

Report on the common needs for national support mechanisms for SUMPs in BSR countries

SUMPs for BSR - Enhancing Effective Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning
for Supporting Active Mobility in BSR Cities

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Imprint

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Authors:	Kertu Ling & Maarja Käger, Institute of Baltic Studies.
Contributors:	Olivia Koskinen, City of Turku, Finland Ilze Bibere, Ilze Sestule, Ritvars Šilkovs, Madara Jenerte, Daina Tērauda, Cēsis Municipality, Latvia Justyna Suchanek, Klaudia Kościk, City of Gdynia, Poland Stephan Braun, Karl Hildebrand, University and Hanseatic City of Greifswald, Germany Farah Albukaai, Aregay Fkadu Kebede, Annika Lundqvist, Gävle Municipality, Sweden Gintarė Kliucininkienė, Indrė Juodikė, Jokubas Leipus, Panevėžys City Municipality, Lithuania Ira Sibeliuss, Adham Maharramli, Rosa Puusaari, Anna Paulus, Union of the Baltic Cities Sustainable Cities Commission, Finland Marcin Wołek, Aleksander Jagiełło, University of Gdańsk, Poland. Andra Asser, Institute of Baltic Studies.
Layout:	Ira Sibeliuss, UBC Sustainable Cities Commission c/o City of Turku.
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Project note

SUMPs for BSR supports cities in shifting their planning practices towards people-centred sustainable urban mobility planning, with a particular focus on active mobility. The project aims to increase the uptake of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans by developing practical tools and providing capacity building for local authorities, especially in small and medium-sized BSR cities. The project has developed a common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and a model for experimenting with active mobility measures, helping cities assess mobility-system performance, test solutions and use evidence in planning and decision-making.

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Executive summary

This report examines how national support mechanisms can better enable municipalities to develop, implement and maintain Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs) and related sustainable mobility approaches in the seven SUMPs for BSR project countries: **Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden.**

The analysis combines three complementary perspectives: the national SUMP support landscape described through the **BSR SUMP Competence Centre country profiles** and the **National SUMP Contact Point survey**; municipal and stakeholder needs identified through **seven national peer-transfer workshops**; and the practical tools and capacity-building approaches developed and tested within the **SUMPs for BSR project** (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026a–g; SUMPs for BSR, 2025–2026; SUMPs for BSR, 2026; Interreg Baltic Sea Region, n.d.). The National SUMP Contact Point survey covers Estonia, Finland, Germany, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden, while Latvia is represented through the country profile and national workshop evidence.

The comparison shows that the main challenge is generally **not the absence of national support**. The revised TEN-T Regulation has strengthened the national support framework by requiring Member States to designate a National SUMP Contact Point and establish a national SUMP programme to support TEN-T urban nodes. This creates a stronger formal basis for national support, while also raising the question of how comparable support can reach municipalities outside the urban-node network. All seven countries already provide relevant support through different combinations of national guidance, transport-system planning, funding instruments, competence structures, data systems, metropolitan cooperation and sustainable mobility policies. The more important issue is **whether this support is sufficiently practical, accessible, continuous and adapted to municipalities with different levels of capacity and SUMP maturity.**

The main findings are:

- **The largest recurring gap lies between planning and implementation.** Municipalities often have access to strategic frameworks and planning guidance, but face greater difficulties when moving towards implementation, monitoring, follow-up and long-term operation. Limited staff capacity, unstable financing, unclear ownership and weak continuation after project funding were repeatedly identified across the national evidence.
- **Municipal support needs to be differentiated.** Smaller and less experienced municipalities often require basic guidance, practical templates, access to expertise and proportionate data and monitoring approaches. More experienced municipalities increasingly need advanced support related to implementation, monitoring and evaluation, institutional coordination and scaling tested solutions.
- **Data, monitoring and evaluation are among the strongest common capacity needs.** Municipalities need not only more data, but common methodologies, interoperable datasets, clearer indicators and the analytical capacity to translate monitoring results into decisions. National-level methodological harmonisation therefore needs to be accompanied by practical municipal capacity building.
- **Governance and cooperation across administrative boundaries remain difficult in practice.** Urban mobility often follows functional city travel patterns rather than municipal borders. Although several countries already have regional or metropolitan planning arrangements, municipalities continue to face challenges related to joint decision-making, responsibilities, financing, data sharing and coordination between mobility, spatial planning and other policy areas.

- **Political commitment, public acceptance and knowledge exchange are implementation issues, not secondary activities.** Municipalities need support to communicate trade-offs, engage users, build political support and influence mobility behaviour. They also benefit from regular peer learning and easier access to tested approaches, expertise and project lessons.

The gap analysis therefore suggests that national SUMP support should focus less on creating entirely new structures and more on **strengthening and connecting existing ones**. The most important recommendations are to:

- provide coherent support across the full SUMP cycle, from planning to implementation, monitoring and continuation;
- differentiate support according to municipal capacity, planning maturity and territorial context;
- strengthen practical guidance, training and access to specialist expertise;
- improve national support for data, monitoring, evaluation and indicator use;
- strengthen governance and cooperation across municipal and functional city boundaries;
- treat stakeholder engagement, political communication, peer learning and behavioural change as core elements of implementation support.

SUMPs for BSR has developed several outputs that can contribute directly to these needs, including the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework, M&E Plan Template and Indicator Selector Tool; tested approaches for active mobility data collection; the model for experimenting with active mobility measures; the five-module SUMP Training Programme; the SUMP Clinic approach; and the BSR SUMP Competence Centre (Wołek & Jagiełło, 2026; Asser et al., 2026; Rusanen et al., 2026; Interreg Baltic Sea Region, 2026; BSR SUMP Competence Centre, n.d.). These should not be treated as a parallel support system, but as tested resources that national authorities and National SUMP Contact Points can adapt and integrate into existing guidance, training, technical assistance and knowledge-sharing structures.

Overall, the evidence supports a model based on **a common national framework, differentiated municipal support, practical implementation assistance and sustained knowledge exchange**. Countries do not need identical national SUMP programmes, but municipalities across the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) require access to a coherent set of support functions throughout the full planning and implementation cycle, adapted to different levels of municipal capacity and SUMP maturity.

A concise **decision-maker briefing** summarising the main gaps, recommendations and practical implications for National SUMP Contact Points and other national support actors is provided in Annex 1.

1. Introduction and policy context

SUMPs provide an integrated framework for addressing mobility, accessibility, climate, safety and quality-of-life challenges. Rather than considering individual transport modes or infrastructure investments in isolation, the SUMP approach connects mobility and land-use planning, considers the functional city, involves relevant stakeholders and links long-term objectives with implementation, monitoring and evaluation (European Commission, 2026b). At European level, SUMP has become a central approach to sustainable urban mobility planning and is increasingly supported by both regulatory requirements and dedicated national support structures. The revised TEN-T Regulation requires Member States to designate a National SUMP Contact Point and establish a national SUMP programme to support TEN-T urban nodes, giving national-level SUMP support a more formal institutional role (European Commission, 2023; European Parliament and Council, 2024).

For cities in the BSR, this transition takes place under different national planning traditions, governance arrangements and levels of municipal capacity. The SUMPs for BSR project responds particularly to the **needs of small and medium-sized cities** by developing practical tools and capacity-building approaches for sustainable mobility planning, with a strong focus on active mobility, monitoring and evaluation, experimentation and data-informed decision-making (Interreg Baltic Sea Region, n.d.).

This report focuses on the **seven SUMPs for BSR project countries: Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden**. Its aim is to examine how national support can better enable municipalities to develop, implement and sustain effective SUMPs and related sustainable mobility approaches.

1.1. Purpose and scope of the report

Increasing SUMP uptake is not solely a question of encouraging municipalities to prepare a strategic plan. Effective sustainable mobility planning also depends on cities' ability to implement measures, monitor and evaluate progress, cooperate across administrative and institutional boundaries, engage stakeholders and maintain sufficient capacity over time.

Against this background, the report has **three closely connected objectives**:

1. to examine the current status and development of national SUMP support mechanisms in the seven SUMPs for BSR project countries;
2. to identify common cross-border capacity-building needs and barriers experienced by municipalities in developing and implementing SUMPs; and
3. to formulate joint recommendations on how SUMPs for BSR results and tools could strengthen national SUMP frameworks and support programmes.

The report does not rank national SUMP support structures or assume that one institutional model should apply across all countries. Instead, it compares the **functions provided by national support systems** — such as guidance, technical expertise, financing, data and monitoring support, capacity building and governance arrangements — and considers how well these correspond to municipal needs.

The report is primarily intended for **National SUMP Contact Points, national, regional and local authorities** and other organisations supporting sustainable mobility planning, while its findings

are also relevant for mobility practitioners and organisations providing technical assistance, training, data or other forms of SUMP support.

1.2. Strengthening the uptake of SUMPs in the Baltic Sea Region

The SUMPs for BSR project was developed at a time when **national SUMP support structures were still emerging**. During project preparation in 2023, the European Commission had recommended that Member States establish National Support Programmes for Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning, but these programmes were not yet widely established. The subsequent revision of the TEN-T Regulation strengthened the role of national SUMP support by requiring Member States to designate National SUMP Contact Points and establish national SUMP programmes for urban nodes.

One of the activities of SUMPs for BSR focuses on **strengthening the national enabling environment for SUMP development and implementation**. It aims to increase awareness of the barriers and capacity-building needs experienced by cities, foster dialogue on national support mechanisms and facilitate the integration of relevant project results into national SUMP frameworks and support programmes.

A central element of this work is the **national peer-transfer workshops organised in all seven project countries**. Their aim was to bring together municipalities and other mobility stakeholders, share relevant project findings and discuss current national support mechanisms and remaining needs. In Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden, the workshops were connected to project partner cities. In Estonia, where the project did not have a pilot city, the national workshop was organised by the Institute of Baltic Studies (IBS), a project partner and support organisation. For the purposes of this report, the seven workshops are treated as **comparable country-level evidence on municipal and stakeholder support needs**.

This national perspective complements the project's practical outputs, including its monitoring and evaluation tools, active-mobility data-collection approaches, model for experimenting with mobility measures, National SUMP Contact Point survey, SUMP training activities and the BSR SUMP Competence Centre (Interreg Baltic Sea Region, n.d.). The report therefore moves from identifying needs towards considering how tested project approaches could support longer-term national capacity.

1.3. European policy context and the role of national SUMP support programmes

The European policy context for SUMPs has strengthened substantially in recent years. A major milestone was **Commission Recommendation (EU) 2023/550 on National Support Programmes for Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning**, which called on Member States to establish national programmes supporting cities with SUMP preparation and implementation. The Recommendation identifies a broad range of possible support functions, including guidance, training and capacity building, technical expertise, financial support, city networks and communication activities (European Commission, 2023).

The revised **TEN-T Regulation (EU) 2024/1679** gives these arrangements a stronger institutional role. It requires Member States to designate a National SUMP Contact Point and establish a national SUMP programme with the aim of supporting TEN-T urban nodes in adopting and

implementing SUMP. TEN-T urban nodes are also required to adopt and monitor a SUMP in line with the Regulation's requirement. While the EU-level obligation focuses on urban nodes, Member States may choose to make national support available more broadly. This makes the accessibility of support for smaller and non-urban-node municipalities an important issue for national SUMP support systems (European Parliament and Council, 2024).

Monitoring and data have also become more prominent. **Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2026/1554** establishes common requirements for urban mobility data relating to sustainability, safety and accessibility, further increasing the importance of consistent data collection, methodological support and analytical capacity (European Commission, 2026a). At the same time, the third edition of the European SUMP Guidelines, published in 2026, provides updated methodological support for cities developing and implementing SUMP (European Commission, 2026b).

Together, these developments reinforce the role of national authorities as more than promoters of the SUMP concept. Effective national support may need to connect **guidance, capacity building, financing, data and monitoring, institutional coordination and implementation support**. This broader understanding of national support provides the policy reference point for the analysis in the following chapters.

It also needs to be highlighted that **national SUMP support should not be understood as the responsibility of the National SUMP Contact Point alone**. Depending on the national context, support functions may also be provided by ministries and transport agencies, regional and local government networks, city networks, research and competence organisations, and European projects. These actors can complement formal national support programmes by providing expertise, peer learning, training, data support and practical implementation assistance.

2. Evidence base and analytical approach

The report combines evidence on **what support currently exists at national level** with evidence on **what municipalities and other mobility stakeholders need in practice**. The main analytical principle is triangulation: findings are compared across several sources rather than being derived from any single survey, workshop or background document.

2.1. Sources and stakeholder groups

Four main groups of evidence are used for the purpose of this report.

1. National peer-transfer workshops. These provide the principal municipal and stakeholder-level evidence on barriers, capacity-building needs and expectations towards national support mechanisms. Workshops were organised in each of the seven project countries and followed common project guidance while allowing the format and thematic emphasis to reflect national circumstances. Discussions addressed project findings and tools, experiences with sustainable mobility planning and implementation, and gaps in existing national support.

