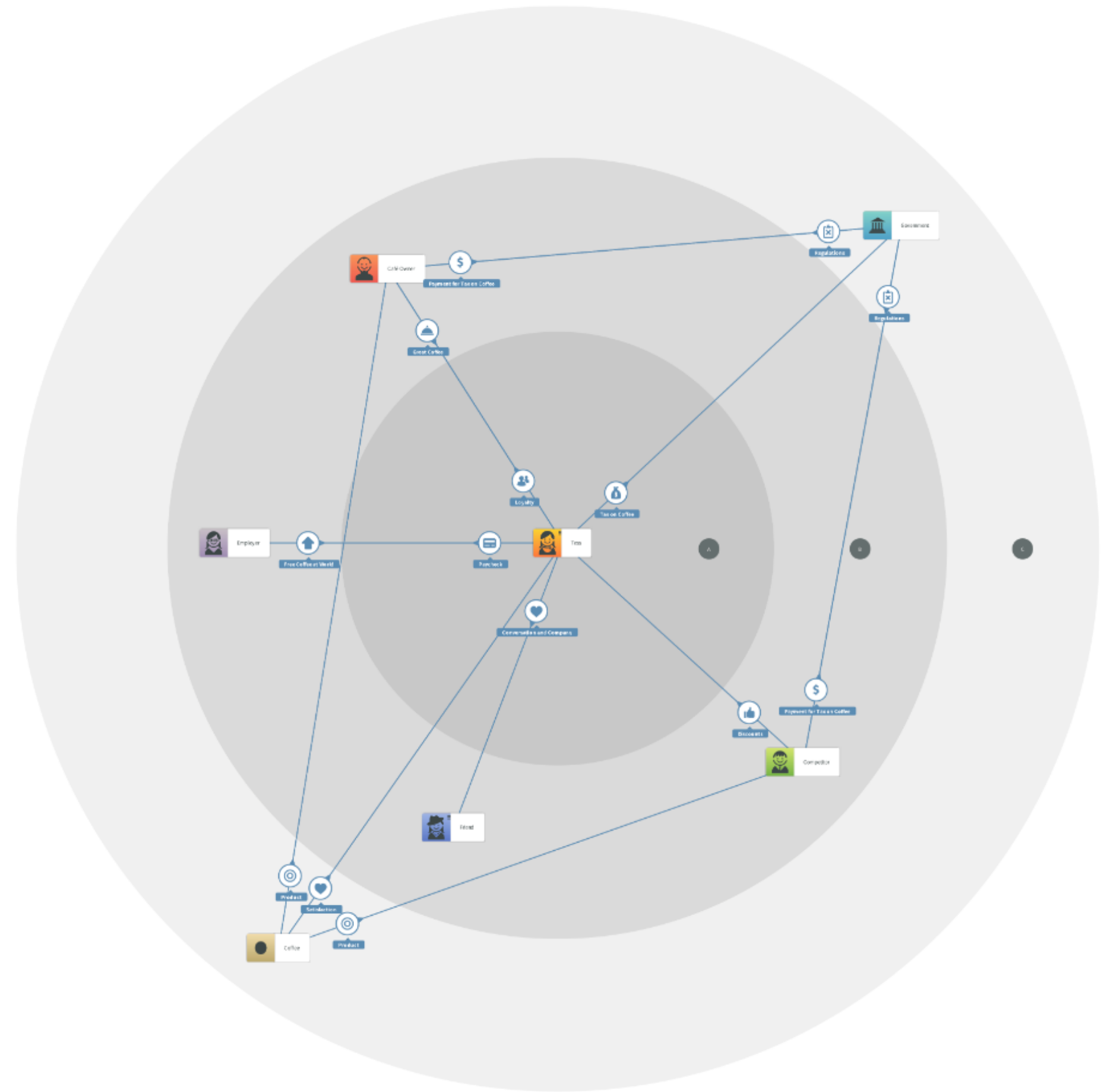
<h3>Satisfy</h3> <p>High Influence, Low Interest</p> <p>These stakeholders are highly influential but they don't have a lot of interest, nor are they actively engaged in your project.</p> <p>Consider their objectives and keep them satisfied to ensure they remain strong advocates. Getting them off side poses a risk.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Regulators (eg. EPA, FDA, Tax)</li><li>Administrators (ie. with discretion over budgets)</li></ul>	<h3>Manage</h3> <p>High Influence, High Interest</p> <p>These are your key stakeholders.</p> <p>They have a lot of influence and a strong interest in the outcomes. Manage these stakeholders well to build strong relationships and ensure you retain their support. Involve them in decisions and engage regularly.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Trade Unions</li><li>Politicians and senior officials</li><li>Investors</li><li>Senior Management</li><li>Project Sponsors</li></ul>
<h3>Monitor</h3> <p>Low Influence, Low Interest</p> <p>These stakeholders sit on the periphery of the project. They are neither interested or have much influence.</p> <p>Monitor their activity from time to time to stay on top of their involvement. Their relevance may change over time. Communicate to keep them informed and encourage their interest.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Support/Complementary Services</li></ul>	<h3>Inform</h3> <p>Low Influence, High Interest</p> <p>These stakeholders have a strong interest in your project but very little power to influence it.</p> <p>Anticipate their needs and keep these stakeholders informed to ensure their continued support. Consult on their area of interest and use their input to improve your chances of success.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>End users of a program or product</li><li>Members of the community</li><li>Community Action groups</li><li>Media outlets</li></ul>



# Example:

## Ecosystem maps:

Ecosystem maps help in the visualization of complete systems, including all actors and their interrelationships. These often feature sectors, wide-scale stakeholders, interactions, and value exchanges. Ecosystems can grow extremely complicated as a result of all these intricacies, therefore they frequently require different zoom levels.





A woman with curly hair is smiling and looking down at a yellow sticky note on a glass wall. The background is a blurred office setting with other people and more sticky notes. A large blue geometric shape, resembling a stylized 'W' or a series of connected triangles, is overlaid on the right side of the image.

2.

## **When to conduct stakeholder engagement activities**



By this point, we have already established that developing effective, practical initiatives for a shift toward sustainable mobility requires the participation of relevant stakeholders as well as citizens. But when exactly should you plan for the engagement activities?

Planning and carrying out participation programs requires a wide range of abilities and extensive knowledge. Inputs from stakeholders and citizens must be channelled back into technical planning and political decision-making, and they must be coordinated with other activities linked to the SUMP.

