



SuSMo

# Sustainable Shared Mobility

## Transition guidance tools on Private Sector Engagement

May 2021



**cenex**



Co-funded by the  
European Union



agenzia per l'energia e  
lo sviluppo sostenibile



# Executive summary

Shared sustainable mobility has the potential to support the decarbonisation of the transport system. As part of the SuSMo project guidance and training materials are developed that will support change agents in making the shift towards shared sustainable mobility. Research identified the following areas for further work:

- Behavioural change
- Private sector engagement
- Policy, regulation and procurement
- Evaluation of the impact

In order to improve private sector engagement and collaboration there is a need to bring the different stakeholders together and explore a shared vision. These stakeholders are interviewed to get a deeper understanding of the key elements to a successful partnership. Different shared mobility operators in the private sector were engaged and their views are combined with previous research with municipalities. Four key factors for successful partnership are identified during this research:

- 1. Financial viability of the tender and/or funding support. Easy to navigate procurement processes with realistic timings.**
- 2. Enthusiasm (from the municipal authority) and good knowledge of shared mobility.**
- 3. Evidence-based and comprehensive strategic thinking and policies.**
- 4. Clear rules and regulations in place at a local level.**

This report outlines a series of recommendations for shared mobility collaboration in order to deliver better, decarbonised and user centric services. Cities and operators should work to develop:

- A sustainable transport vision for the city
- Procurement that works for both parties

# Introduction

The SuSMo (Sustainable Shared Mobility) 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 municipalities 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 the 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. Research has identified the following areas for further work:

- Behavioural change
- Private sector engagement
- Policy, regulation and procurement
- Evaluation of the impact

This report will describe the results for the private sector engagement, this includes key factors in good partnership between the private and public sector. The material in this report should be used as guidance material to successfully implement sustainable shared mobility.

## Theory of Change

In collaboration with the SuSMo team, MOTION (project to develop evaluation methodology at a project level) has identified the transformative outcomes, processes that need to be activated to promote transformational change, with regards to private sector engagement, this resulted in figure 1 on the next page.

These transformative outcomes reflect and review the activities, outputs, and inputs of an ongoing project within the context of Theory of Change. To increase the transformative potential and allow for a structural learning, it is necessary to examine and review the underlying convictions, theories and dominant models that apply. Reassessing the criteria against which an innovation is evaluated is an additional challenge towards achieving systemic change.

The application of the proposed transition tool will provide decision makers with a better understanding of how cities can facilitate systemic change to achieve quick and optimal integration of low carbon urban shared mobility into their existing public transport system.

In regard to private sector engagement, the SuSMo project is working with public and private sector representatives to gain an understanding of different use cases helping to align goals and vision; To bring a change of perspective for those within the shared mobility system and help to manage expectations of the public and private sector. Ultimately this will enable the conditions for shared mobility to be well integrated into the transport system and result in decarbonisation.