For comparative purposes, the **country is the unit of analysis**, rather than the type of project partner organising the workshop. Estonia is therefore treated on an equal basis with the six countries represented by project pilot cities. The Estonian workshop organised by the Institute of Baltic Studies brought together municipal, regional and national-level mobility actors and used structured thematic group work specifically to identify support needs and potential solutions.

Workshop findings are coded against a **common thematic framework** covering:

- resources, financing and continuity from planning to implementation;
- practical guidance, technical expertise and differentiated capacity building;
- data, monitoring, evaluation and indicators;
- governance, coordination and functional city cooperation;
- political commitment, public acceptance and behavioural change;
- peer learning and knowledge exchange; and
- active mobility as a cross-cutting capacity need.

Within these themes, the analysis distinguishes between **barriers, support needs and recommendations**. Questions concerning the continuation and scaling of pilots or project-based activities are considered primarily under resources, financing and continuity from planning to implementation, while peer learning focuses on the exchange and transfer of knowledge, methods and experience between municipalities and other actors.

2. National SUMP Contact Point survey. A survey conducted between October 2025 and January 2026 provides direct national-level evidence from Estonia, Finland, Germany, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden. It covers national SUMP frameworks and uptake, support currently available to municipalities, perceived challenges and priorities for strengthening national support. Latvia is not represented in this survey, which makes the other country-level sources particularly important for maintaining seven-country coverage (SUMPs for BSR, 2025–2026).

3. BSR SUMP Competence Centre country profiles. The country profiles were developed within the SUMPs for BSR project by experts from the University of Gdańsk and are used as a systematic secondary source for all seven project countries. They provide a comparable baseline on how sustainable urban mobility planning is framed and applied nationally, including relevant planning

traditions, institutional arrangements, guidance, funding and implementation support, governance and monitoring practices. This report uses the profiles for Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026a–g).

The profiles are particularly important for Chapter 3, where they provide a common national baseline that is analysed alongside the Contact Point survey. They also support the gap analysis by allowing municipal needs identified in the workshops to be compared with support structures already in place.

4. Additional project and cross-border evidence. Earlier SUMPs for BSR needs assessments, training and SUMP Clinic activities, monitoring and evaluation framework development, pilot lessons and other project outputs are used to contextualise findings and assess possible responses to identified gaps. The report also makes selective use of the wider BSR Urban Mobility project’s survey for cities & urban nodes as supporting cross-border evidence (BSR Urban Mobility, 2025–2026). European policy documents provide the policy benchmark against which national support functions are considered.

The sources therefore have different roles: workshops provide the municipal perspective; the National SUMP Contact Point survey provides direct national-level perspectives; country profiles provide a systematic seven-country baseline; and other project and cross-border sources provide triangulation and context.

2.2. Approach to cross-border analysis

The analysis combines three questions:

1. **What support currently exists?** National frameworks, support mechanisms and priorities are identified primarily through the country profiles and National SUMP Contact Point survey.
2. **What do municipalities need?** Barriers, support needs and recommendations are identified primarily through the national peer-transfer workshops and compared across the seven project countries.
3. **How can remaining gaps be addressed?** Existing national support is compared with municipal needs, after which relevant SUMPs for BSR tools and approaches are assessed against the remaining gaps.

The analytical chain used throughout the report is therefore:

Identified barrier → municipal support need → current national response → remaining gap → relevant SUMPs for BSR contribution → recommended national action

Workshop evidence is analysed qualitatively rather than through simple frequency counting. Themes appearing substantively across different national contexts are treated as **common or recurring cross-border needs**; needs affecting particular types of municipalities are retained as **differentiated needs**; and findings strongly linked to a specific national or thematic context are treated as **context-specific**.

The emerging cross-border findings were also reviewed with the SUMPs for BSR Cross-Border Advisory Group (CBAG) at its final meeting on 5 October 2026. The workshop presented the main D3.1 findings, including the observation that national support tends to be most visible around planning and becomes less consistent during implementation, monitoring, review and continuation. CBAG participants were invited to validate the findings, identify corrections or

missing nuances, propose practical national-level actions and share relevant examples from their countries. The discussion broadly confirmed the direction of the analysis and did not require substantive changes to the main cross-border findings; its input was used to validate and finalise the report.

The analysis also accounts for differences in national planning traditions. Sustainable mobility planning may be embedded in transport-system planning, spatial planning, metropolitan cooperation or other established structures without necessarily using the SUMP label. For this reason, Chapter 3 compares the **functions and support provided by national systems**, rather than judging countries according to the terminology or institutional model they use.

2.3. Limitations of the evidence

The evidence should be interpreted as a **comparative qualitative evidence base**, rather than as a statistically representative assessment of all municipalities in the seven countries.

The National SUMP Contact Point survey contains responses from six countries and reflects expert institutional perspectives rather than a large national sample (SUMPs for BSR, 2025–2026). National workshops also differed in participant composition, format and thematic emphasis, as they were deliberately adapted to national circumstances. A topic not discussed in a particular workshop is therefore not interpreted as evidence that the issue is absent in that country.

The country profiles provide a consistent comparative baseline, but they are desk-based national summaries and are therefore used alongside rather than as substitutes for evidence collected directly from authorities and workshop participants (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026a–g). National frameworks are also evolving, meaning that the report represents the situation during the project period rather than a permanent assessment.

These differences between sources are taken into account through triangulation. **Convergence between municipal workshop evidence, national-level evidence and country-profile information is treated as particularly strong evidence**, while differences between them are themselves relevant — for example, where a formal support mechanism exists nationally but municipalities continue to report a practical implementation gap.

Taken together, the evidence base allows the report to compare national support arrangements across the seven project countries and then examine how well these arrangements correspond to the needs experienced by municipalities. Chapter 3 therefore begins with the national support landscape, using the country profiles and National SUMP Contact Point evidence as its principal sources, before Chapter 4 turns to the cross-border needs emerging from the national peer-transfer workshops.

3. National SUMP support mechanisms in the project countries: current status and plans

Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning is supported through **different institutional arrangements** across the seven SUMPs for BSR project countries. Some countries use dedicated SUMP guidance and coordination structures, while others embed SUMP principles within established transport-system planning, municipal mobility strategies, metropolitan cooperation or wider land-use and climate-planning frameworks. The differences reflect national planning traditions and governance systems rather than a simple distinction between countries that do or do not support SUMP.

This chapter combines two principal national-level sources. The **SUMP for BSR National SUMP Contact Point survey**, conducted between October 2025 and January 2026, provides direct institutional evidence from Estonia, Finland, Germany, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden (SUMP for BSR, 2025–2026). The **BSR SUMP Competence Centre country profiles** provide a systematic comparative baseline for all seven project countries, including Latvia, which was not represented in the Contact Point survey (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026a–g).

National peer-transfer workshop findings are used selectively where they provide additional information directly relevant to existing support arrangements or their practical application. The Contact Point survey confirmed substantial variation in national frameworks and uptake, but also found that national guidance, recommendations and voluntary adoption are common and that larger urban nodes generally have more developed SUMP practice than smaller municipalities (SUMP for BSR, 2025–2026).

3.1. Current SUMP frameworks and uptake across the project countries

A common feature of the seven countries is that **SUMP principles are increasingly present in national and municipal planning** even where there is no universal legal obligation requiring every municipality to prepare a document formally labelled as a SUMP. The National SUMP Contact Point survey found that most responding countries did not have such a nationwide obligation. At the time of the survey, Poland reported a legislative framework under development; Lithuania and Finland referred to established guidance or planning traditions; and Germany highlighted the requirements associated with TEN-T urban nodes (SUMP for BSR, 2025–2026).

Estonia has developed a flexible approach in which sustainable mobility has gradually become more prominent within national transport policy and local planning. There is no nationwide requirement for all municipalities to prepare a SUMP, but the Transport and Mobility Development Plan 2021–2035 provides a strategic framework for sustainable mobility. Tallinn and Tartu are designated TEN-T urban nodes and are therefore required to prepare and monitor SUMP in line with the TEN-T framework. Mobility is also addressed through wider development, spatial, climate and energy plans. Recent national developments include the Estonian Cycling Strategy 2040, the Public Transport Reform Concept and the preparation of the national spatial plan (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026a; European Parliament and Council, 2024).

Finland embeds SUMP principles within a long-established system of national, regional and city-region transport-system planning. Several of the largest city regions have transport-system plans, and the seven largest urban regions use land use, housing and transport agreements (MAL

agreements) to coordinate the state and municipalities. Several sustainable mobility plans in Finland fulfil key elements of the SUMP concept. Finland therefore combines increasingly explicit SUMP practice with a pre-existing planning system already organised to a significant extent around functional cities and integrated land-use and transport planning (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026b).

Germany builds on a long tradition of municipal *Verkehrsentwicklungspläne* (VEPs). Modern VEPs and related mobility plans increasingly incorporate multimodality, climate objectives, stakeholder participation, links with surrounding municipalities and monitoring, bringing them closer to the European SUMP approach even where the SUMP label is not used. Germany has no single nationwide SUMP obligation for all municipalities, while regional approaches also differ between Länder (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026c).

Latvia similarly has no universal legal obligation for municipalities to prepare a distinct SUMP. Sustainable mobility planning has developed most visibly at metropolitan level through the Riga and Pierīga Mobility Plan, alongside the Transport Development Guidelines 2021–2027 and municipal planning processes. National policy increasingly connects mobility with lower-emission transport, public transport, active modes and wider territorial development (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026d).

Lithuania has a dedicated national framework for sustainable mobility planning. National SUMP preparation guidance was introduced in 2015 and revised in 2022 as the Guidelines on the Preparation of Sustainable Mobility Plans. The revised framework explicitly extends sustainable mobility planning beyond individual cities to regions and other functional cities. A substantial number of municipalities have prepared plans, and several have subsequently revised plans or updated their action programmes (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026e).

Poland has increasingly incorporated SUMP into national urban and transport policy. The Strategy for Sustainable Transport Development to 2030 and National Urban Policy 2030 recognise the SUMP concept and the need to coordinate mobility and spatial planning, including at functional city level. At the time of the SUMP for BSR Contact Point survey, Poland also reported that a legislative framework was under development (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026f; SUMP for BSR, 2025–2026).

Sweden primarily implements SUMP-type planning through municipal transport strategies based on the TRAST – Transport for an Attractive City framework. Municipalities have a strong planning role and are not universally required to adopt a separate SUMP document. TRAST provides an established national methodological basis for integrated transport strategies, while municipalities apply the approach through different types of transport, mobility and urban-development plans (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026g).

Across the seven countries, **SUMP principles are being embedded through different combinations of dedicated SUMP frameworks and existing domestic planning systems**. This distinction is important when comparing national support: the relevant question is not only whether a country formally uses the SUMP label, but whether municipalities receive the functions needed for integrated planning and implementation.

3.2. Existing national support mechanisms

The National SUMP Contact Point survey shows that **support is already delivered by a diverse range of actors**. Respondents identified ministries and national governments, national transport agencies, regional authorities, research organisations and NGOs, while Poland specifically identified the Centre for EU Transport Projects (CUPT). National digital platforms, competence structures or guidance exist in several countries, and training also comes through Joint Assistance to Support Projects in European Regions (JASPERS), urban-node networks and EU-funded projects (SUMPs for BSR, 2025–2026).

The seven country profiles illustrate how **differently these support functions are organised**.

In **Lithuania**, methodological guidance, ministerial coordination, the Sustainable Mobility Plans Commission and implementation funding form a relatively explicit national SUMP support structure (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026e).

Poland has developed a particularly structured national SUMP support arrangement. Alongside the Ministry of Infrastructure, the system includes a Plenipotentiary for SUMP, a SUMP Competence Centre and a SUMP Support Steering Committee, with the Centre for EU Transport Projects (CUPT) playing an important role in technical support and quality assistance. The Competence Centre supports the preparation, implementation, monitoring and updating of SUMPs and maintains a national SUMP repository. Poland also applies a formal SUMP evaluation process in which plans are assessed against the eight SUMP principles and can receive a positive assessment, a positive assessment with recommendations, or a negative assessment (Ministry of Infrastructure, 2024; BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026f).

Germany uses a more network-based model: NaKoMo — the National Competence Network for Sustainable Mobility — acts as a national networking and knowledge-exchange structure connecting federal, state and municipal levels, while federal funding has supported municipalities in preparing or updating mobility concepts aligned with SUMP requirements since 2023 (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026c).

Finland has established a National SUMP Support Programme for 2025-2027, coordinated by Traficom, which also serves as the National SUMP Contact Point. The programme combines information and communication, training, networking and peer learning, an advisory expert group, development of national SUMP guidance, support related to joint studies and funding opportunities, and coordination of indicator data. The programme is designed to build on Finland's existing regional transport system planning and MAL cooperation structures rather than create a separate parallel planning system (Traficom, 2025).