As the SUMP cycle goes on, each stage has different goals that require a different approach and techniques. At many points in the SUMP cycle, stakeholders and citizens can get involved. However, different European countries and cities have different rules regarding how stakeholders and citizens can take part in the SUMP Process.

Several countries have formal, required consultation processes for large and medium-sized transportation projects, as well as for making transportation plans and SUMPs. For example:

## Interesting facts

Local Transport Plans, which English local governments are required by law to make, need participation, but there is no set way for people to take part.

There is a well-defined legislative framework in place in France for the creation of urban mobility plans as well as for the participation of institutional actors; nevertheless, the law is not particularly demanding with regard to the level of citizen participation.

Many European local authorities have little to no practice with participatory planning methods and few formal channels for stakeholders' and citizens' input. These are only told about plans after they have already been finalized, and planning is still predominantly done by transport and technical specialists.



## Example

There is no standardised procedure for when and how participation should take place in the SUMP process. However, there are various opportunities to engage with stakeholders, citizens, or both. As the starting point for participation in the SUMP process is flexible to a certain degree, each city authority needs to find its approach and define the stages as well as the level of involvement that is appropriate to its local context (e.g. capacities provided for participation, overall participation strategy).

Ideally, stakeholders should be actively involved since the development of the core elements of the SUMP (e.g. policy scenarios, vision, objectives and measure packages). Such an early involvement requires that the city authority has a clear picture of how participants should contribute to SUMP development, and is capable to facilitate an early, discursive process. Alternatively, a city authority should at least discuss the core SUMP elements with a representative group of key stakeholders and allow other stakeholders and the public to provide feedback.

One of the main challenges for cities is to choose different tools and methods for participation at different stages of planning to get people interested and get them involved early.

As an example, the SUMP PLUS cities worked with 3 diverse engagement tools – mobility forum (red), city integrator (purple) and citizens engagement (green). Both the mobility forum and city integrator rely on stakeholder participation and, as can be seen in the image below, these fed into almost all phases of the SUMP development. The citizens' engagement platform was utilised however in specific phases which garnered a higher interest for citizens.

***\*For more info on these instruments, you can consult the factsheets in the resources section. \****





3.

# How to consult the stakeholders using various techniques





# What are the various levels of stakeholder engagement?

There are different levels of engagement, from just informing stakeholders of what you intend to do to actively asking for their involvement and letting them take part in the final decision. Depending on the phase of the SUMP and the types and needs of stakeholders, you can use a variety of tools and strategies to get stakeholders engaged at different levels and in different ways.

The extent to which citizens and stakeholders will participate in SUMP decision-making must be established by the city authority representatives. There are various systems to categorise and rank the level of engagement, all depending on the nature of a project. However, the most common one in the context of SUMP development and implementation is: inform, consult, involve, collaborate, and empower.

► **Inform:** Results from each phase of SUMP development are communicated to citizens and stakeholders as soon as possible. However, informing the public is not the same as engaging with it.

► **Consult:** The city authority disseminates information about the SUMP process; listens and responds to citizen and stakeholder concerns. Inputs from consultation processes are not always taken into account in formulating final decisions.

► **Involve:** Throughout SUMP's stages, the city authority, citizens, and stakeholders collaborate. Participants are told how their participation influenced the outcome and how their issues and concerns were addressed.

► **Collaborate:** The city authority asks stakeholders for suggestions and innovative solutions. The city authority must commit to incorporating these inputs as much as possible into final decisions.

► **Empower:** The city authority guarantees to implement suggestions from stakeholders or citizens. If citizens and stakeholders are not truly involved, this may violate democratic values.



# How do you approach stakeholders?

After deciding to what level you want to engage your stakeholders, it's time to start planning how to approach them.

Email or official letters are the most common ways to approach and stay in touch with stakeholders. However, how these are structured, formulated and delivered can greatly influence how they respond. So let's look at a few helpful tips to help you gain a better response rate:

## **1. Timing counts!**

Even though you may work at night, that doesn't mean everyone does. General emails should be limited to business hours as they might get lost in the inbox otherwise or some stakeholders might not appreciate receiving emails after work hours. If the case, consider different time zones as well.

## **2. Don't leave out the subject line.**

Emails without clear or interesting subject lines can get lost in the mix. To keep your email from being ignored, make sure the subject line is clear and short so it's easy to figure out what it's about.

## **3. Content is key! Make it easy to read.**

Don't write long blocks of text. No one likes to open an email that is just a big block of text with no paragraphs, bullets, or headers. Make your sentences short and easy. Your stakeholders will remember more of what you say if you use good formatting.

## **4. Avoid reply-all.**

When it comes to sharing information, don't just hit "reply-all" when you're in a group email. Think about whether or not everyone in the group needs to get the email you're about to send.

## **Remember**

Your first contact with a stakeholder is likely to be the start of a working relationship, so try to make a good first impression. You can also figure out what style of communication seems to work best based on how they respond and use that style in all future communication with them. On the first contact, you should tell them who you are and why you're reaching out, since they might not know everything about the situation or why you're reaching out.