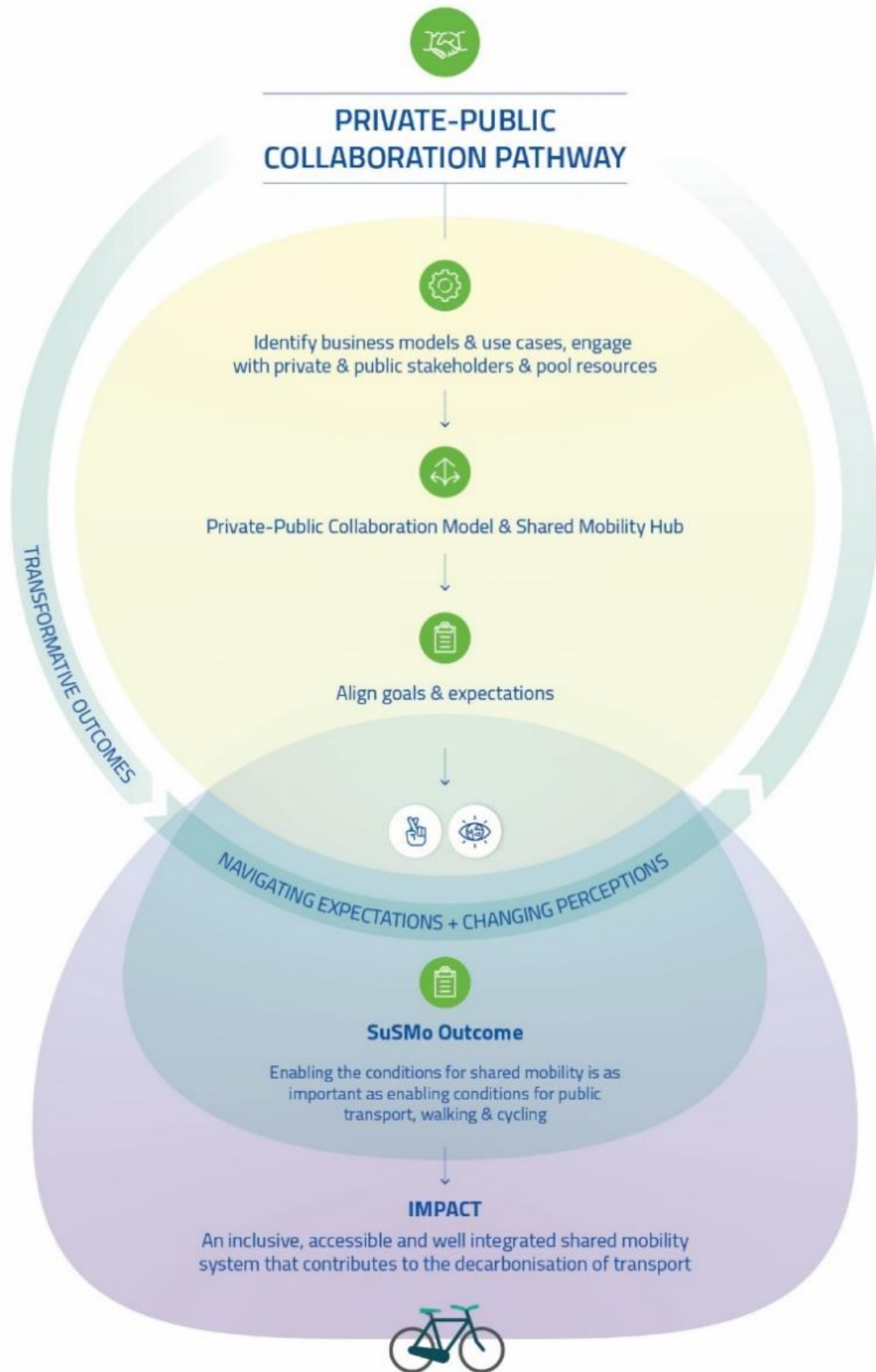


Figure 1: Theory of Change – Private Sector Engagement

# Private sector engagement

The expansion of shared mobility modes has resulted in a growth in the industry of new and agile companies. These new mobility operators are quick to innovate and can deliver low carbon transport solutions. However, many of the incumbent processes for transport delivery are not well suited to the new system of multiple modes and providers.

Consultation with the SuSMo cities and outputs from our 2019 workshop on challenges and needs for shared mobility identified a desire from cities to make partnership working smoother, with all those involved having aligned goals and a shared vision. Collaboration between all sectors is key for successful shared mobility to flourish. The SuSMo project has been exploring the challenges and opportunities in partnership working between the private and public sectors. Taking key insights from shared mobility operators on how policy, regulation and procurement processes in cities can help or hinder the expansion of shared mobility modes.

## Methodology

In order to gain insight into the private sector perspective on collaborative working, semi-structured telephone interviews were held. These were held with a variety of private sector operators, including car clubs/sharing, eScooter providers and moped providers. The purpose of the interviews was to:

- Learn about successful and unsuccessful examples of partnership working in order to understand the key factors that impact partnership working
- Gather information on the expectations for data requirements and sharing for operators.

An online questionnaire was also distributed to a wide range of shared mobility operators to gain further insight into factors that impact partnership working. A total of twelve different operators, active in over 20 European countries, were interviewed or surveyed.

It was important that all private sector operators that took part felt free to share their experiences without feeling that it could jeopardise any relationships with municipalities. Therefore, findings are kept anonymous and the full scripts are not shared in this report.

# Success factors for implementing shared mobility

The input from the interviews along with the feedback in the questionnaires are used to summarise the key factors which facilitate good collaborative working and the implementation of sustainable, user centric shared mobility services.

## 1. Financial viability of the tender and/or funding support. Easy to navigate procurement with realistic timings

Operators appreciate that the pace that the public sector moves at is different from the private sector. Both public and private sector concur that the decision-making process can be lengthy, partly due to the need for checks and balances to be in place to ensure the proper use of public funding. The length of time it takes from initial conversation to deployment can be quite difficult for operators to manage. It would be beneficial to both parties to start the discussion with confirmation of the processes and realistic timescales; this would help to manage expectations and allow the operator to plan future developments in line with the cities.

The procurement of shared mobility service is a strong tool to allow cities to maximise benefits. However, a balance is needed to ensure that the tender process is not over-complicated and too restrictive. Some areas have this right, with light touch tender documents or memorandums of understanding. Private operators report that in some cases the restrictions and requirements make it very difficult for them to submit a viable application. Some examples are the requirement for a specific number of vehicles at certain locations, this is unhelpful and places a heavy burden on the operator to comply with.

All the providers are keen to work with municipalities to provide services that fit the need. They often feel, however, that they are being asked to shoulder some of the socioeconomic burdens of the city with very little support. Cities should seek to discuss proposals for the tender with industry representatives before launch to check that all operational requirements are sensible, and it is recommended that where municipalities want to guarantee a level of service beyond what may be profitable, they explore how they can support this. This could be via financial subsidies, commitment to provide communications support, or enforcement.