In **Sweden**, national support is provided through established guidance and transport planning structures rather than through one dedicated SUMP support model. Trafikverket plays an important role through the TRAST framework, national transport planning and implementation-oriented instruments, while municipalities retain substantial autonomy over the form of their mobility strategies (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026g).

Estonia currently combines national strategic direction, mobility investment priorities and expanding methodological and data support rather than one long-established dedicated SUMP support system. The Ministry of Climate acts as the main national institutional reference, while the Estonian Transport Administration and other national actors are developing complementary tools and sectoral initiatives, including the multimodal transport model, national mobility survey and cycling-related guidance (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026a).

In **Latvia**, the Ministry of Transport provides the main national institutional reference, while national transport policy and the Riga and Pierīga metropolitan planning framework provide the principal structures supporting sustainable mobility (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026d). The Latvian national workshop also indicated that municipalities increasingly expect the national level to provide not only investment support but methodological and coordination support.

Overall, national SUMP support should therefore not be understood only as a standalone programme carrying the SUMP name. Across the seven countries, relevant support is distributed between **guidance, transport-system planning, competence networks, funding programmes, metropolitan governance, data systems and technical assistance**.

3.3. Guidance, training and technical expertise

Access to **methodological guidance, training and specialist expertise** differs considerably between countries. Existing support ranges from national SUMP guidance and regular training activities to competence networks, technical assistance programmes and expert support.

Lithuania has established national Guidelines on the Preparation of Sustainable Mobility Plans, providing a dedicated methodological framework for SUMP preparation and extending the approach beyond individual cities to regions and functional city areas (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026e).

Finland's National SUMP Support Programme includes regular training and peer-learning activities coordinated by Traficom. These include monthly SUMP information sessions and at least three annual half-day events for the national SUMP core network. The programme also foresees the preparation of a national SUMP planning guide adapted to Finnish practice, covering planning processes, decision-making, monitoring, participation and communication, with content intended to be useful for cities of different sizes (Traficom, 2025).

Sweden's TRAST framework provides long-established methodological guidance for municipal transport strategies, plans and action programmes, covering accessibility, urban quality, integration between modes and implementation (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026g).

Germany combines methodological materials with networking and practical support through NaKoMo and other national sustainable mobility resources, while **Poland** has complemented its national SUMP support structure with direct technical assistance through pilot and Technical Support Instrument activities (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026c, 2026f).

European-level support has also complemented national SUMP capacity building. The European Investment Bank, through **JASPERS** and on behalf of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport, has delivered a series of free SUMP training sessions in cooperation with national SUMP contact points and other relevant national authorities. The training has been targeted particularly at authorities responsible for SUMP preparation and implementation in TEN-T urban nodes, including local or regional authorities depending on where the planning mandate lies. The programme combines core SUMP methodology with practical topics such as links between SUMP and investment planning, monitoring and indicators, stakeholder engagement, active mobility and the relationship between urban-node planning and the wider TEN-T network. JASPERS SUMP training was also delivered in several SUMP projects for BSR project countries, including Finland, Latvia, Estonia, Poland and Sweden (EIB – JASPERS, 2025-2026).

The **National SUMP Contact Point survey** nevertheless suggests that the existence of guidance and training does not eliminate capacity gaps. Respondents identified human and technological resource limitations, difficulties linking SUMP with wider governance and planning, low public participation and challenges in communicating the value and impacts of sustainable mobility to political decision-makers and wider audiences (SUMPs for BSR, 2025-2026). This points to a continued need for practical, implementation-oriented and context-specific support alongside written guidance and training.

3.4. Financial and implementation support

Financial and implementation capacity is one of the areas in which national arrangements differ most clearly. The Contact Point survey identifies **human, technological and financial resources** — including resources needed to implement SUMP after preparation — as a common challenge. Estonia, Finland and Lithuania also explicitly identified financing or financial incentives among areas requiring stronger future support (SUMPs for BSR, 2025–2026).

Lithuania provides a particularly clear example of linking planning with implementation support. National programming of the 2021-2027 EU Funds Investment Programme provides funding for sustainable mobility measures in municipalities that have prepared mobility plans, including zero-emission public transport, charging and refuelling infrastructure, micromobility integration and other greenhouse gas reduction measures. Lithuania's national programme therefore creates a direct connection between mobility plan preparation and support for implementing related measures (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026e).

Germany has provided federal financial support since 2023 for the preparation or updating of sustainable mobility concepts aligned with European SUMP requirements. The first funding call supported 17 projects with approximately EUR 5.2 million, followed by further projects under a subsequent call (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026c).

Sweden does not have a dedicated national programme for financing SUMP documents, but implementation has been supported through instruments such as the Urban Environment Agreements, covering public transport, cycling and sustainable freight measures (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026g).

Finland similarly embeds financing within the wider Transport 12 and MAL structures rather than operating a standalone SUMP funding instrument. In **Estonia** and **Latvia**, sustainable-mobility investments are likewise supported through broader national transport-policy and EU-supported programming frameworks rather than dedicated SUMP funding schemes (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026a, 2026b, 2026d).

Available financing does not necessarily remove the implementation gap. At the workshop in **Poland**, participants identified investment funding alongside institutional capacity, data and public acceptance as continuing implementation needs (SUMPs for BSR, 2026).

The key question is therefore not simply whether sustainable-mobility funding exists, but **how effectively funding and organisational capacity cover the full SUMP cycle** — from planning to implementation, monitoring, evaluation and continuation over time.

3.5. Data, monitoring and evaluation support

Data and monitoring form one of the **clearest areas of common concern**. The National SUMP Contact Point survey identified limited or unsystematic SUMP monitoring and lack of reliable data among the main challenges faced by cities. Lithuania identified a common data-collection methodology as a priority, while Poland highlighted SUMP monitoring, data sources and data platforms (SUMPs for BSR, 2025–2026).

National support differs in the extent to which **common data, monitoring methods and analytical tools are available** to municipalities.

Estonia is expanding national mobility-data capacity through the national multimodal transport model (LAAM), the Estonian National Mobility Survey (EELU 2026) and a national pedestrian and cyclist counting system on state roads. National transport policy also contains quantified mobility and environmental indicators (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026a).

Lithuania's national methodology requires structured analysis across transport themes, while municipal plans increasingly link diagnosis with action programmes and subsequent updates (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026e). In **Sweden**, diagnosis and follow-up form part of TRAST-based mobility planning, although the specific indicators and reporting arrangements vary between municipalities (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026g).

Latvia's Riga and Pierīga Mobility Plan provides a monitoring-oriented metropolitan framework, and national policy also includes measurable sustainable-mobility targets (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026d). At the Latvian peer-transfer workshop, however, municipalities and Ministry representatives highlighted an ongoing need for unified data approaches, common methodologies and practical support that smaller municipalities can use.

Poland provides a particularly detailed example of emerging monitoring support. The National SUMP Contact Point survey identified monitoring, data sources and platforms among national priorities, while workshop participants called for more consistent data standards, clearer indicator calculation methods and data sources, reliable transport models, stronger institutional responsibility for monitoring and procedures linking monitoring results with management decisions (SUMPs for BSR, 2025–2026, SUMPs for BSR, 2026).

Taken together, the evidence points to an important national support role in **harmonising definitions and methodologies, improving data interoperability and availability, building analytical capacity and helping municipalities develop monitoring systems that are proportionate to their resources and useful for actual decision-making**.

3.6. Governance and functional city cooperation

Sustainable mobility increasingly needs to be planned beyond individual municipal boundaries. The National SUMP Contact Point survey identified both the integration of SUMPs with wider governance and planning and the governance of plans covering several municipalities as **recurring challenges**. Specific questions concern cooperation models, legal arrangements, funding and decision-making (SUMPs for BSR, 2025–2026).

Several project countries already contain structures that **facilitate planning across municipal boundaries**. In **Finland**, city-region transport-system planning and MAL agreements institutionalise cooperation between municipalities and central government while linking mobility with land use and housing (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026b). **Lithuania's** updated

national guidance explicitly recognises regions and functional cities as relevant scales for sustainable mobility planning (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026e).

In **Poland**, national urban policy places considerable emphasis on urban functional areas (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026f), while the Contact Point survey specifically identifies cooperation models within functional cities as an area requiring further support (SUMPs for BSR, 2025–2026).

Latvia's most developed integrated mobility-planning framework operates at metropolitan scale through the Riga and Pierīga Mobility Plan, reflecting travel flows and land-use relationships across municipal boundaries (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, 2026d).

At the workshop in **Estonia**, participants similarly highlighted functional city cooperation as a practical support need. They called for mobility to be planned according to functional travel patterns, stronger cooperation between neighbouring municipalities, closer integration of spatial and mobility planning and clearer division of responsibilities between planning levels.

Across the seven countries, **functional city planning appears easier to operationalise where established inter-municipal or metropolitan structures already exist**. Elsewhere, extending mobility planning beyond municipal boundaries introduces additional questions concerning responsibility, financing, data sharing, coordination and decision-making.

3.7. Current plans and priorities for strengthening national support

The National SUMP Contact Point survey provides the most comparable evidence on areas national actors considered important for further support. These findings reflect the position at the time of the survey and should be interpreted as **identified priority areas rather than confirmation that all measures have since been formally adopted** (SUMPs for BSR, 2025–2026).

Table 3.1 Priorities for strengthening national SUMP support identified through the National SUMP Contact Point survey.^{1 2}

Country	Priorities identified in the National SUMP Contact Point survey
Estonia	Technical guidance adapted to the regional context, including cost-benefit analysis; support for communicating or “selling” the need for SUMPs; continuous financing for implementation.
Finland	Support for discussions with decision-makers; better information on the costs and effects of measures; financing for implementation.
Germany	Further development of national guidelines and criteria.
Lithuania	Funding or financial incentives; development of a common methodology for data collection.
Poland	SUMP monitoring; data sources and platforms; public and stakeholder participation; cooperation models within functional cities.

Source: SUMPs for BSR National SUMP Contact Point survey (SUMPs for BSR, 2025–2026).

¹ Latvia did not participate in the SUMPs for BSR National SUMP Contact Point survey. Its country profile documents the existing national policy and metropolitan-planning framework, but no directly comparable survey-based list of future priorities is available.

² For Sweden, at the time of the survey, work was underway to identify municipalities' support needs; the available survey response does not provide a final list of resulting priorities.

The workshop evidence is not fully representative of all municipalities or stakeholders in each country, but it provides an **important indication of where participants see remaining gaps in these evolving systems**. For example, the workshop in Estonia particularly highlighted functional city cooperation, practical guidance, mobility-data capacity and continuity from pilots to implementation, while the workshop in Poland reinforced the need for common data and indicator methodologies, stronger implementation capacity and support that links monitoring results to decisions. These municipal perspectives are analysed systematically in Chapter 4.

Across the six Contact Point responses and seven country profiles, several common directions can already be identified. National support is increasingly expected to extend **beyond plan preparation towards implementation**, while data and monitoring, context-specific technical expertise, financing, functional city cooperation and engagement with decision-makers remain important areas of development. At the same time, the evidence does not point towards convergence on one institutional model. Rather, the seven countries are approaching similar support functions through different combinations of national guidance, established planning systems, funding instruments, competence structures and metropolitan cooperation.

This provides the national-level baseline for the next stage of the analysis. Chapter 4 examines what municipalities and other stakeholders across the seven national peer-transfer workshops identified as the most important barriers and support needs, before Chapter 5 compares those needs with the support landscape described above.

4. Common cross-border capacity-building and support needs of cities

The seven national peer-transfer workshops in **Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden** provide the main municipal and stakeholder-level evidence on the support needed to develop and implement sustainable urban mobility planning across the SUMPs for BSR project countries.

Although organised by individual project partners, the workshops were designed as **national exchanges**, bringing together municipalities and, depending on the country, national and regional authorities, researchers, transport organisations, private-sector actors and other stakeholders. The analysis therefore treats each workshop as a **national country case**, rather than as evidence concerning only the host city.

The workshops **differed in format and thematic emphasis**. Most addressed national SUMP support relatively broadly, while the German workshop focused more specifically on sustainable urban logistics and delivery traffic. The Polish workshop used pre-workshop registration responses as its main direct source on national support needs, with the live session concentrating particularly on monitoring, evaluation and KPI selection. These differences are retained in the analysis rather than interpreted as differences in the importance of particular needs between countries (SUMPs for BSR, 2026).