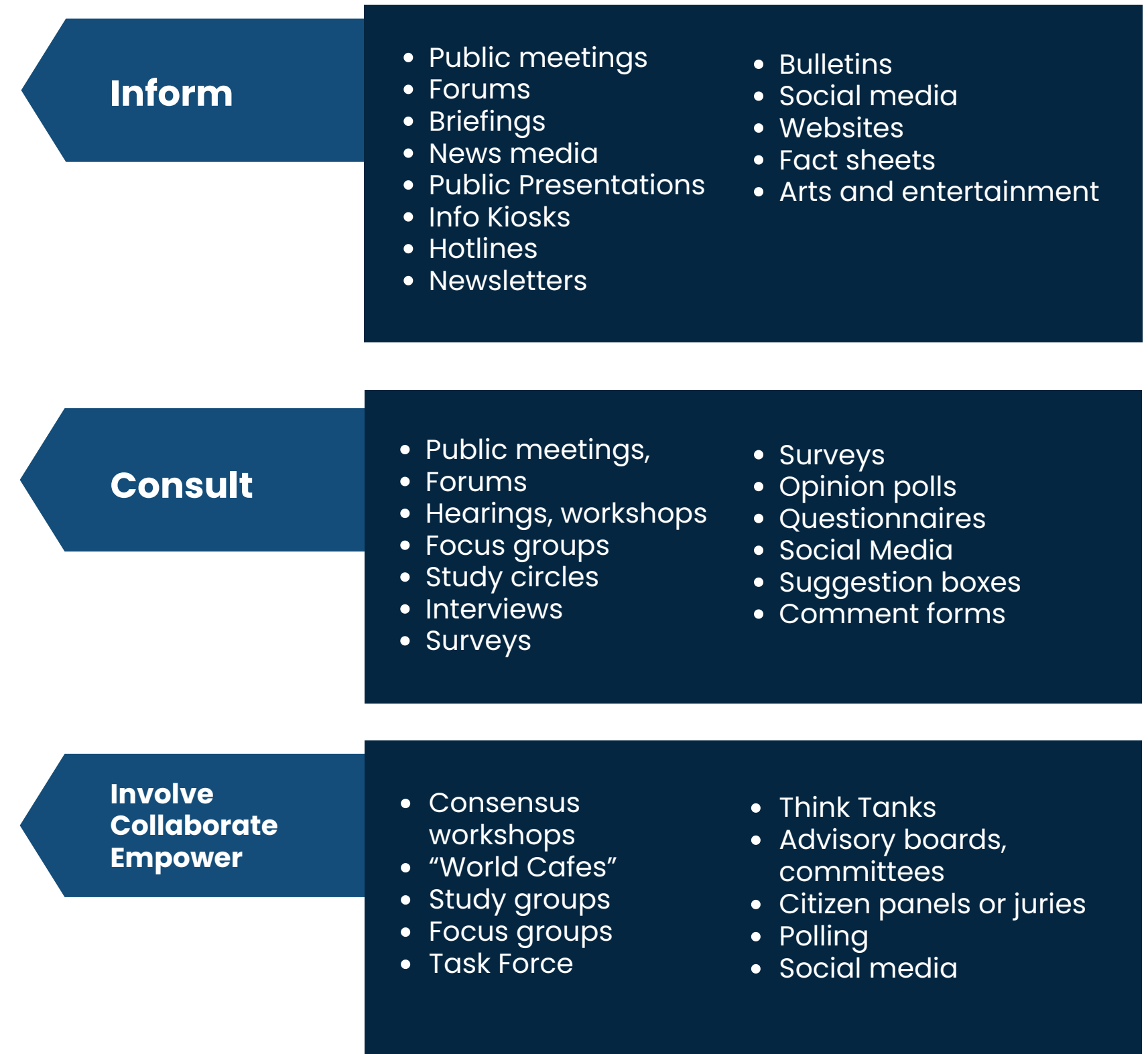
# What are the classical methods of stakeholder engagement?

After figuring out whom the most important people to involve are and how, as well as what the goals of the engagement process are, you can plan the process more concretely. Most of the time, public meetings and one-way communication aren't the only way people can take part in developing and implementing a SUMP.

Most of the time, a city authority doesn't choose just one level of engagement. Instead, it uses methods from different levels and puts them in the right order for the planning process to make sure that participation is meaningful and interactive.

There are a lot of methods to get different groups of stakeholders involved at different points in a project or decision-making process. Which ones are best depends on the goals, the topics, the stakeholder analysis, and the strategy for getting people involved.

The following diagram illustrates the most common methods:





To ensure that everyone who wants to participate may do so, it's crucial to employ multiple strategies for participation. A successful SUMP involvement process will typically include a mix of methods (or tools), both offline and online, focused and open.

How people have engaged in the past (by, say, adapting successful former methods), what people want, or what the law mandates can all influence the choice of tools. The city authority should think about the needs of the stakeholders they're trying to reach when deciding which participation methods to use, such as:

- the timing and availability of tools
- the location of events
- the accessibility of venues
- linguistic and cultural differences
- the need for translation and the availability of computers.

Consider the following before deciding on a method of engagement:

## Key Questions

- Are citizens, stakeholders, or both, able to be included?
- When it comes to SUMP development, does this tool support all SUMP phases, or only some?
- Can the desired outcomes be obtained through using the tool?
- How long does it take to use the tool well?
- How many people can the tool effectively involve?
- Who will use this tool?
- How much time and effort (including preparation, implementation, follow-up, logistics, equipment, and procedures), as well as money, is required to use the tool?





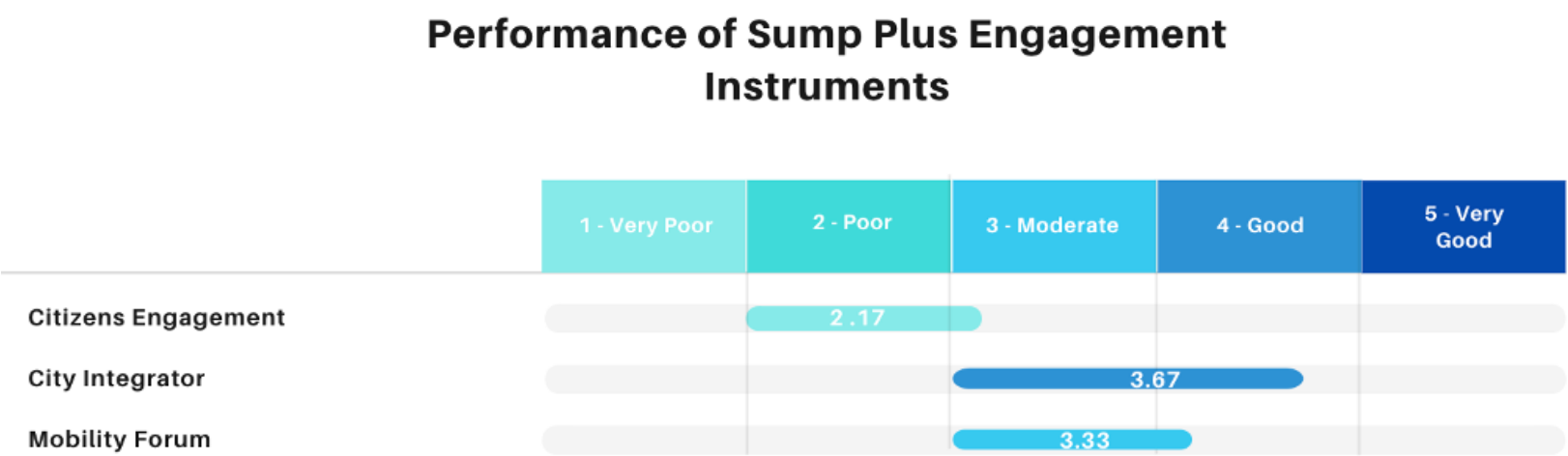
# Example:

## SUMP PLUS engagement instruments:

In SUMP-PLUS, EIP provided the cities with a set of engagement instruments to be implemented which are meant to help them achieve their goals within SUMP PLUS. These instruments are:

- **The Mobility Forum** aims at improving institutional cooperation and participation in transport planning by facilitating communication among stakeholders on transportation issues.
- **The City Integrator** represents a platform for discussions and exchange of views and information between major city departments’ representatives. The Integrator is a way to facilitate a joint understanding regarding mobility issues and how they are impacting the activities of different departments in terms of decision-making or daily activities.
- **Citizen Engagement** represents a tool for cities to “take the pulse” of their citizens regarding mobility issues and, at the same time, to facilitate the citizens’ direct access to the decision-making process on mobility issues.

