SuSMo

Sustainable Shared Mobility

Case study: Bologna subsidized free floating bike sharing

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Bologna multimodal hub & free-floating bike sharing

The Sustainable Shared Mobility (SuSMo) project aims to catalyse systemic change by instigating behaviour change, enabling connections and collaborations, and removing barriers through policy change. SuSMo brings together leading European cities with experts in the transport sector to provide decision-makers with tools and knowledge to maximise the benefits and mitigate the negative impacts of shared mobility modes. Funded by EIT Climate KIC, SuSMo was launched in 2019 and has worked with city representatives and private sector shared mobility providers to establish the key needs and priorities for the effective deployment of sustainable shared mobility.

The City of Bologna

Bologna is a University city with 80.000 university students, on a total of 400.000 residents living in the municipality. The university is considered one of the oldest in the world, dating its first statue to the year 1088. Bologna has transformed its medieval radial structure into a modern city, easy to traverse by bike. Leaning against the hill with flourishing Liberty villas, secret gardens and bike routes along its canals.

With the introduction of a high speed rail connection and the improved connection to the local airport, Bologna started to attract large numbers of tourists to its historical city centre. The combination of students and tourists led to a gentrification process in the city centre, leading to many original residents moving away.

One of the ways the city of Bologna hopes to conserve space within the historical centre is by stimulating shared mobility and enforcing public transport. This should promote a modal shift, reducing private car ownership and the accompanying need for parking space.

In its latest Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP), Bologna is now promoting 30 new mobility hubs. Located mostly at local railway stations, they aim to promote the offer of public transport and on-demand sharing services while regenerating these areas.

Since 2018 Bologna implemented a shared bike service. This free-floating service was procured using a tendering process called competitive dialogue. The competitive dialogue process used for the bike sharing public tender was recognized as a very innovative and effective instrument, allowing to introduce the service in a short time. The service runs 2200 traditional and 300 e-bikes.

Procurement framework for bike-sharing using competitive dialogue

Competitive dialogue is a form of tendering, whereby contracting authorities enter into a structured dialogue with a number of selected and prequalified candidates to identify a common solution and its financing before that solution is put out to tender amongst the relevant candidates. Competition-sensitive information will remain confidential. After the structured dialogue process, which usually requires significant investment from the participating parties, the contract is awarded to the preferred bidder.

Before launching the tender, Bologna Municipality studied tenders issued in New Orleans and Portland. The idea was that it is necessary to pay for the service (200 euro per bike per year) to ensure proper maintenance. The income generated by the service is part of the payback and strategy for the Return on Investment (ROI) strategy. This is a completely different model from other EU cities, in which the service payment are considered an occasional plus and the ROI was only based on the earning made by advertisement and public grants.

The process of bike-sharing procurement consists of three main phases: preparation and enabling procurement, procurement procedure and operation, and evaluation. Figure 1 shows how these phases fit within the procurement framework by means of competitive dialogue.

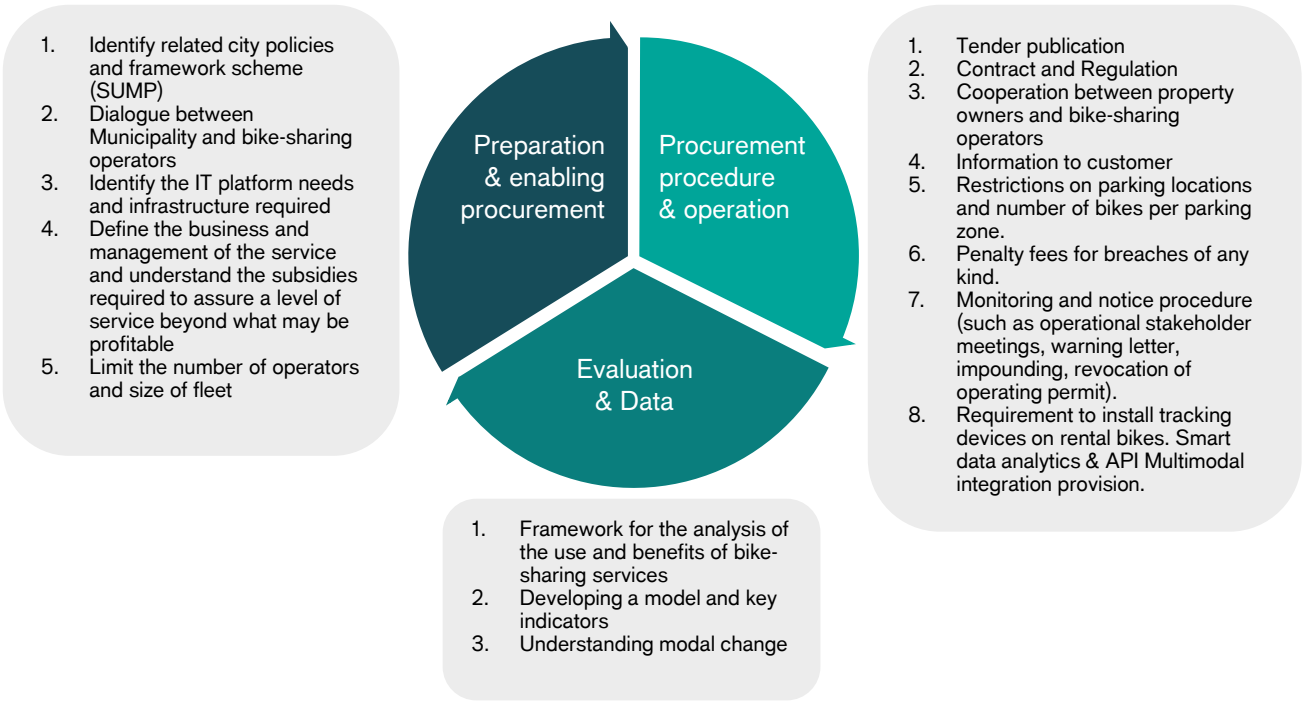

Figure 1: Framework for establishing bike-sharing schemes using competitive dialogue.

SuSMo

How did SuSMo contribute to Bologna

The study provided valuable insights on how the procurement model influenced the sustainability and customer centred quality of the implementation of shared mobility, as well as the steps and policy that support the adoption of each sharing model. Bologna has been using this information to improve sharing services in multimodal hubs, from the early planning to the operation and evaluation, resulting in an ever improving shared mobility network.

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