Across the seven countries, the workshops point to a consistent finding: **municipalities need support not only to prepare plans, but to build and maintain the organisational, technical, financial and political capacity required to implement, monitor and update them**. This overall pattern is also supported by the wider BSR Urban Mobility survey, which identified financial planning and funding, staff resources, political acceptance, governance and the collection and use of data among recurring challenges for cities and regions. The survey also pointed to a need for more effective monitoring and evaluation frameworks with clear indicators (BSR Urban

Mobility, 2025–2026). These wider survey findings are used here as supporting evidence rather than as the basis for defining the Chapter 4 themes, which remain grounded in the seven national workshops. The main cross-border themes are summarised in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Overview of common cross-border support needs identified through the national workshops

Theme	Main cross-border need	Important nuances
Resources, financing and continuity	Resources for implementation, monitoring, staff capacity and continuation beyond individual projects.	Smaller and lower-capacity municipalities face particularly strong resource constraints; more advanced cities also struggle with moving pilots and project results into permanent practice.
Practical guidance, technical expertise and differentiated capacity building	Usable methodologies, tools, specialist expertise and implementation-oriented assistance.	Less experienced municipalities need basic guidance and templates; more experienced municipalities increasingly need specialist support on data, monitoring and implementation.
Data, M&E and indicators	Common methodologies, better data access and interoperability, suitable indicators and analytical capacity.	Strongly recurring theme across countries; exact needs range from basic data collection to advanced M&E and transport modelling.
Governance, coordination and functional city cooperation	Clear responsibilities and stronger coordination across municipalities, sectors and governance levels.	Particularly important where mobility flows cross municipal borders or several organisations share responsibility for infrastructure and data.
Political commitment, public acceptance and behavioural change	Capacity to communicate benefits and trade-offs, engage users and maintain political support.	Some countries stressed political continuity; others focused more on public acceptance, behavioural change or conflicts over limited urban space.
Peer learning and knowledge exchange	Permanent mechanisms for exchanging methods, examples, expertise and project lessons.	Especially important for municipalities that do not have specialist expertise in-house.
Active mobility	Integrate walking and cycling into mainstream planning, data, investment and governance.	Active mobility repeatedly exposed wider capacity gaps related to infrastructure, M&E, behaviour, responsibility and first/last-mile integration.

Source: Analysis of the seven SUMPs for BSR national peer-transfer workshops (SUMPs for BSR, 2026).

The themes are closely interrelated. For example, weak monitoring may reflect not only a lack of indicators, but also insufficient staff capacity and fragmented data ownership. Similarly, implementation may be delayed by funding constraints, political resistance and unclear

responsibilities at the same time. The following sections therefore examine the themes separately while recognising these interdependencies.

4.1. Resources, financing and continuity from planning to implementation

Resources and long-term continuity emerged as **one of the clearest cross-border concerns**. Participants did not describe the problem only as a lack of investment funding. They also identified shortages of staff time, specialist expertise, organisational ownership and resources for monitoring, maintenance and follow-up.

In **Lithuania**, financial support was the most frequently highlighted implementation challenge, followed by shortages of human resources and professional competencies. Smaller municipalities were seen as particularly constrained by the staff, technical expertise and administrative effort required for sustainable mobility planning.

The workshop in **Finland** similarly highlighted the need for predictable and continuous funding covering planning, implementation and monitoring rather than isolated project activities. Participants noted that limited staff time and funding prevent proper follow-up of pilots and that good practices are not always integrated into regular municipal operations once project funding ends.

In **Sweden**, limited staff capacity and access to specialist expertise were particularly important for smaller municipalities. Participants also identified securing funding for implementation, monitoring and long-term maintenance as an ongoing challenge and recommended support that covers both planning and implementation.

The workshop in **Latvia** similarly stressed that one-off projects do not provide the continuity municipalities need. Participants called for sustained state–municipal cooperation, while smaller municipalities reported difficulties financing mobility studies, monitoring and other activities that larger administrations may be able to undertake internally.

In **Estonia**, discussions focused strongly on what happens after a pilot or project. Participants noted that solutions often disappear when external funding ends and emphasised the need to clarify future ownership, maintenance, financing and scaling earlier in the process. Municipalities also differ considerably in their ability to test and adopt new technologies because of differences in financial and technical capacity.

The workshop in **Poland** reinforces the distinction between preparing a plan and having the organisational capacity to implement it. Municipal actors explicitly described the need for durable institutional capacity to translate SUMP objectives into everyday decisions and measurable results, while transport-sector respondents also identified investment funding as a barrier.

As such, the workshops suggest that national support should address the **full implementation chain**:

Plan → implementation → monitoring and evaluation → learning and adjustment → continued operation or scaling.

A recurring weakness is that **support is often strongest at the beginning of this chain**, while municipal capacity becomes less secure during implementation and follow-up.

4.2. Practical guidance, technical expertise and differentiated capacity-building

Municipalities also need practical guidance and technical expertise that can be applied to real planning and implementation decisions. The evidence strongly suggests that capacity-building should be **differentiated**, because municipalities enter the SUMP process with very different levels of experience, staffing and analytical capacity.

The clearest distinction emerged in the workshop in **Lithuania**. More experienced municipalities prioritised improving existing infrastructure, data-driven management and cooperation networks, whereas less experienced municipalities wanted practical planning tools, guidance on SUMP requirements and clarification of what kind of planning process they should undertake. Participants specifically questioned whether a full-scale SUMP is always proportionate for small municipalities with limited administrative capacity.

A similar pattern emerged in **Sweden**, where participants stressed substantial differences between urban and rural municipalities. Smaller municipalities often have no dedicated transport or mobility strategy and limited specialist staff. They therefore require practical guidance and targeted capacity building rather than a uniform support model designed primarily for larger urban areas.

The workshop in **Latvia** also distinguished between municipality types: smaller municipalities expressed a stronger need for practical tools and templates, while larger-city participants were more focused on coordination and governance.

In **Estonia**, the discussions highlighted demand for practical national guidance on issues such as walking and cycling infrastructure, first/last-mile solutions and mobility data. Municipalities were also concerned about repeatedly solving similar technical questions independently rather than being able to use established national approaches.

Poland provides a concrete example of how such support could be structured in the field of M&E: participants requested a manageable set of indicators accompanied by definitions, calculation methods, recommended data sources, update frequencies and examples suitable for cities and functional cities of different sizes.

In **Finland**, the emphasis was somewhat different. Participants noted that relevant expertise often already exists but can be difficult to locate. The need was therefore not only to create new knowledge, but to improve access to experts and connect municipalities, universities and other organisations more systematically.

Table 4.2 Examples of differentiated municipal capacity-building needs

Municipality/context	Typical support need emerging from workshops
Smaller or lower-capacity municipalities	Basic planning guidance; templates and practical tools; clarification of SUMP requirements; access to specialist expertise; proportionate M&E approaches; funding and staff capacity.
More experienced municipalities	Advanced data analysis; implementation support; M&E systems; evaluation of infrastructure effectiveness; institutional coordination and scaling.
Rural and dispersed contexts	Approaches that reflect longer travel distances, fewer sustainable alternatives and different infrastructure conditions.
Functional cities	Joint methodologies, compatible data, inter-municipal governance models and common implementation arrangements.
Municipalities testing new approaches	Flexible pilot support, technical assistance, evaluation methods and pathways for continuation and scaling.

Source: Analysis of the seven SUMPs for BSR national peer-transfer workshops (SUMPs for BSR, 2026).

The cross-border conclusion is therefore not that every municipality needs a different support system. Rather, national programmes need a **common framework with different levels of support**, ranging from accessible introductory tools to specialist implementation assistance.

4.3. Data, monitoring, evaluation and indicators

Data and M&E constitute **one of the most consistently recurring themes** across the seven workshops. The workshops indicate that the challenge is not simply insufficient data. Municipalities also face fragmented methodologies, incompatible datasets, unclear responsibilities, difficulty selecting useful indicators and limited capacity to interpret results.

In **Estonia**, participants argued that data collection should begin with a clearly defined planning question rather than with the availability of a technology. They highlighted gaps in walking and cycling data, the need for regular mobility surveys using consistent methodologies, greater interoperability between municipal and national datasets and stronger municipal analytical capacity.

In **Latvia**, municipalities described a lack of shared methods for collecting, processing and comparing mobility data. The workshop called for national guidance, standardised instruments and shared resources that would allow municipalities with limited internal capacity to undertake meaningful monitoring.

The workshop in **Poland** gave the most detailed attention to M&E. Participants requested consistent data standards across municipalities and functional cities, uniform formats, transparent indicator-calculation methods and clearly documented data sources. Institutional responsibility for maintaining indicators and translating monitoring results into management decisions was also highlighted.

In **Finland**, participants wanted more locally relevant information on mobility behaviour, attitudes and barriers and stronger national support for common data-collection methodologies and evidence-based prioritisation.

Lithuania likewise identified a strong demand for data-analysis capacity and user-friendly tools for data collection, indicator selection and evidence-based decision-making.

In **Sweden**, participants recommended common monitoring frameworks, standardised indicators and improved access to data and methodologies.

The workshop in **Germany** addressed this theme within urban logistics. Participants noted that data availability remains problematic and that it is not always clear how the sustainability and functionality of delivery systems should be measured.

Table 4.3 Main M&E support needs emerging across the national workshops

M&E challenge	Type of national support indicated by the workshops
Different data formats and methods	Common definitions, methodologies and data standards
Limited comparability	Transparent documentation of methods and harmonised core indicators
Weak walking and cycling data	Targeted active mobility data collection and guidance
Too much focus on data collection itself	Guidance linking data to planning questions and decisions
Limited municipal analytical capacity	Training, expert assistance and user-friendly analytical tools
Fragmented ownership and responsibility	Clear responsibilities for collecting, updating and managing data
Weak link between monitoring and management	Procedures for using results to revise measures and priorities
Different local contexts	A common core framework with flexibility for locally relevant indicators

Source: Analysis of the seven SUMPs for BSR national peer-transfer workshops (SUMPs for BSR, 2026).

The overall need is therefore for **harmonisation without excessive standardisation**. Comparable core methodologies can reduce duplication and improve cross-municipal learning, while indicators still need to reflect local mobility conditions and decision-making needs.

4.4. Governance, coordination and functional city cooperation

Governance challenges recur because sustainable mobility systems rarely fit within the boundaries of one municipality, department or institution. Participants frequently raised questions concerning responsibilities, cooperation and coordination across functional cities.

The workshop in **Estonia** placed particularly strong emphasis on this issue. Participants argued that mobility planning should reflect functional travel patterns rather than municipal boundaries and called for stronger joint planning between neighbouring municipalities. They also highlighted the need to integrate mobility and spatial planning more effectively and clarify the division of responsibilities between planning levels.

In **Poland**, participants emphasised coherence at functional city/MOF level, especially where different authorities collect data and manage transport using different systems. Common data-

sharing arrangements and clearer institutional responsibility were therefore seen as necessary elements of support.

The workshop in **Latvia** highlighted both long-term state–municipal cooperation and the practical governance of shared infrastructure. Questions such as who owns or maintains cycling infrastructure, pavements and micromobility facilities illustrate how unclear responsibility can directly delay implementation.

In **Finland**, coordination problems took the form of fragmented information, overlapping project activities and difficulty connecting the correct experts and organisations. Participants called for stronger structures connecting municipalities, universities and national-level actors.

Participants in **Sweden** likewise identified a need for stronger coordination between municipalities and between local, regional and national governance levels.

Lithuania highlighted inter-institutional cooperation among the areas where stronger support is required, alongside strategic planning and implementation.

The evidence therefore points to **several different but connected governance functions** for national support:

- facilitate cooperation across municipal boundaries;
- clarify responsibilities between national, regional and local actors;
- connect mobility with spatial and other strategic planning;
- support shared data and planning arrangements at functional city level;
- create coordination mechanisms where responsibilities are distributed across several organisations.

National support does not necessarily need to prescribe one governance structure. It does, however, need to help cities resolve the **institutional interfaces at which implementation frequently stalls**.

4.5. Political commitment, public acceptance and behavioural change

Technical capacity alone is not enough to implement sustainable mobility measures. All seven national workshops provided evidence, directly or indirectly, that **political ownership, public acceptance and behaviour** influence whether planned measures are implemented and sustained.

In **Lithuania**, political commitment and stakeholder engagement were identified as significant implementation factors. Participants particularly stressed that infrastructure alone does not necessarily change mobility behaviour and asked for stronger support for behavioural change, active-mobility promotion and understanding users' needs.

The workshop in **Finland** identified political changes as a threat to long-term continuity and noted that benefits are not always communicated effectively to decision-makers or different public groups. Negative perceptions of cycling safety and continuing car dependency were also discussed.

In **Latvia**, the discussion focused strongly on difficult choices over limited urban space. Participants highlighted the political courage required to implement measures that may initially be unpopular and identified low public awareness of SUMP processes as a continuing obstacle.

The workshop in **Estonia** similarly noted that political cycles can weaken long-term mobility objectives. Participants also stressed the importance of involving actual users early in the process and communicating clearly why pilots or mobility measures are being introduced and what evidence supports their continuation.