Within SUMP-PLUS, out of the three instruments, the City Integrator has been the most successful one. The reason why this instrument has performed better is because of both a more targeted set of stakeholders and a more specific topic of discussion. Similarly, the Mobility Forum had a better rate of success in engaging stakeholders in dialogue due to more specific topics and a wider set of stakeholders. The success of this instrument could also be attributed to the fact that as opposed to the City Integrator and for most – Citizens' Engagement, all cities were already familiar with the use of this instrument to some extent. However, the Citizens' Engagement platform has proved to be a challenge for all cities, both due to the COVID restrictions as well as, in some cases, because of the lack of openness to dialogue.



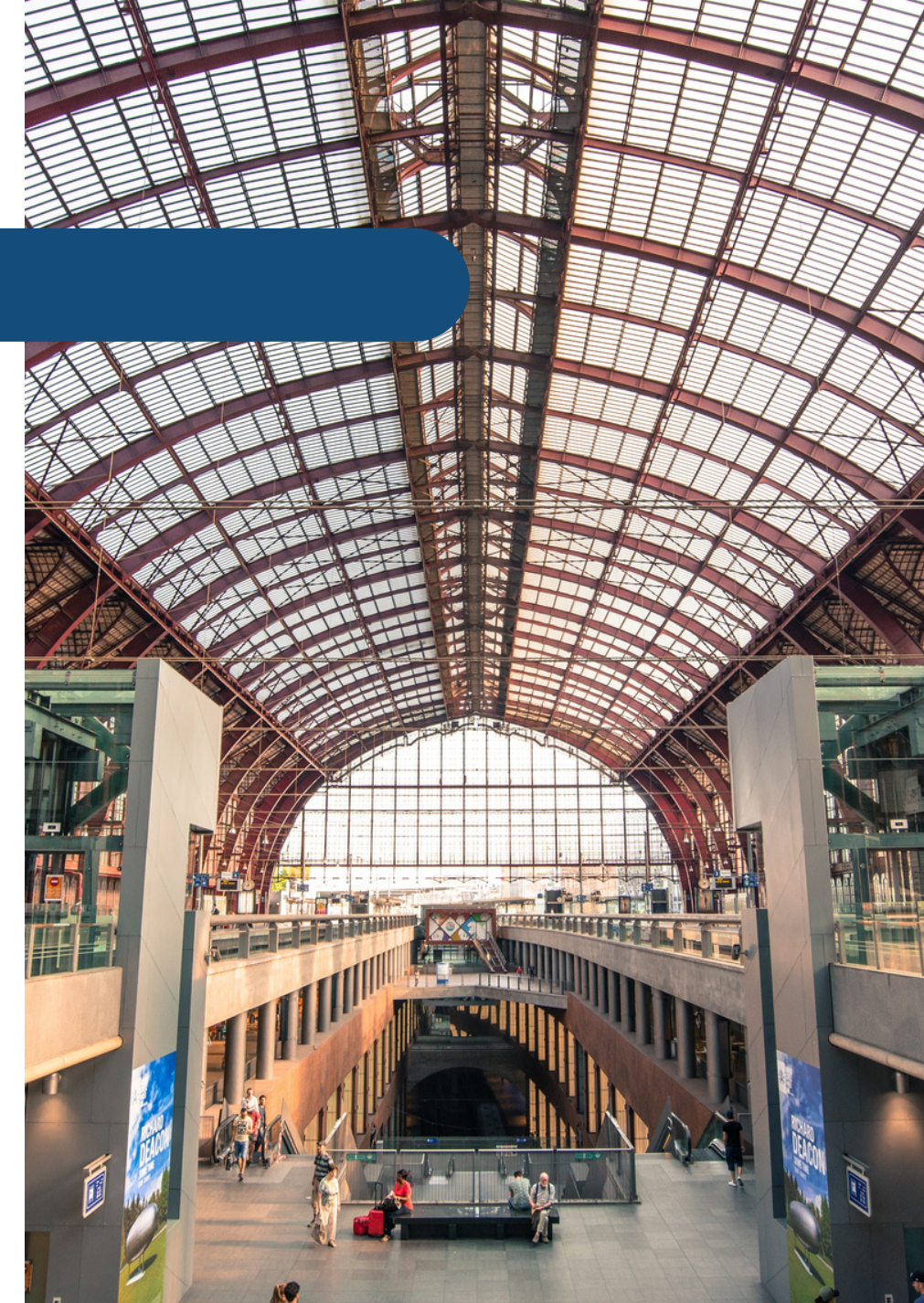


# Example:

## Engagement supporting PARTNERSHIPS and SOLUTIONS implementation in Antwerp

The practice of addressing mobility stakeholders in an integrated and comprehensive way already existed in the form of the meetings of the Antwerp Transport Region Council. The Mobility Forum has continued this practice.

- The Forum involves stakeholders such as the city authority and the other municipalities in the Transport Region, the Province, the regional authority (Flanders Region), the Belgian Railways (NMBS / SNCB), the Flemish public transport company (De Lijn) Antwerp Port Authority, the Agency for Roads and Traffic / AgentschapWegen enVerkeer, De VlaamseWaterweg, and other stakeholders.
- Coordinating beyond administrative borders and planning for the functional areas allows for more adequate solutions.
- It creates the conditions for strengthening the partnerships with solutions providers and for cross-boundary working with surrounding municipalities in the functional urban area in order to reduce the need to travel and to deliver attractive, convenient, and safe intermodal travel options running from “commuter belt” areas into and through the city.





4.