Local context is important for delivering transport. However, operators are keen to see the development of some universally applicable frameworks that can aid the procurement process. Cities should seek to learn from others and share examples of tender documents/procurement that have worked well for both parties.

Shared mobility is a fast-moving area with innovations coming to the market all the time. Therefore, it is important to consider future trends and provide flexibility to accommodate these within the tender process. In the SuSMo project, previous engagement with municipalities discussed the danger of getting lost in the 'next new thing' was discussed. A balance is needed that includes adaptability but does not lose focus on current operations.

## 2. Enthusiasm (from the authority) and good knowledge on shared mobility.

Many cities and municipalities are announcing ambitious goals and programmes to reduce carbon emissions and the pace of change in transportation is fast. There is an increasing awareness of shared

mobility services and a desire to understand how these services can be implemented within a different local context. Some municipalities have a knowledge gap, as officers and those at a higher level do not appreciate the intrinsically collaborative nature of shared mobility. Operators reported that their engagement process with cities often starts with an explanation of shared mobility and that these new modes should not be viewed as competing with mass and public transport. All evidence demonstrates that an integrated multi-modal transport system supports an increased used in all sustainable transport.

Municipalities must be responsible for creating low carbon transport systems that are desirable and people want to use. Shared mobility providers cannot convince the public to use low carbon transport on their own. Municipalities could create a clear picture of what shared mobility will mean and look like, both for the city and its residents. This can help individual residents understand how shared mobility can fit their needs.

### **3. Evidence-based and comprehensive strategic thinking and policies.**

Evidence-based strategic thinking and policies impacts the development of good tender/procurement. Evidence-based planning is needed to prevent requirements from municipalities being unrealistic. Cities that undertake strategic planning before going forward with procurement have a better foundation to propose realistic policies for the implementation of shared mobility.

Requests for regular KPIs are helpful for private operators as this allows them to understand what the priorities for the service are. KPIs should be based on realistic requests for data and both parties must have a good understanding of what is measured

### **4. Clear rules and regulations in place at a local level.**

All providers stated that a regulated environment is better for operations and partnership working. They do not want to see a free-for-all approach as this is detrimental to providing a good service and a successful business model. However, there is some frustration around reports of enforcement not being sufficient. Resulting in a situation where those who were adhering to the rules were not seeing the expected benefits. The providers are clear that poor practice is damaging to all and should be addressed. Cities must be clear from the beginning how they will review and address any issues. This should be addressed in the procurement phase with input on how enforcement is maintained for the length of the agreement.

# External factors

As part of the interviews and questionnaire, some other factors were identified that may have relevance to the development of shared mobility in a city. These aspects are less within the cities' and operators' control as part of partnership development but may affect the viability of service delivery.

## 1. High population density and favourable demographics

Operators indicated that population density and demographics are important for successful schemes and profitability. However, if the municipality offered a good tender and had the right strategy and a cooperative attitude then they would still be keen to explore what was feasible, even in less dense areas with unfavourable demographics.

## 2. Digital and physical connectivity to other modes of transport

Good public transport and cycling/micro-mobility infrastructure makes a considerable difference to the ability for users to access shared mobility. It is recommended that cities should improve the physical infrastructure if they are keen on encouraging shared mobility. Digital connectivity and access to online travel information, booking and journey planning should be explored for future strategy development – if not part of a SUMP already.

## 3. Data sharing standards

All operators are keen to see data sharing standards in place across countries and the EU. The private sector is keen to ensure the importance of GDPR and trust within the process.





# Recommendations for collaborative working

The recommendations for cities can be sorted in two main recommendations, which can be divided in multiple sub sections, all are listed below.

## 1. Develop a sustainable transport vision for the city

- a) Present the benefits of an integrated transport system at all levels (decision-makers, procurement, incumbent transport providers)
- b) Operators share experiences and evidence on benefits of shared mobility, working collaboratively to disseminate to cities.
- c) Use current data and evidence to understand how shared mobility can impact the city. Municipalities need private operators to share data to do this.
- d) Review SUMP and strategies to check they are in line with current trends and innovations. Operators should share how they intend to innovate and development of their services.

## 2. Procurement that works for both parties

- a) Use procurement framework and be clear about the timeline from the start.
- b) Talk to the market early in the procurement process.
- c) Shared experiences of successful tenders with reach out to other cities/operators to learn from their experiences.
- d) Define data sharing (content and mechanisms), Level of support (financial, communications, other), enforcement (both operators and users).

# Successful private sector engagement

Introducing sustainable shared mobility does not start when the mobility itself hits the pavement. It starts with planning and consulting with all involved stakeholders, both public and private. Early involvement will lead to well established partnerships, which will lead to good cooperation which will result in great sustainable shared mobility.