In **Poland**, municipal and transport-sector respondents identified both political readiness and resident education or acceptance as factors affecting implementation. Communication and change-management support therefore formed part of the workshop's recommendations.

In **Sweden**, sustainable mobility was described as competing with other municipal priorities, making political and senior-management support important for establishing sufficient organisational attention and capacity.

The workshop in **Germany** provides a useful complementary perspective. Because many participants were not familiar with SUMP or Sulp (Sustainable Urban Logistics Plan) terminology, one of the main conclusions was the need to communicate sustainable mobility concepts in an accessible way. The logistics discussion also demonstrated how different businesses and user groups can have conflicting needs where urban space is limited.

These findings suggest that **communication, participation and political engagement should themselves be treated as capacity-building needs**. Municipalities need methods and evidence that help them explain trade-offs, engage affected groups and maintain support for measures whose benefits may only become visible over time.

4.6. Peer learning and knowledge exchange

Peer learning emerged as an important enabling mechanism, particularly where municipal expertise is limited or highly specialised.

In **Latvia**, participants valued opportunities to learn directly from tested approaches to mobility surveys, data collection and active-mobility infrastructure. They called for more regular peer exchanges and a national repository of mobility initiatives, data and good practices.

The workshop in **Finland** identified a similar need for national networks, knowledge repositories and better ways of locating relevant experts and ongoing initiatives. Participants noted that duplication occurs when organisations do not know what others are already doing.

In **Lithuania**, knowledge exchange was considered particularly beneficial for smaller municipalities because it can help them avoid mistakes, build on already tested solutions and access expertise that may not exist locally.

Sweden participants recommended stronger peer-learning networks and better knowledge-sharing mechanisms between municipalities and regions.

Poland recommended continued practical peer learning, including case-based exercises and use of tools such as the SUMP for BSR Indicator Selector Tool.

The workshop in **Estonia** also stressed the value of sharing experience from both successful and unsuccessful pilots, so that other municipalities can learn without repeating the same experiments independently.

The workshops therefore suggest that peer learning should become a more **permanent element of national SUMP support**, rather than being dependent mainly on temporary EU projects.

National Contact Points and other support organisations are well placed to act as knowledge intermediaries between municipalities, experts, universities and national authorities.

4.7. Active mobility as a cross-cutting capacity need

Active mobility is a central focus of SUMP for BSR, and the national workshop evidence shows that walking and cycling should not be treated as an isolated thematic support area. Instead, active mobility reveals many of the broader capacity gaps described above.

The wider **BSR Urban Mobility survey** reinforces this cross-cutting interpretation. Among respondents, funding constraints were rated as the strongest challenge for active-mobility planning (mean 4.05 on a five-point scale), followed by political acceptance or priorities (3.67), existing infrastructure (3.58), land and urban-space constraints (3.47) and staff resources (3.41). Public acceptance and cooperation with national and local or regional stakeholders were also identified as relevant challenges (BSR Urban Mobility, 2025–2026). This suggests that active-mobility capacity depends on a **combination of financial, institutional, spatial, political and organisational factors** rather than infrastructure alone.

In **Latvia**, participants noted that walking and cycling are often still treated as additions to transport and spatial planning rather than as core components of mobility systems. They also identified unclear responsibilities for active-mobility and micromobility infrastructure.

In **Lithuania**, the discussion highlighted that infrastructure alone is insufficient to increase walking and cycling. Connectivity, quality, road safety, behavioural measures and stakeholder engagement all influence whether new infrastructure changes travel behaviour.

The workshop in **Estonia** identified missing links in walking and cycling networks, inadequate bicycle parking, weak first/last-mile connections and the need for better integration between public transport, active mobility and shared mobility. Practical infrastructure guidance was also considered necessary.

The workshop in **Sweden** discussed pedestrian, cycling and moped crossings and highlighted continuing funding, infrastructure and implementation challenges associated with modal shift.

In **Finland**, perceptions of cycling safety and the limited availability of alternatives in car-dependent areas were identified as barriers to behavioural change.

The workshop in **Poland** used pedestrian safety and cycling as practical cases for indicator development, demonstrating that active mobility needs to be measured through a combination of infrastructure, safety, behavioural and perception-based indicators rather than a single metric.

The workshop in **Germany** approached active mobility mainly through cargo-bike logistics, where limited urban space, data availability and acceptance of alternative delivery solutions were key concerns.

Active mobility therefore reinforces the broader conclusion that national SUMP support needs to combine **infrastructure, data, governance, behavioural measures, communication and implementation capacity**.

4.8. Overall cross-border picture

Across the seven national workshops, the strongest common needs concern **implementation resources and continuity, practical and differentiated capacity building, data and monitoring,**

governance and coordination, and political and public support. The evidence also shows that these needs vary according to municipal capacity, planning maturity and territorial context. National support therefore needs to combine a common enabling framework with differentiated practical assistance. Chapter 5 examines how these needs correspond to the support mechanisms already available nationally.

5. Gap analysis: Matching cities' needs with current national support

The comparison between the national support landscape described in Chapter 3 and the municipal and stakeholder needs identified in Chapter 4 shows that the main challenge is generally **not a complete absence of sustainable mobility support**. All seven project countries already provide relevant support through some combination of national guidance, transport-system planning, funding instruments, competence structures, data systems, metropolitan cooperation or wider sustainable mobility policies.

The more significant gaps concern **how accessible, practical, continuous and implementation-oriented this support is from the perspective of municipalities**. In several cases, a national framework or methodology exists, while workshop participants continue to report difficulties applying it in practice. In others, sustainable mobility investments are available, but municipalities lack the staff, expertise, data, governance arrangements or political support required to turn plans into implemented and monitored measures.

For the purposes of this chapter, a **support gap** therefore does not necessarily mean that no national mechanism exists. It may also refer to:

- a function that is only partly covered;
- support that does not reach municipalities with lower capacity;
- a mismatch between strategic guidance and practical implementation needs;
- insufficient continuity between planning, implementation and monitoring; or
- support that exists nationally but remains fragmented across institutions, programmes or policy areas.

This distinction is particularly important because the seven project countries use different institutional models. The gap analysis therefore compares the **functions municipalities need** rather than assessing countries against one standard national SUMP programme.

5.1. Alignment of city and national perspectives

A first important finding is that many of the challenges identified by municipalities in the national workshops were **also identified** by National SUMP Contact Points.

The Contact Point survey already highlighted limited human, technological and financial resources, difficulties integrating SUMPs with wider governance and planning, challenges governing plans across several municipalities, weak public engagement and political communication, and limited or unsystematic monitoring and reliable data (SUMPs for BSR, 2025–2026). The seven national workshops subsequently **brought out very similar issues** from the municipal and stakeholder perspective.

Table 5.1 Alignment between national-level and municipal perspectives

Support area	National-level perspective	Municipal/workshop perspective	Comparison
Resources and implementation	Contact Points identified shortages of human, technological and financial resources, including for SUMP implementation. Estonia, Finland and Lithuania specifically identified financing as an area for stronger support.	Workshops repeatedly identified insufficient staff, expertise, implementation funding and continuity beyond individual projects.	Repeated in both evidence sets
Data, M&E and indicators	Limited and unsystematic monitoring and lack of reliable data were identified nationally. Lithuania prioritised a common data methodology and Poland monitoring, data sources and platforms.	All seven workshops raised data or monitoring questions, ranging from basic data access to common indicators, interoperability and analytical capacity.	Repeated in both evidence sets
Governance and functional city cooperation	Contact Points identified integration with wider governance and the governance of plans covering several municipalities as challenges; Poland specifically prioritised functional city cooperation.	Workshops highlighted cross-municipal planning, unclear responsibilities, inter-institutional coordination and shared data or infrastructure governance.	Repeated in both evidence sets
Practical guidance and expertise	Estonia prioritised regional technical guidance, Germany national guidelines and criteria, while support providers already include agencies, platforms, competence structures and EU initiatives.	Municipalities asked for practical tools, templates, specialist expertise and guidance adapted to different levels of municipal capacity.	Need recognised at both levels; practical application remains a gap
Political/public support	Contact Points identified weak participation and difficulties communicating SUMP benefits to policymakers and wider audiences.	Workshops identified political continuity, public acceptance, behavioural change and communication as factors affecting implementation.	Repeated in both evidence sets
Peer learning and knowledge transfer	Existing support includes networks, competence centres, JASPERS and EU projects.	Workshops called for more regular and permanent practitioner networks, repositories	Need recognised, but provision often project-based

		and opportunities to exchange experience.	
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Source: Analysis based on the SUMPs for BSR National SUMP Contact Point survey (SUMPs for BSR, 2025–2026) and the seven national peer-transfer workshops (SUMPs for BSR, 2026).

The convergence matters because it shows that the **main support gaps are not visible only from the municipal side**. National actors themselves recognise many of the same constraints.

At the same time, the workshops add an important practical dimension. National-level evidence often identifies broad categories such as financing, monitoring or participation, whereas municipalities describe the **operational consequences**: not knowing which indicators to select, lacking staff to analyse data, being unable to maintain a pilot after project funding ends, having unclear responsibility for shared infrastructure, or struggling to secure political approval for individual measures.

The gap between the two perspectives is therefore generally less about **what the problems are** and more about **how national support translates these recognised problems into sufficiently practical and sustained assistance**.

5.2. Needs already partly addressed by current national mechanisms

The comparison shows that many municipal needs are already addressed to some extent by existing national support structures. Across the seven project countries, guidance, training, funding, competence networks, data systems, metropolitan cooperation and other forms of technical support already exist in different combinations. The challenge is therefore not to build support entirely from scratch, but to strengthen, connect or broaden mechanisms that are already in place.

The main gap is often between formal availability and practical usability. National guidance may exist, while smaller or lower-capacity municipalities still need more accessible templates and direct assistance. Monitoring frameworks and datasets may be available, while cities lack compatible data, analytical capacity or clear methods for using results in decision-making. Funding may support investments, while resources for implementation management, monitoring, stakeholder engagement, maintenance or continuation after project funding remain less secure.

This distinction is central to the gap analysis. The existence of a national support mechanism does not automatically mean that municipalities can access it easily, apply it proportionately to their circumstances or rely on it throughout the SUMP cycle. The remaining cross-border gaps are therefore examined in the following section.

5.3. Common support gaps

When national arrangements are compared with the seven workshop cases, **six common gaps become visible**.

Table 5.2 Main cross-border gaps between existing support and municipal needs

Common gap	What is already available in national systems	What remains insufficient from the municipal perspective
1. Planning-to-implementation gap	Strategic frameworks, guidance and support for preparing plans exist in different forms across all seven countries.	Resources, organisational ownership, implementation support, monitoring and continuity after projects remain less consistently supported.
2. Capacity and proportionality gap	Guidance, training, competence structures and national methodologies exist in several countries.	Support is not always sufficiently adapted to municipality size, staff capacity, SUMP maturity or rural/urban context.
3. Data-to-decision gap	National datasets, M&E methodologies, models or monitoring frameworks exist or are developing.	Municipalities still struggle with interoperability, indicator selection, analytical expertise and turning monitoring results into management decisions.
4. Governance and functional city gap	Metropolitan or regional planning structures exist in several countries and functional city planning is increasingly promoted.	Responsibilities, joint decision-making, financing, data sharing and implementation across municipal boundaries remain difficult in practice.
5. Political and behavioural implementation gap	Participation and stakeholder involvement are recognised within SUMP methodologies and national guidance.	Municipalities need more practical support for political communication, behavioural change, conflict management and maintaining public acceptance.
6. Knowledge-transfer and scaling gap	Networks, EU projects and competence structures generate significant knowledge and good practices.	Learning remains fragmented and often project-dependent; successful solutions are not systematically transferred or integrated into permanent practice.

Source: Synthesis of the BSR SUMP Competence Centre country profiles (2026a–g), the SUMP for BSR National SUMP Contact Point survey (SUMP for BSR, 2025–2026) and the seven national peer-transfer workshops (SUMP for BSR, 2026).

The six gaps are closely interrelated rather than independent. In practice, the strongest recurring pattern is a planning-to-implementation gap: as municipalities move from strategy preparation towards delivery, monitoring and continuation, resource, data, governance and political constraints increasingly intersect. The following sections therefore examine two cross-cutting dimensions in greater detail: **how support needs differ according to municipal capacity and context**, and **how gaps change across the different stages of the SUMP cycle**.

5.4. Differences by municipality size, capacity and SUMP maturity

The workshop evidence shows that national support should not differentiate municipalities solely by population size. At least **three related dimensions matter**:

1. **organisational capacity** – available staff, specialist expertise and financial resources;
2. **SUMP maturity** – whether a municipality is beginning integrated mobility planning, already implementing a plan or developing advanced monitoring and evaluation; and
3. **territorial context** – including rural, urban, metropolitan and functional city conditions.

These dimensions often overlap but are not identical. A smaller municipality may have experienced staff and strong mobility planning, while a larger municipality may face institutional fragmentation or limited monitoring capacity.