# How to extract the most important stakeholders' needs





After figuring out when and how to engage your stakeholders, the next challenge is to extract the necessary information in a way that helps you understand not only what your stakeholders think and want but ultimately how to move forward with your engagement strategy.

There are a variety of methods out there that can be used to extract stakeholder needs, but we will be focusing on the most common ones:

- **Online surveys** are a wonderful alternative if you need to collect data from many people but lack the manpower, money, or other resources to personally contact each one. The survey's questionnaire can be quantitative, qualitative, or a mix of the two. Quantitative surveys typically use 'closed' questions, where respondents must choose an answer from a predetermined list. Yes/no questions, checkboxes, and the Likert scale come to mind. Open questions, where the responder is given the opportunity to put in their own thoughts and opinions, are a hallmark of qualitative surveys.
- **One-on-one interviews** can be conducted in a few different ways. Our preference is face-to-face: the researcher sitting in the same room as the interviewee. If that's not possible, consider video conference interviews or, our least favourite (but sometimes necessary), phone interviews.

- **Workshops** often involve a group of people in the same room, working together to achieve some predetermined goal. Unlike online surveys and one-on-one interviews, workshops are often not solely an information-gathering exercise. Participants are often also involved in helping develop a solution.

## Quick Tips

### **When to consider an online survey:**

Basically, it's any time you want simple information at scale.

### **When to consider one-on-one interviews:**

These are good for situations when you need deep insight into a topic. You won't get deep insight from an online survey, but people may not be willing to truly express their thoughts in a workshop situation. One-on-one interviews will glean the insights you need.

### **When to consider workshops:**

These are great when you are looking for the collective knowledge of a group of people, rather than just individual opinions. In successful workshops, the value of the group is greater than the sum of its individual parts. Workshops are great for situations when you need everyone to collectively 'build' something.



## Tips from Manchester:

Within SUMP-PLUS, Greater Manchester's engagement process focused on co-creating a Health and Transport Decarbonisation Action Plan that will align existing strategies from both sectors to the overarching goal of reaching carbon neutrality in Greater Manchester (GM) by 2038.

To this end, they ran a series of solution-creation workshops to explore the scope for cross-sector service delivery at the local level, taking into account specific travel catchments and the needs of particular target groups and vulnerable groups.

Using the engagement instruments provided within the project, they organised quarterly (more formal) meetings, paired with more flexible in-between work meetings that targeted a wide array of stakeholders from the transport and health sector as well as citizens.

**Stuart Blackadder, rep. Transport for Greater Manchester** advises the following:

”

The most effective method for extracting stakeholders needs is to be present in their meetings, which are relevant to their objectives. In my experience, and bear in mind, I'm working from a transport authority perspective to support the NHS decarbonisation ambitions. I attended national NHS meetings specifically around the development of sustainability principles, and that's helped me to understand where their direction is coming from, understand the wider strategic picture, and to be involved in the whole process of designing an action plan towards meeting these objectives. I also attended their local monthly catch-ups, to see what their local priorities and issues were. These have really helped me to have more focused discussions with the stakeholders.

As we've gotten to know each other more and have had more common experiences, they also started to feel that my organisation is committed to their objectives. I also began to really understand what types of problems these health stakeholders face. So to summarise, I'd say, invite yourself along to some of their meetings and stand in their shoes when you can.

”



5.

# How to interest and motivate stakeholders for participation





# Common barriers in attracting stakeholder interest and participation

The stakeholders' engagement process is still new for many cities, so it needs to be built into the planning process as a whole. This requires a clear allocation of budget and staff time, as well as a plan for getting the word out. Based on the engagement experience of the cities involved in the SUMP PLUS project, several common barriers to attracting stakeholder interest have been identified. These include:

- Lack of political will based on political and/or strategic reasons
- No clear plan or agenda for SUMP development
- Conflicts of vision between key stakeholders
- Resistance from key stakeholders to accept changes
- Not enough information on key stakeholders and citizens
- No activities to raise awareness
- Lack of personnel and money to carry out a proper engagement process

- Low interest and awareness
- Lack of engagement culture in a country
- Impeding administrative structures, procedures, and routines
- Interdepartmental and interpersonal conflicts
- Lack of routines for working together
- Poor communication between departments
- Certain events or local conditions that can disrupt the process

## Highlight

One of the main barriers that the SUMP-PLUS cities have pointed has been related to the confidence of getting the right people in the room and, even if they did, the debate didn't spread to more idiosyncratic topics. The concern expressed is that if proper care is not taken in selecting the people involved in a particular exercise, the initiators end up hearing the same people. Often, they are the loudest groups with a particular agenda, and often their views are not representative of the wider community.



# Attracting stakeholder interest and participation

Good partnerships take planning. Throughout the SUMP process, interactions must be well-structured. Regular communication is needed to establish a successful conversation with stakeholders, and meetings and activities should be followed up on. Unorganized stakeholder feedback is hard to use. This may damage the consultation and decision-making processes.

The partnership should be maintained from the ideation to the reflection phases. Plan ahead and make sure stakeholders know how they'll be involved. It may not be necessary to involve all stakeholders so deeply at all phases of the process, but you should keep them informed of how their input is being used and how the process is moving so they feel ownership over decisions and measures. This also creates a sense of transparency and helps spark their interest.

Stakeholders who know why changes are being made will also be more motivated to participate. Overall, stakeholders who possess key knowledge early on, are more open to participation as it gives them time to reflect on the issue, understand their role and put forward their input.

## Quick tips

- Analyse stakeholders' objectives and resources.
- Ensure the well-structured engagement of all stakeholders.
- Develop an overall cooperation strategy and transparent principles for stakeholder engagement.
- Make it personal to the stakeholders. Communicate to them how your goals can positively influence them on a personal as well as the benefits of it on a broader level.
- Make sure they know upfront why it's happening.
- Identify and schedule suitable decision-making stages and methods for involving all the different stakeholder groups.
- Create a planning culture based on regular communication, consultation and cooperative decision making.
- Prepare and follow up events with the stakeholders.

It's also important to avoid making a single stakeholder the focal point of your talks and consultations. For stakeholders who are unable or unwilling to participate in a public debate, the result may be that their voices are not heard. It should always be a top priority to include and empower all key groups and individuals.