Table 5.3 Indicative support needs at different stages and capacity levels

Municipal situation	Typical needs identified through workshops	Appropriate character of national support
Early-stage / limited organisational capacity	Understanding SUMP requirements, defining an appropriate planning scope, obtaining baseline data, finding expertise and financing initial work.	Simple guidance, templates, examples, mentoring and direct technical assistance.
Developing SUMP capacity	Stakeholder engagement, prioritising measures, data collection, indicator selection and moving from strategy to action.	Training, methodological tools, expert advice, funding guidance and peer learning.
Implementation-oriented / more mature	Stable implementation financing, advanced M&E, cross-department coordination, project ownership and adaptation based on results.	Specialist assistance, interoperable data systems, evaluation support and institutional coordination.
Pilot and innovation-oriented	Flexible experimentation, baseline and follow-up assessment, technical expertise and pathways to permanent operation.	Pilot funding linked with evaluation, learning and scaling mechanisms.
Functional city / metropolitan	Joint planning, compatible datasets, governance, shared financing and coordination between transport systems.	Cooperation frameworks, common data approaches and support for joint decision-making.
Rural or dispersed mobility context	Limited sustainable mobility alternatives, smaller administrative capacity and difficulty applying large-city solutions directly.	Proportionate approaches and solutions adapted to lower-density travel patterns.

Source: Analysis of the seven SUMPs for BSR national peer-transfer workshops (SUMPs for BSR, 2026).

Lithuania provides particularly clear evidence of differences by planning maturity: less experienced municipalities requested basic planning guidance and clarification, while more experienced municipalities concentrated more on infrastructure effectiveness, data-driven approaches and cooperation.

Sweden similarly demonstrates why municipal scale and context matter. Several participating municipalities lacked dedicated mobility strategies and had limited specialist capacity, while urban and rural mobility conditions also differed substantially.

Latvia's workshop found that smaller municipalities placed stronger emphasis on practical tools and templates, while larger-city stakeholders focused more on governance and coordination.

Poland's recommendation for indicator guidance explicitly called for examples applicable to cities and functional cities of different sizes.

The implication is that **differentiated support should be built into national programmes rather than treated as an exception**. A common national framework can establish shared principles and methodologies, while the intensity and technical complexity of assistance can vary according to municipal needs.

5.5. Planning-to-implementation gaps

The comparison across Chapters 3 and 4 also shows that **gaps occur at different stages of the SUMP cycle**. National support tends to be relatively visible around strategic planning and plan preparation, whereas municipal workshop evidence becomes increasingly concerned with the later stages of implementation, monitoring, adaptation and continuation.

Table 5.4 Support gaps across the SUMP cycle

Stage	Existing support landscape	Main gap emerging from workshops
1. Diagnosis and plan preparation	National guidance, planning traditions, SUMP methodologies and technical support are available to varying degrees across the seven countries.	Lower-capacity municipalities may still struggle to interpret requirements, collect baseline evidence or determine a proportionate planning scope.
2. Prioritisation and action planning	Strategic frameworks generally support identification of sustainable mobility objectives and measures.	Objectives are not always sufficiently linked to responsible actors, realistic resources, financing and implementation timelines.
3. Implementation	Sustainable mobility investment programmes exist across countries in different forms.	Municipalities report shortages of staff, financing, expertise, political support and cross-institutional coordination required to deliver measures.
4. Monitoring and evaluation	National M&E frameworks, data initiatives or methodological guidance exist or are developing.	Data remains fragmented; methods are not always compatible; analytical capacity is uneven; monitoring may remain disconnected from management decisions.
5. Learning and adjustment	SUMP principles recognise iterative planning and evaluation.	Municipalities have fewer established mechanisms for turning monitoring or pilot results into revised priorities and corrective action.
6. Continuation and scaling	Projects, pilots and EU programmes generate tested solutions and knowledge.	Ownership, follow-up financing, maintenance and transfer into permanent municipal operations are often unclear.

Source: Synthesis of the BSR SUMP Competence Centre country profiles (2026a–g), the SUMP for BSR National SUMP Contact Point survey (SUMP for BSR, 2025–2026) and the seven national

peer-transfer workshops (SUMP for BSR, 2026). The SUMP-cycle framing is also informed by the European SUMP Guidelines (European Commission, 2026b).

This progression points to what can be described as an **implementation gradient**: the further cities move from preparing a strategy towards implementing, evaluating and institutionalising it, the more strongly resource, governance and capacity constraints become visible.

The national workshop evidence repeatedly demonstrates this transition. Municipalities are often able to formulate sustainable mobility objectives, but **practical difficulties emerge** when these objectives need to be translated into funded actions, coordinated between organisations, defended politically, monitored with reliable evidence and sustained beyond the lifetime of individual projects.

This is also where **several of the gaps described earlier come together in practice**. For example, scaling an active-mobility pilot may require support in several areas at the same time:

- continued financing;
- a responsible municipal owner;
- reliable monitoring data;
- cooperation with neighbouring or national authorities;
- public and political acceptance; and
- access to evidence from similar initiatives elsewhere.

The planning-to-implementation gap should therefore not be treated as one isolated problem. It is the point at which **financial, organisational, technical, governance and behavioural capacity need to function together**.

5.6. Overall implications of the gap analysis

Overall, the gap analysis suggests that the **main opportunity is not to create entirely new national support structures, but to make existing support more continuous, differentiated and implementation-oriented**. Particular attention is needed to connecting common methodologies with practical municipal capacity, strengthening coordination across administrative boundaries, and helping project and pilot results become lasting practice. These gaps provide the basis for assessing the contribution of SUMP for BSR outputs in Chapter 6.

6. How SUMPs for BSR outputs can strengthen national support frameworks

The gap analysis shows that many of the remaining needs concern **practical implementation capacity**: monitoring and data, differentiated technical support, experimentation, stakeholder engagement and access to expertise. SUMPs for BSR has developed and tested several outputs that directly address these areas.

The main value of these outputs is that they provide **ready-to-use methods, tools and capacity-building approaches** that national authorities and National SUMP Contact Points can adapt, translate, promote or incorporate into their existing support systems. The project outputs considered here include the M&E Framework and related tools, tested active mobility data approaches, the experimentation model, the SUMP Training Programme, SUMP Clinic and BSR SUMP Competence Centre.

Table 6.1 Matching SUMPs for BSR outputs with the main support gaps

Gap identified	Relevant SUMPs for BSR resource	Potential use within national support
Data-to-decision and M&E gap	M&E Framework, M&E Plan Template and Indicator Selector Tool	Integrate into national methodological guidance, training and technical assistance
Active mobility data gaps	Tested data-collection approaches and pilot lessons	Support municipalities in choosing proportionate methods for walking and cycling data
Planning-to-implementation and scaling gap	Model for experimenting with active mobility measures	Support structured small-scale testing before larger investments and improve learning from pilots
Capacity and proportionality gap	Five-module SUMP Training Programme	Provide modular training that can be used by municipalities at different levels of SUMP maturity
Need for tailored expertise	SUMP Clinic	Provide targeted mentoring, helpdesk or expert-support formats for municipalities requiring more individual assistance
Knowledge-transfer gap	BSR SUMP Competence Centre	Connect national portals and practitioner networks with existing BSR tools, training materials, cases and country information

Source: SUMPs for BSR project resources described in this chapter.

6.1. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, Indicator Selector Tool and M&E Plan Template

The project's Monitoring & Evaluation package responds directly to one of the strongest gaps identified across the national workshops. The [M&E Framework](#) provides step-by-step guidance on organising monitoring, selecting meaningful indicators, linking data collection with mobility

objectives and evaluating progress. Together with the [M&E Plan Template](#) and [Indicator Selector Tool](#), it is intended to help municipalities assess both the overall mobility system and the effects of individual measures more consistently. The framework was developed with a particular focus on small and medium-sized cities and tested and validated through the SUMP for BSR project partnership (Wolek & Jagiełło, 2026).

At national level, these tools could be incorporated into SUMP guidance, municipal training or technical-support programmes. Their use would still need to be aligned with **national datasets, indicator requirements and terminology** rather than applied as a separate parallel monitoring system.

6.2. Tested approaches for active mobility data collection

In local pilots, partner cities tested a variety of approaches to collecting information on walking, cycling and mobility behaviour, including surveys, manual observation, sensors, cameras, open data and participatory approaches. The [cross-pilot lessons](#) emphasise starting with the **data gap and monitoring question**, selecting methods afterwards, combining quantitative and qualitative evidence, planning for data integration and interpretation, and establishing responsibilities early (Asser et al., 2026).

These lessons are relevant to national support because Chapter 5 identified both active mobility data gaps and large differences in municipal analytical capacity. Rather than prescribing one technology, national guidance could use the tested approaches to help municipalities choose **proportionate methods according to their question, resources and local context**.

6.3. Model for experimenting with active mobility measures

The [Model for experimenting with active mobility measures](#) provides practical steps and questions for testing mobility interventions at a smaller scale before or alongside permanent implementation. It is based on experience from the project's local pilots and is intended to support learning, adaptation and evidence-based decision-making (Rusanen et al., 2026).

This is particularly relevant to the **planning-to-implementation gap**. National programmes could use the model when supporting municipal pilots, linking experimentation with baseline assessment, monitoring and follow-up. The project experience also indicates that testing is most useful when responsibilities, continuation and the eventual use of results are considered from the beginning rather than after the pilot has ended (Rusanen et al., 2026).

6.4. Five-module SUMP Training Programme

The project developed a [five-module training programme](#) designed particularly for mobility planners and experts in small and medium-sized cities. Its modules cover SUMP basic principles, M&E and indicators, data collection on active mobility, experimentation and stakeholder engagement. The programme included ten online webinars and workshops delivered between January and May 2026, while materials for independent learning are available through the BSR SUMP Competence Centre (Sibeliuss & Uusitalo, 2024; Interreg Baltic Sea Region, 2026).

The modular structure makes the programme suitable for differentiated national capacity building. Basic modules can support municipalities beginning the SUMP process, while more

specialised modules can be used for staff already working on implementation, monitoring or active mobility. National use would mainly require adaptation to the **domestic policy framework, language and local examples**.

6.5. SUMP Clinic and tailored expert support

The **SUMP Clinic** complemented the general training programme by providing individual support to five cities identified as having a high need for assistance, tailored to their local context, priorities and stage of SUMP development (Interreg Baltic Sea Region, 2026).

Its main relevance for national frameworks is therefore the **support model**, rather than a specific technical output. Chapter 5 showed that municipalities with limited staff or experience often need more than written guidance. A clinic-style approach could be adapted into mentoring, an expert pool or a helpdesk through which municipalities receive targeted assistance with their particular planning or implementation problem.

6.6. BSR SUMP Competence Centre and continued knowledge exchange

The [BSR SUMP Competence Centre](#) provides a common regional platform bringing together SUMP information, tools, case studies, country insights and the project's training materials (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, n.d.).

This responds particularly to the knowledge-transfer gap identified in Chapters 4 and 5. National authorities do not necessarily need to reproduce resources that already exist at Baltic Sea Region level. Instead, national portals and practitioner networks could **signpost, translate or contextualise relevant BSR resources**, while the Competence Centre can continue to provide access to cross-border examples and project outputs.

6.7. Opportunities for integrating project outputs into national support programmes

The main opportunity is not to introduce SUMP outputs as a separate support system, but to embed them within **existing national structures**.

Depending on the national context, this could include:

- referencing the M&E Framework and Indicator Selector Tool in national methodological guidance;
- using active mobility data and experimentation materials in municipal training or pilot funding programmes;
- integrating selected training modules into national capacity-building activities;
- offering clinic-style expert support for municipalities with lower internal capacity; and
- linking national SUMP portals, practitioner networks and Contact Point activities with the BSR SUMP Competence Centre.

The degree of adaptation will differ between countries. National indicator systems, data sources, legislation, institutional responsibilities and languages need to be taken into account. The project's contribution is therefore best understood as a **tested resource base that can**

strengthen existing national support functions, rather than as a uniform model to be adopted unchanged.

This provides the link to Chapter 7, which translates the combined evidence from national frameworks, municipal needs and tested project outputs into **joint recommendations for national SUMP support mechanisms**.

7. Joint recommendations for national SUMP support mechanisms

The comparison of national support systems, municipal needs and SUMP for BSR project outputs leads to a **set of joint recommendations** for National SUMP Contact Points, ministries, transport agencies and other organisations responsible for supporting sustainable mobility planning.

The recommendations do not propose a single national SUMP support model. The seven project countries have different planning traditions and institutional structures, and many already provide substantial support through existing transport-planning, funding, data or metropolitan-governance systems. The priority is therefore to strengthen the **functions** that municipalities consistently need and integrate them into the structures already operating nationally.

The strongest overall message is that **national support should extend beyond the preparation of SUMP documents and provide a more continuous pathway from planning to implementation, monitoring, learning and long-term operation**.

Table 7.1 Joint recommendations for national SUMP support mechanisms

Recommendation	Main gap addressed	Practical national-level response
1. Provide coherent support from planning to implementation	Support often weakens after plan preparation or pilot funding	Link planning guidance with implementation resources, monitoring, follow-up and long-term ownership
2. Differentiate support according to municipal capacity	One support model does not fit municipalities with different resources and SUMP maturity	Provide tiered guidance, technical assistance and mentoring
3. Strengthen practical guidance and access to expertise	Municipalities need help applying SUMP principles to concrete implementation questions	Develop usable tools, templates, expert-support mechanisms and sector-specific guidance
4. Improve data, monitoring and evaluation support	Fragmented data, incompatible methods and limited analytical capacity	Provide common methodologies, core indicators, data access and analytical support
5. Strengthen governance across administrative boundaries	Mobility flows and responsibilities extend beyond municipal borders	Support functional city cooperation, clarify responsibilities and enable joint planning and data arrangements
6. Support political commitment, engagement and behavioural change	Technically sound measures can still fail because of weak political or public support	Include communication, participation and change-management capacity in national support

7. Institutionalise peer learning and knowledge exchange	Expertise and project lessons remain fragmented	Maintain practitioner networks, repositories and regular national exchange formats
8. Integrate and sustain SUMP outputs for BSR outputs	Tested project tools may lose visibility after project completion	Embed relevant tools and materials in national guidance, training and support services
9. Maintain BSR-level cooperation	Many capacity challenges are shared across countries	Continue cross-border exchange on M&E, active mobility, data and implementation practices

Source: Authors' synthesis based on the evidence and analysis presented in Chapters 3–6.

7.1. Provide coherent and long-term support from planning to implementation

National SUMP support should cover the **full planning and implementation cycle**, rather than concentrating primarily on preparing the plan. Workshops repeatedly identified shortages of staff, financing, ownership and monitoring capacity once cities move from strategic planning towards implementation and follow-up. National Contact Points also identified human, technological and financial resources as major barriers.

Where possible, planning guidance and funding should therefore be connected with implementation planning, monitoring requirements, responsible organisations and arrangements for maintaining successful measures after project financing ends. Pilot support should likewise encourage municipalities to consider future ownership, financing and scaling from the beginning.

7.2. Develop differentiated support for municipalities with different capacities

National programmes should recognise differences in **municipal capacity, planning maturity and territorial context**.

Smaller and less experienced municipalities often need clear introductory guidance, templates, basic data methods and direct access to expertise, while more experienced municipalities increasingly require advanced support for implementation, M&E, governance and evaluation. Lithuania, Latvia and Sweden provided particularly clear evidence of these differences.

A useful model is therefore a **common national framework with tiered support**, allowing municipalities to access assistance proportionate to their needs rather than requiring all cities to follow an equally resource-intensive process.

7.3. Strengthen practical guidance, training and access to expertise

Guidance should increasingly focus on **how to implement sustainable mobility planning in practice**. Municipalities identified needs ranging from infrastructure and active-mobility planning to data methods, indicator selection, stakeholder engagement and pilot implementation.

National support actors should **combine written guidance with practical formats** such as training, reusable templates, case examples, expert pools, mentoring or helpdesk-style assistance. This is especially important where expertise already exists nationally but municipalities have difficulty locating the right organisation or specialist.

The **SUMPs for BSR Training Programme and SUMP Clinic** provide models that could be adapted for this purpose. The training programme was specifically developed for small and medium-sized cities, while the Clinic provided individual assistance to cities with a higher need for support (Sibelius & Uusitalo, 2024; Interreg Baltic Sea Region, 2026).

7.4. Improve data, monitoring and evaluation support

National support should establish a **common methodological foundation for SUMP monitoring while retaining flexibility for local conditions**.

Across the workshops, municipalities requested **clearer indicators, common definitions, compatible datasets and stronger analytical capacity**. The need is not simply to collect more data, but to support the full chain from identifying a planning question to collecting and interpreting evidence and using the results to adjust decisions.

National actors can support this through:

- common core indicators and definitions;
- documented calculation methods and recommended data sources;
- improved access to nationally available mobility data;
- interoperable data formats and sharing arrangements;
- guidance for walking and cycling data collection; and
- training or technical assistance for municipalities with limited analytical capacity.

The SUMPs for BSR **M&E Framework, M&E Plan Template and Indicator Selector Tool** provide tested resources that can complement national methodologies. They support cities in organising monitoring, selecting indicators and linking data collection with mobility objectives (Wołek & Jagiełło, 2026).

The project's **active mobility data work** also provides practical lessons for selecting data-collection methods according to the planning question, available resources and local context rather than starting from a particular technology (Asser et al., 2026).

7.5. Strengthen governance and cooperation across administrative boundaries

National support should make it easier to plan and implement mobility according to **functional travel patterns rather than administrative borders**.

The workshops identified **recurring difficulties related to inter-municipal cooperation, unclear responsibilities, data sharing and coordination** between transport, spatial planning and other policy areas. These issues become particularly important for functional cities.

National frameworks should therefore **clarify available cooperation models** and, where appropriate, support joint planning, compatible datasets, shared monitoring and coordinated investment between municipalities. The objective is not necessarily to prescribe one governance model, but to provide practical arrangements through which responsibility, financing and decision-making can be agreed.

7.6. Support political commitment, stakeholder engagement and behavioural change

Communication and participation should be treated as part of **implementation capacity**, rather than as secondary dissemination activities.

The national workshops repeatedly showed that sustainable mobility measures can encounter **political resistance, public concern or established travel habits** even when technically justified. National actors can support municipalities with methods for stakeholder mapping, participation, communication of evidence and benefits, behavioural-change measures and the management of conflicts over street space and mobility priorities.

This is particularly important for active mobility, where **infrastructure investment alone does not necessarily lead to behavioural change**. Stakeholder engagement is also incorporated into the SUMP for BSR capacity-building approach, reflecting its role throughout the planning and implementation process (Sibeliu & Uusitalo, 2024; Interreg Baltic Sea Region, 2026).

7.7. Institutionalise peer learning and knowledge exchange

National SUMP support should provide regular opportunities for peer learning and knowledge exchange between municipalities and other relevant actors. Municipalities repeatedly valued **opportunities to learn from other cities, identify relevant experts and use approaches that have already been tested**. National Contact Points and other support organisations can facilitate this through regular practitioner exchanges, thematic networks, repositories of cases and practical communities of practice.

These mechanisms should include lessons from **unsuccessful or adapted approaches as well as successful cases**, helping municipalities avoid repeating the same problems and supporting the continued transfer and use of practical knowledge.

7.8. Integrate and sustain SUMP for BSR outputs within national frameworks

National authorities should assess which SUMP for BSR outputs can be incorporated into existing guidance, training, technical assistance and knowledge platforms rather than establishing a parallel support system. Priority resources include the **M&E Framework and related tools** (Wolęk & Jagiełło, 2026), **active mobility data lessons** (Asser et al., 2026), the **Model for experimenting with active mobility measures** (Rusanen et al., 2026), the Training Programme and SUMP Clinic approach (Interreg Baltic Sea Region, 2026), and the **BSR SUMP Competence Centre** (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, n.d.).

Any uptake should be adapted to national legislation, datasets, institutional arrangements and language.

7.9. Maintain cross-border cooperation at BSR level

Finally, national support mechanisms should remain connected to **cross-border exchange within the BSR**.

The seven-country analysis demonstrates that **countries use different institutional models but encounter many similar practical challenges**, particularly around M&E, municipal capacity, functional city cooperation, active mobility and implementation. This creates value in continued exchange between National SUMP Contact Points, municipalities and support organisations.

The **BSR SUMP Competence Centre** provides an existing platform through which project tools, training materials, country information and examples can remain available beyond the project period (BSR SUMP Competence Centre, n.d.). Cross-border cooperation can complement national support by enabling countries to compare methods, avoid duplication and adapt solutions already tested elsewhere in the region.

8. Conclusions and way forward

The analysis shows that the seven SUMP for BSR project countries do not need to adopt the same national SUMP support model. Their planning traditions, governance arrangements and existing support structures differ considerably. What municipalities need, however, is access to a **coherent set of support functions throughout the SUMP cycle**, from planning and capacity building to implementation, monitoring, evaluation and continuation.

Across the seven countries, the **strongest remaining gaps** concern the transition from planning to implementation, differences in municipal capacity, practical access to expertise, data and monitoring, cooperation across administrative boundaries, and the political and organisational conditions needed to sustain mobility measures over time. Many of these needs are already recognised within existing national frameworks, but the workshop evidence shows that **support is not always sufficiently accessible, practical, continuous or adapted to municipalities with different capacities and levels of SUMP maturity**.

The analysis indicates that national SUMP support should combine four complementary elements:

A common national framework + differentiated municipal support + practical implementation assistance + sustained knowledge exchange.

This does not necessarily require new standalone institutions or programmes. In many cases, the **priority is to strengthen and connect existing guidance, funding, data systems, training, technical assistance and cooperation structures**. National SUMP Contact Points and other national-level actors can play an important coordinating role by helping municipalities access appropriate support, connecting them with expertise and peer networks, and ensuring that planning guidance is linked more clearly with implementation and monitoring.

The SUMP for BSR project provides a practical resource base for this work. Its monitoring and evaluation tools, active mobility data approaches, experimentation model, Training Programme, SUMP Clinic and BSR SUMP Competence Centre can be adapted and incorporated into existing national support structures rather than maintained as a separate system.

The next step is therefore primarily one of **uptake and adaptation**. National actors can assess which project outputs are most relevant to their existing support systems and adapt them to national legislation, datasets, institutional responsibilities and language. At BSR level, continued exchange between National SUMP Contact Points, municipalities and support organisations can

help countries compare approaches, share lessons and avoid duplicating solutions to challenges that are common across the region.

In this way, the value of SUMPs for BSR can extend beyond the project period: not through the creation of one uniform BSR model, but by strengthening the capacity of existing national systems to help municipalities turn sustainable mobility plans into **implemented, monitored and lasting change**.

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Annex 1: Decision-maker briefing on national SUMP support needs in the BSR

SUMPs are increasingly supported through national guidance, funding, data systems, competence structures and established transport-planning arrangements across the BSR. The main challenge is therefore **not to create an entirely new layer of SUMP support**, but to make existing support more accessible, practical, continuous and responsive to municipalities with different capacities.

Evidence from Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden points to a common issue: **support is often strongest around planning, while municipalities encounter greater difficulties when moving towards implementation, monitoring, evaluation and long-term continuation.**

The overall direction for national support can be summarised as seen in Table A1.1.

Table A1.1 Four elements of effective national SUMP support

Core element	What it means
Common national framework	Shared principles, methods and strategic direction
Differentiated municipal support	Assistance matched to municipal capacity, SUMP maturity and territorial context
Practical implementation assistance	Funding, expertise, monitoring support and clear ownership
Sustained knowledge exchange	Regular peer learning and access to tested approaches

Countries do not need identical National SUMP Support Programmes. The priority is to **strengthen the support functions municipalities need throughout the SUMP cycle** and connect them to existing national institutions, funding schemes, data systems and practitioner networks.

Six gaps that matter the most

A cross-cutting pattern emerges across the six gaps seen in Table A1.2: **the further municipalities move from plan preparation towards implementation, evaluation and institutionalisation, the more strongly resource, governance and capacity constraints tend to intersect.**

Table A1.2 Six main gaps and corresponding national support responses

Gap	What the evidence shows	National support response
1. Planning-to-implementation gap	Support is generally more visible around strategic planning and plan preparation. Municipalities face greater difficulty when objectives must be translated into funded actions, assigned to responsible actors, monitored and sustained over time.	Connect planning guidance with implementation resources, ownership, monitoring and continuation.
2. Capacity and proportionality gap	Municipalities differ in organisational capacity, SUMP maturity and territorial context. Population size alone does not explain support needs.	Offer a common framework with tiered support, from basic templates and mentoring to specialist implementation and M&E assistance.
3. Data-to-decision gap	The issue is not only data availability. Municipalities also struggle with indicators, calculation methods, interoperability, analytical capacity and using monitoring results in decisions.	Support the full chain from planning question to data, analysis, monitoring result and management decision.
4. Governance and functional-city gap	Mobility flows cross municipal borders, while responsibilities, financing and decision-making often remain divided between institutions and administrative areas.	Provide workable approaches for joint planning, compatible data, shared monitoring, financing and decision-making.
5. Political and behavioural implementation gap	Technically sound measures can still stall because of weak political commitment, public concern or established travel behaviour.	Treat communication, participation, conflict management and behavioural change as implementation capacities.
6. Knowledge-transfer and scaling gap	Municipalities benefit from access to peers, experts and tested approaches, especially where specialist capacity is limited.	Maintain regular peer-learning opportunities and make both successful and adapted or unsuccessful approaches visible.