## ► Tips from Antwerp:

Antwerp's approach to mobility planning is characterized by intensive engagement and idea generation with stakeholders from the public - community and business sector as well as from all levels (local, regional, national). Antwerp's main aims in SUMP-PLUS consisted in seeking to strengthen partnerships with solutions providers and cross-boundary working with surrounding municipalities in the functional urban area in order to reduce the need to travel and to deliver attractive, convenient, and safe intermodal travel options running from "commuter belt" districts into and through the city.

The practice of addressing mobility stakeholders in an integrated and comprehensive way already exists in the form of the meetings of the Antwerp Transport Region Council. The SUMP PLUS engagement instruments helped strengthen this practice by organising more regular interactions between the involved stakeholders taking place as needed, with a special focus on Placemaking City Integrator, Logistics City Integrator and innovative approaches to engage its citizens.

**Annelise Heijns, rep. Antwerp Stad advises the following:**

”

The biggest barrier the city of Antwerp faced in attracting stakeholders during the SUMP PLUS project was the COVID pandemic. One other barrier we faced as a city of Antwerp is engagement or meeting fatigue. People were getting tired of going to meetings or engagement events. **So how did we overcome those barriers?**

During the pandemic we started to work from home and we discovered all sorts of online tools like Zoom, and Miro. Thanks to those tools, we were still able to keep the dialogue between all the departments of the city, the citizens and all the different stakeholders. For example, we organised a City Integrator, where we had an online brainstorm on the topic of wayfinding. We used Zoom and the Miro board for this engagement exercise.

The best way to motivate people to participate in a meeting is to point out what is in it for them. You can use a clear agenda, or explain what you will do with the results of the engagement and involve them in every step. That really helps to motivate people so they know what's in it for them.

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6.

# How to deal with acceptance issues





# Red flags that show a stakeholder may become reluctant

Creating and developing a strategy for SUMP stakeholder engagement is much easier said than done. Engaging and managing stakeholders can be a challenge, especially if they take actions that undermine the common cause.

To help you identify problematic stakeholders, we've put together some telltale signs that indicate you may be dealing with one:

- **Poor communication** – clear and consistent communication is crucial to an effective engagement process. With that in mind, stakeholders that fail to return calls or reply to emails on time don't make your job any easier. This lack of communication can also convey their disinterest in the project as a whole.
- **They only share critical remarks** – this is yet another warning sign that you're dealing with a difficult stakeholder. Sure, constructive criticism never harmed anyone and you could even benefit from bold honesty every once in a while. However, some stakeholders might be rude and uncooperative for no actual reason.

- **They don't share a sense of urgency** – your stakeholders should share the same sense of urgency from start to finish. If stakeholders seem to be pumping the breaks on your project or giving delayed feedback, this can hint that there is no longer a sense of urgency in their minds.





# Tips for dealing with reluctant stakeholders

The **1st** step is to simply **listen to what they have to say**. Don't close communication channels because you don't like what you hear. Try to see where difficult stakeholders are coming from and put yourself in their shoes to understand their motivation and goals.

**2. Make an effort to understand their point of view.** If what they're saying is frustrating, ask yourself: Do their needs align with your objectives? Do they simply want things done in a different way? Try to find common ground.

**3. Meet them one on one.** Schedule time to meet with difficult stakeholders individually. Meeting without other stakeholders in the room takes the pressure off and makes them feel more comfortable. This leads to more clear and calm conversations. Take this time to explore their viewpoint and preferred solutions.

## **4. Determine their motivation**

What's causing your stakeholders' sudden resistance? The key to engaging stakeholders is to address the motivation underlying their resistance. This will help you spot compromises, create a win-win solution, and finish the project.

**5. Keep them moving forward.** Listen to your stakeholders and strive to meet their needs — difficult or not. Ensuring they're feeling heard, valued, and appreciated grows trust and support. Building relationships and understanding motivation takes time and effort but will make your job easier in the long run. Projects are more successful when everyone is on board and on the same page!

## Quick tips

Ask yourself the following questions to get to the bottom of their motivations:

- What are their most pressing needs?
- What is the best way to communicate with them?
- What information or details do they want or need?
- Do they fully understand your work or do they need some extra explanation?
- Who influences them?
- Who do they influence?
- What are they responsible for?
- Who do they report to?



## Tips from Lucca:

As part of SUMP PLUS, Lucca is working on the definition of guidelines and recommendations for the coordination and integration of SUMP and SUDP at the city level. These guidelines and recommendations will identify also the coordination/cooperation issues/areas between the city SUMP and the overall strategies/approaches under development in the SUMP at the Lucca-shire level (Provincia di Lucca). The SUMP-PLUS project supports the city's efforts to integrate the different levels of strategic planning tools (Sustainable Energy Action Plan – SEAP & General Plan for Urban Traffic – GPOT) already existing at Lucca town and to coordinate the shire SUMP approach (under development) to be smoothly integrated with the City level.

Throughout the project, Lucca used the engagement instruments provided to address the mobility stakeholders in an integrated and comprehensive way, building on the already existing engagement activities (Logistics Roundtables). They initiated a joint working group for accelerated decision-making on freight logistics measures, bringing together the wider group of stakeholders in city logistics. They also organised surveys and meetings to involve citizens.

**Pamela Salvatore, rep. Lucca Municipality advises the following:**

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As a municipality, it's not easy to find common points with other entities – even with neighbouring municipalities. It all depends on the political alignment, on the interests involved, on the objectives to be achieved and on particular geographical social and cultural topics. Each administration must take into account all these interests involved, such as citizens' economic and commercial activities.

When the goals from municipal expanded to territorial, it's necessary to join forces to achieve better results and more quickly, putting the emphasis on these topics of common interest and stressing also that unity is strength.

In our experience, we realised that a common interest can stimulate the acceptance of the different stakeholders whom we want to address and whose cooperation we are looking for. It's obvious that a widely shared proposal agreed upon by several municipalities and presented to regional and national decision-makers is more likely to be heard and accepted. So unity is strength. And this strength leads to results that for municipalities can mean measures to be financed and supported.

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# How to build trust and confidence





Trust is vital in engaging stakeholders, but it's hard to measure it. Trust is a complicated construct with many bases, degrees, and causes. Trust supports adaptive organizational forms, minimizes conflicts, fosters knowledge exchange and ultimately determines the level to which a stakeholder will want to get involved.

When it comes to building confidence, it is important to keep in mind that the better informed, connected and engaged the stakeholders are, the more likely they are to develop it towards your municipality.

**Transparency** about the planned measures and your goals at an early stage is necessary to build trust and confidence. Therefore, make sure that **all key information is provided right from the start**, in a variety of formats and is simple to grasp. To a certain extent, people want to feel like they can influence the outcomes of events that have an impact on their lives.

When thinking about how to build trust among stakeholders, especially those that seem very reluctant there is no simple list of strategies that will work. However, oftentimes the first move is simply to **take a step back and consider why certain stakeholders might be reluctant to get involved**. Make a list of potential barriers. For example, maybe certain stakeholders are not comfortable with certain engagement methods (i.e - public meetings, online workshops, etc) or maybe their goals do not align with yours.

## Remember

Building trust and confidence is a complex endeavour. However, there are a few things to keep in mind when working to build stakeholder trust and confidence:

- **Be reliable** - trust is lost through inconsistent behavior on matters of importance, saying one thing and doing another will not help your relationship with your stakeholders.
- **Ensure good communication** - communication is the most important trust-building mechanism. Keep it timely, accurate and relevant.
- **Do your best to reach project milestones** - reaching project milestones is a crucial factor for building trust. This shows commitment to your goals and reassures stakeholders that plans are actually crystalising.
- **Provide criteria for decisions** - you can increase stakeholders confidence in you by explaining how you arrived to your decisions. Lining up facts, figures and projections can help stakeholders understand your thinking.



## ► Tips from Klaipėda:

As part of its SUMP, Klaipėda defined a 5–10 year Action Plan, but its implementation proved more challenging than expected in the last couple of years. Important progress was deciding on BRT as a solution for the main public transport corridor and specific efforts are made to prepare for the implementation of this measure. In order to bridge the implementation gap for the realisation of sustainable mobility policies, Klaipėda's main focus as part of SUMP-PLUS was developing an Implementation Pathway, broken down into short- and long-term actions, for accelerating SUMP implementation and maximising the benefits of investments.

During SUMP-PLUS, Klaipėda used the engagement instruments provided to start a new practice targeting to reach their objectives through engagement exercises such as forums, roundtables and surveys with a wide array of stakeholders from the transport, and education sectors, as well as citizens.

**Jurate Sokolova, rep. Klaipėda Municipality advises the following:**

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There are always trust issues among stakeholders, between business representatives and community, between business and public authorities, between ministry and municipality and perhaps the deepest one – between the community and municipality or other public authorities. We also certainly faced some challenges in building trust among stakeholders. So how did we get stakeholders to trust our course for reaching objectives and stay involved?

First of all, time is key. It takes time to convey the right message of what we need, and get the necessary and appropriate information from all sides.

Secondly, an open and honest communication. This is the main thing affecting the conversation and problem-solving process. Another important aspect is reaching a common interest that unites all members as well as delivering their expected result.

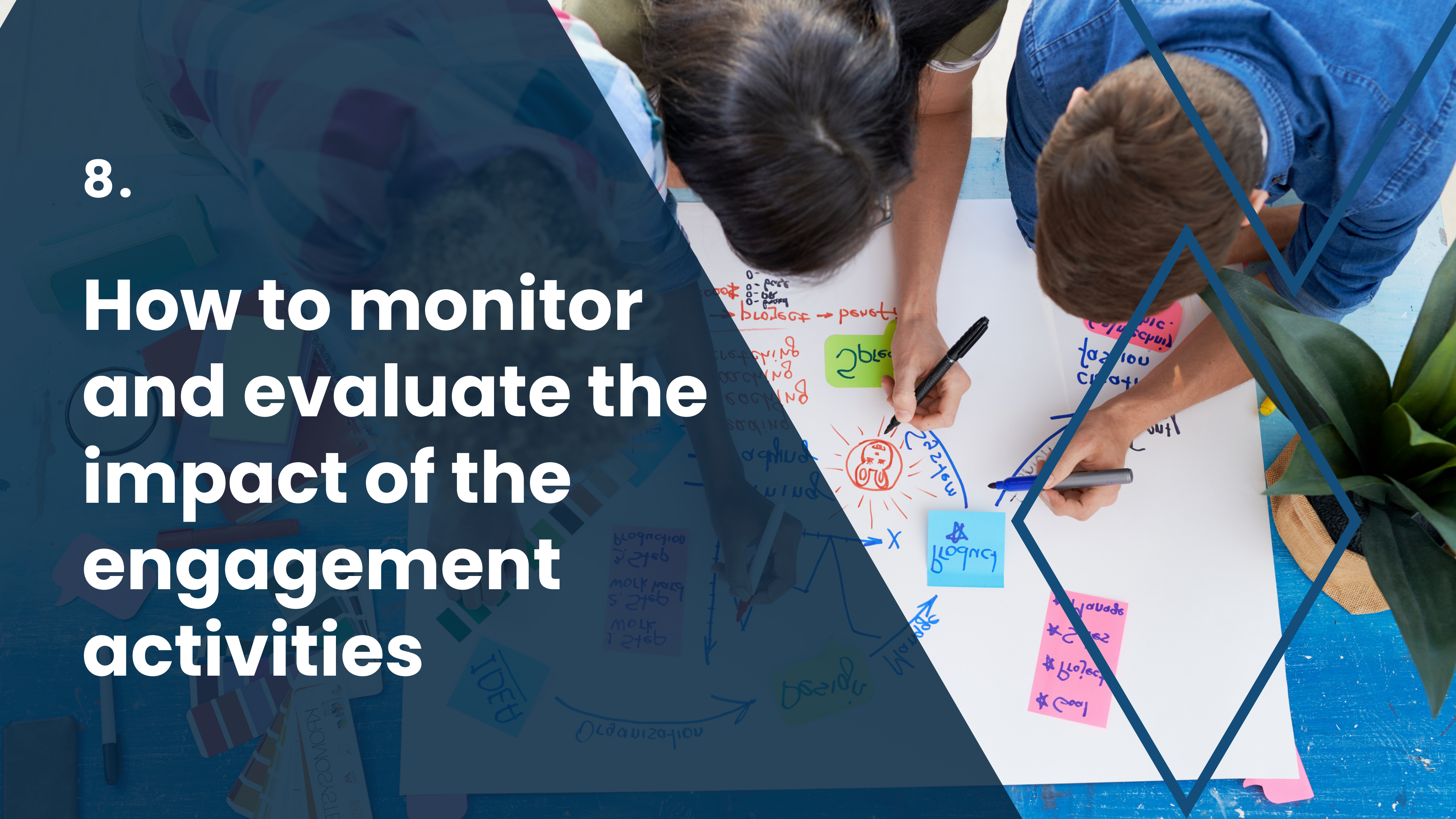
Lastly, it's important to highlight the benefits for every stakeholder and to show attention to everyone. Create an environment where everyone feels important and needed in the project.