Existing support should be strengthened, not replaced

Many municipal needs are already addressed to some extent by existing national support structures. Across the seven project countries, guidance, training, funding, competence networks, data systems, metropolitan cooperation and other forms of technical support already exist in different combinations.

The remaining gap is often between **formal availability and practical usability**. For example:

- guidance may exist, while a lower-capacity municipality still needs accessible templates or direct expert assistance;
- national datasets or monitoring frameworks may be available, while municipalities lack compatible data, analytical capacity or clear methods for using the results;

- investment funding may exist, while resources for implementation management, monitoring, stakeholder engagement, maintenance or continuation remain uncertain;
- metropolitan or regional cooperation structures may exist, while responsibilities for individual measures remain unclear.

The priority is therefore to **strengthen, connect and broaden existing mechanisms**, rather than automatically create new support structures.

A useful practical test is:

Can a municipality find the support, understand it, apply it with its available capacity, and continue using it beyond the planning stage?

What national SUMP support should provide

1. Connect planning with implementation

Support should extend across the full SUMP cycle. Planning guidance and funding should, where possible, be linked with implementation planning, monitoring, organisational responsibility and arrangements for maintaining successful measures. For pilots in particular, future ownership, financing, evaluation and possible scaling should be considered from the beginning.

2. Differentiate support according to municipal needs

A common national framework can provide shared principles while allowing different levels of support (see Table A1.3).

Table A1.3 Examples of differentiated support needs

Less experienced or lower-capacity municipalities may require:	More mature municipalities may increasingly require:
• introductory guidance; • templates; • basic data methods; • mentoring; • direct technical assistance.	• specialist implementation support; • advanced monitoring and evaluation; • institutional coordination; • data-system support; • evaluation and adaptation based on results.

3. Combine guidance with practical expertise

Written guidance remains important, but municipalities also need practical ways of applying it. National support can combine guidance with:

- reusable tools and templates;
- training and case-based learning;
- expert pools;
- mentoring;
- helpdesk or clinic-style assistance;
- easier access to relevant specialists and support organisations.

4. Strengthen monitoring and data support

National actors can provide a common methodological basis through:

- core indicators and definitions;
- recommended calculation methods;
- clear data sources;

- improved access to nationally available mobility data;
- interoperable datasets and sharing arrangements;
- technical assistance for municipalities with limited analytical capacity.

The objective should be to support the full chain:

planning question → appropriate data → analysis → monitoring result → management decision

5. Enable cooperation across administrative boundaries

Where mobility systems extend beyond one municipality, national frameworks can support practical cooperation arrangements for:

- joint planning;
- compatible datasets;
- shared monitoring;
- financing;
- infrastructure responsibilities;
- coordinated decision-making.

The aim is not to impose one governance model, but to make cross-municipal cooperation easier to organise.

6. Treat political communication and participation as implementation support

Stakeholder engagement, political communication and behavioural change should be integrated into implementation support. Municipalities need tools not only for designing measures, but also for:

- explaining choices and trade-offs;
- communicating evidence and benefits;
- engaging users;
- managing competing interests;
- supporting behavioural change.

7. Support regular peer learning

National support structures should provide regular opportunities for municipalities and other relevant actors to exchange experience, share new approaches and locate expertise. Peer learning should include lessons from approaches that required adaptation or did not work as expected, not only examples presented as good practices.

8. Keep national and BSR-level exchange connected

Many practical challenges are shared across countries. Continued exchange between National SUMP Contact Points, municipalities and support organisations can help avoid duplication and allow countries to adapt solutions already tested elsewhere in the BSR.

SUMPs for BSR resources that national actors can use

The SUMPs for BSR project has produced [practical resources](#) (Table A1.4) that can be adapted and embedded in existing national guidance, training and technical-assistance systems. They are best treated as a **resource base**, not as a parallel support system.

Table A1.4 SUMPs for BSR resources and potential national use

Resource	What it provides	Potential national use
Monitoring & Evaluation package	M&E Framework, M&E Plan Template and Indicator Selector Tool	Use in national guidance, municipal training and technical assistance on monitoring, indicator selection and linking mobility objectives with evidence
Active mobility data approaches	Tested approaches from local pilots using surveys, observation, sensors, cameras, open data and participatory methods	Help municipalities select proportionate walking and cycling data methods based on the planning question, resources and local context
Model for experimenting	Model for experimenting with active mobility measures	Support structured small-scale testing, baseline assessment, monitoring, learning and pathways from pilots to more permanent implementation
Five-module SUMP Training Programme	Modules on SUMP principles, M&E, indicators, active-mobility data, experimentation and stakeholder engagement	Integrate selected modules into national capacity-building, adapting language, examples and policy context
SUMP Clinic approach	Tailored expert support for municipalities with higher assistance needs	Adapt as mentoring, an expert pool, helpdesk or clinic-style support where written guidance is not enough
BSR SUMP Competence Centre	Regional platform with tools, training materials, cases and country information	Link national portals and practitioner networks to existing regional resources instead of reproducing them

The key principle is **adaptation rather than duplication**. National legislation, terminology, datasets, institutional responsibilities and language should determine how these resources are used.

Five questions for the next national review

The questions in Table A1.5 can guide national actors in reviewing how well existing support meets municipal needs.

Table A1.5 Questions for reviewing national SUMP support

Question	What to examine
1. Where does support become weaker after plan preparation?	Map the pathway from planning to implementation, monitoring and continuation. Identify stages where municipalities receive the least practical support.
2. Which municipalities are least able to use existing support?	Consider organisational capacity, SUMP maturity, access to expertise and territorial context — not only population size.
3. Which mechanisms need to be connected more effectively?	Check whether guidance, funding, data, technical assistance, training and peer learning form a coherent pathway from the municipality's perspective.
4. Which SUMP for BSR resources could strengthen current provision?	Use project tools where they address a recognised national gap, adapting them to domestic systems rather than creating parallel support.
5. Which issues benefit from continued BSR-level exchange?	Prioritise shared challenges such as monitoring and evaluation, active-mobility data, implementation support and functional-city cooperation.

Final takeaway

The goal is **not one uniform support model for the Baltic Sea region**.

It is to strengthen different national systems so that municipalities can access **continuous, proportionate and practical support throughout the SUMP cycle** — helping them move from planning to implemented, monitored and lasting sustainable mobility change.

Annex 2: Report one-pager

Deliverable 3.1 of the SUMPs for BSR project

Institute of Baltic Studies, 2026

The SUMPs for BSR project, co-funded by the Interreg BSR programme, supports the transition to sustainable urban mobility planning



Report on the common needs for national support mechanisms for SUMPs in BSR countries

THE AIM

How can national authorities in Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Germany better support cities in developing, implementing and maintaining Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans? The report compares existing national support with what cities say they need and turns the remaining gaps into joint recommendations.

Evidence base: seven national peer-transfer workshops · seven country profiles · six-country National SUMP Contact Point survey

WHERE NATIONAL SUPPORT THINS OUT



FIVE THINGS THE EVIDENCE SHOWS

- Support is strongest for planning, weaker for making it happen.**
Support is already there, but it often weakens after planning. Cities need continued help to implement measures, monitor results and keep successful solutions going.
- The widest gap sits between planning and implementation.**
Staff shortages, unstable funding and unclear ownership become more visible as measures move from planning into implementation.
- One support model does not fit every city.**
Lower-capacity and less experienced cities need practical guidance, templates and direct support; more experienced ones need advanced support for implementation, monitoring, coordination and scaling.
- Cities need usable data, not simply more of it.**
Cities need common methods, clear indicators, compatible datasets, and the tools and skills to turn monitoring results into decisions.
- Politics and public acceptance shape what gets implemented.**
Even sound measures can stall without engagement, clear communication and support for behavioural change.

NINE MOVES FOR NATIONAL AUTHORITIES

01 Support the whole journey. Link planning guidance with implementation, monitoring and long-term continuation.	02 Adjust support to city needs. Match support to capacity, SUMP maturity and local context.	03 Make guidance practical. Use templates, training, case examples, mentoring and expert helpdesks.
04 Agree on common indicators. Use core indicators, shared methods, compatible datasets and analytical support.	05 Enable planning across city borders. Support joint planning, compatible data and coordinated investment across functional urban areas.	06 Build public and political support. Treat engagement, communication and behavioural change as part of implementation.
07 Make peer learning routine. Maintain practitioner networks and share what worked — and what did not.	08 Use what already works. Embed tested SUMPs for BSR tools in national guidance and support programmes.	09 Keep the region connected. Sustain cross-border exchange — the hardest problems do not stop at borders.

It is time to help cities move beyond planning and give them the support they need to turn plans into lasting change.

Visit the BSR SUMP Competence Centre for further resources

Annex 3: Cross-border coding matrix of national peer-transfer workshop findings

The seven national peer-transfer workshops were coded against the **common thematic framework** used in Chapter 4. The purpose of the coding was to identify recurring cross-border support needs while retaining differences in national context and workshop focus.

The coding is **qualitative rather than quantitative**. It does not measure the importance of a topic by counting references or assigning numerical scores. A theme is coded according to how substantively it emerged in the available national workshop evidence.

Table A3.1 Interpretation of coding categories

Code	Interpretation
S – Strong substantive theme	The theme was clearly developed in the workshop evidence and supported by several related needs, barriers or recommendations.
C – Clear theme	The theme was directly identified and relevant, but was less extensive or central than a strong substantive theme.
X – Contextual contribution	The workshop contributed relevant evidence to the theme, but mainly through a narrower or country-specific issue rather than a broad support need.
—	The theme was not materially evidenced in the available workshop documentation. This does not mean that the need is absent in the country.

Table A3.2. Seven-country workshop coding matrix

Cross-border theme	EE	FI	DE	LV	LT	PL	SE
Resources, financing and continuity from planning to implementation	S	S	X	S	S	S	S
Practical guidance, technical expertise and differentiated capacity building	S	C	X	S	S	S	S
Data, monitoring, evaluation and indicators	S	S	C	S	S	S	S
Governance, coordination and functional city cooperation	S	S	X	S	C	S	S
Political commitment, public acceptance and behavioural change	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Peer learning and knowledge exchange	C	S	—	S	S	C	S
Active mobility as a cross-cutting capacity need	S	C	X	S	S	X	S

Interpretation of the matrix

The coding confirms that the strongest recurring cross-border themes concern **implementation resources and continuity, practical capacity building, data and monitoring, governance and coordination, and political and public support**. These themes appear substantively across different national contexts, although their specific form differs between countries.

The theme of data, monitoring, evaluation and indicators emerges particularly consistently across the workshops. Workshop discussions ranged from basic data availability and common methodologies to indicator calculation, interoperability, analytical capacity and the use of monitoring results in decision-making.

Resources and continuity also recur strongly. The evidence extends beyond investment funding to staff resources, institutional ownership, monitoring capacity and the continuation of pilots or project-based activities after external funding ends.

Governance and functional city cooperation is a strong recurring need, especially where mobility flows, public transport systems, infrastructure or data responsibilities extend beyond individual municipal boundaries.

Political commitment, public acceptance and behavioural change is visible across all seven country cases. This includes political continuity, communication of mobility measures, public acceptance, stakeholder involvement and the ability to manage trade-offs between different mobility modes and uses of urban space.

Peer learning and knowledge exchange is strongly represented in most workshops but is best understood as an enabling mechanism supporting the other themes rather than as a separate technical capacity area.

Active mobility is likewise treated as a cross-cutting theme. Walking and cycling repeatedly reveal wider gaps related to infrastructure, data, governance, funding, behavioural change and implementation capacity rather than forming an isolated support category.

Notes on interpretation

The matrix should be read together with the **methodological limitations** in Chapter 2.

The workshops differed in format, participant composition and thematic emphasis. A topic that was not discussed extensively in one workshop should therefore not be interpreted as evidence that the corresponding need does not exist nationally.

The **German** national workshop had a comparatively narrow thematic focus on sustainable urban logistics and delivery traffic. Its contribution to several themes is thus coded as contextual rather than directly comparable with workshops that addressed national SUMP support more broadly.

For **Poland**, the clearest direct evidence on national support needs came from 21 pre-workshop registration responses, while the live workshop concentrated primarily on monitoring, evaluation and indicator selection. The Polish coding therefore reflects the combined evidence base rather than only the live discussion.

For **Estonia**, the national workshop was organised by the Institute of Baltic Studies rather than a project pilot city. It is nevertheless treated as equivalent country-level evidence because it brought together municipal, regional and national mobility stakeholders specifically to identify sustainable mobility support needs and possible responses.

The matrix was used as an analytical aid for Chapter 4. It was **not used to rank countries or calculate frequencies**, but to distinguish between common, recurring, differentiated and context-specific needs across the seven project countries.