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8.

# How to monitor and evaluate the impact of the engagement activities





Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement activities is very important both to ensure that engagement activities are accomplishing their objectives and that resources are not being wasted through activities that are not well implemented or conceived.

Participatory monitoring of stakeholder engagement can strengthen trust and give stakeholders a greater sense of empowerment and ownership in a project but this will mean including stakeholders in the process beyond simply through collecting feedback from them.

This is something that **should be done throughout the entire engagement process**. Think about how you can incorporate evaluation into stakeholder consultations. Common **forms of monitoring** include looking at things like:

- Records and reports
- Analyzing media that has already been utilized
- Conducting structured questionnaires with the participants
- Holding focus groups for bigger groups
- Roundtables for smaller groups;
- One-on-one interviews with important stakeholders

Some **measurable indicators** to evaluate stakeholder engagement activities should be identified, agreed to and monitored over time. In general, the best indicator of successful stakeholder engagement activities will be reflected in the quality of the relationship and can be evaluated based on feedback from stakeholders.

It is also important to remember that monitoring is a process. Therefore, monitoring can and should occur at different time steps. For example:

- **Monitoring the engagement process itself:** this type of monitoring can be initiated from the beginning to track progress. The effectiveness of the engagement process can be monitored, and the process can be adjusted for improvement.
- **Monitoring outputs:** this type of monitoring can be initiated at the end of the engagement process itself, as a tool for evaluation of the process completed.
- **Monitoring outcomes:** this requires longer timelines as well as evaluation of a wider set of drivers and conditions. However, this type of monitoring allows tracking of the actual effectiveness of the engagement process as an agent of change.



## Quick tips

Finally, remember that a systematic assessment of the consultation process with stakeholders should also be planned at the end of the engagement phase. The final results of the stakeholder consultation should be assessed and weighed against your original objectives.

Although within the evaluation of a stakeholder engagement process measurable indicators can be personalised based on what you are trying to get from your evaluation, you should always keep in mind the following aspects to be analysed:

- The overall level of participation
- The level of involvement
- The way input was incorporated
- The outcomes
- The level of resources and skills that went into conducting an effective engagement process

To help offer further insight into how you could evaluate these aspects, have a read through the questions highlighted in the box enclosed.

### **Participation:**

- How many stakeholders were invited to collaborate?
- How many responded?
- How many participated to the first meeting? How about the following ones? How many participated consistently throughout the engagement process?

### **Involvement:**

- How would you evaluate stakeholders level of involvement? Were they active, neutral or passive?
- Did they share inputs or engaged in co-creation or were they reluctant to share?

### **Input:**

- Have you taken note of the input received? How was it incorporated? How did you do this?
- Do you feel that the process has been transparent regarding stakeholder input?

### **Outcomes:**

- Did the engagement process have a positive effect?
- Did it improve the quality of your planning process?
- Has it led to organisational changes within the local authority/mobility department (e.g. new participation practices)?
- Did it help you reach your goals?

### **Resources:**

- Were sufficient personnel resources available to effectively run engagement activities?
- Did your team have an appropriate level of skills and understanding for running the engagement activities?



9.

# Recommendations towards a meaningful engagement process





A meaningful engagement process, at the institutional level, the societal level, and even within organizations, does not happen overnight . . .

It is fair to say that triggering and leveraging engagement in mobility planning are both big challenges for authorities, as they require in-depth knowledge of marketing and sociological aspects. However, they also represent a big chance of success, as they ensure cooperation and knowledge exchange between planners, politicians, institutions, local and regional actors, and citizens. Consistently collecting comments from residents and stakeholders to feed back into technical planning and political decision-making is crucial to the success of this cooperative process. City authorities just need to find the right combination of involvement techniques to better guide and facilitate the discursive planning process, adequately react to conflicts, and ensure constant monitoring and quality control, as evidenced by the six SUMP PLUS cities.

If stakeholders are invited and encouraged to participate in the planning process, especially during the early stages when decisions can be made more freely, the results will be more likely to be sustainable, transparent, long-lasting, legitimate, and accepted by the public.

In the end, the most **important aspects to keep in mind** while developing an engagement process are:

- Stating a clear objective from the get-go
- Have a clear division of responsibility within your team and with the stakeholders involved
- Make sure that all the right people are consulted at the right times during the planning process
- Establish a culture of open, two-way communication and consultation as the foundation for your planning processes
- Strive for as much interactive involvement as possible
- Maintain complete transparency and promote more democratic, inclusive decision-making at all stages of the planning process.
- Always follow up and be consistent



# Tips from the SUMP-PLUS cities

Stuart Blackadder  
**Manchester**

” My recommendation to other cities for building a meaningful engagement process is to do this at the right time and with the right people. So firstly, make sure that you've got a good stakeholder list available and that you speak with the right people. Then make sure that the right strategic background is present and that you're both following it. You're both committed to it. After that, everything should go swimmingly.

Jurate Sokolova  
**Klaipeda**

” What would be our recommendations to other cities for building a meaningful engagement process? First of all, identify your stakeholders early on and then work with them to break down the project into deliverables and tasks. This helps everyone have a better understanding of the project. Furthermore, stakeholders will more likely support a plan that they helped to create. Lastly, but very important: manage expectations. Each of our stakeholders has expectations, sometimes false expectations. But transparently working with them will clarify many of these aspects and make your process run much smoother!





## Tips from the SUMP-PLUS cities

Annelise Heijns  
**Antwerp**

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A tip for building a meaningful engagement process is to go where citizens are. Host the engagement events closed by – for example, on the road or the park that will be redesigned and use different tools to attract different people. Combine a face-to-face meeting in the park or on the road with an online survey or an online meeting.

Valentina Della Lena  
**Luca**

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The first and most important step for a meaningful engagement process is to understand the stakeholder, their needs, and their power and then make them feel like an active part of the decision-making process.

In the engagement process, communication skills are fundamental – it's necessary to stress the common need to find a shared solution. When a single stakeholder realises that his needs are also those of other stakeholders, he feels part of something and is proud to get involved to give his own contribution. It could be useful to use some catchphrases. For example, we are all tiles of a puzzle and each of us is part of a whole





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# Thank You