Sustainable Urban Logistics Plan (SULP) methodology for Small and Mid-sized European Towns: the IEE ENCLOSE project results

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Extended abstract

Objectives and motivation

The well-known impacts of freight distribution in urban areas are even more important and significant in small and medium size cities in terms of pollution, emissions and costs due to, among other factors, specific characteristics of the city structure (old road infrastructure, narrow streets, etc.), more strict access regulations, presence of heritage and historic assets (with higher risks for pedestrian safety). Moreover, it is also evident that the difficulties that local administrations face in addressing urban logistics are due, on the one hand, to the scepticism of local associations of shop owners (often operating in self supply provoking more difficulties than transport operators themselves) and freight operators (which are frequently small local operators) and, on the other hand, to the need of keeping the historic centres active ("Alive") despite main urban policies in the last two decades tend to "void" it. With regard to this situation it is worth noting that a further difficulty, existing also in other mobility sectors (i.e. in the integrated management of parking services and other collective mobility services), is related to the lack of capability of planning integrated solutions (not only for the city logistics), of managing process evolution and insufficient structure and skills at the level of the single Municipality.

The ENCLOSE project, funded by the Intelligent Energy Europe programme, faced the different critical aspects mentioned above from the perspective of Local Authorities/Municipalities (including 9 European Cities), by "simply" (but not always known) recognizing that the small and medium size cities in Europe are more than 1350 (vs 21 cities with over 1 ml of inhabitants) and they need specific solutions and approaches that have not been addressed by the recent large European projects and EU Commission acts, which are, on the contrary, all focused on big urban realities. For this reason, ENCLOSE project acted on different levels with specific results related to:

- Implementation and operation of pilot Services in the three “forerunner” towns – Lucca (IT), Trondheim (NO) and ‘s-Hertogenbosch (NL) – where advanced logistics solutions already existed, and Soft measures, with the related impacts evaluation, in the 6 “follower” towns of Burgos (ES), Almada (PT), Dundee (UK), Albalulia (RO), Serres (GR), Balchik (BG);
- Knowledge and experience exchanges among the different ENCLOSE cities with the production of a portfolio collecting different training course materials, specifically addressed to the technicians of Local Authorities and stakeholders;
- Definition of Sustainable Urban Logistics Plans methodology and implementation and evaluation, in the 9 ENCLOSE towns, of the SULP integrated in the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP).

General description

This paper provides a presentation of the ENCLOSE project, along with the key findings regarding the needs and potential logistics services for SMTs, discussed with respect to the successful experience of the measures adopted by the 9 ENCLOSE towns. Moreover the approach adopted by ENCLOSE for defining the SULP in each of the 9 cities is presented, along with the key feedback received by local policy makers, results achieved and limits encountered by the ENCLOSE towns in the implementation and adoption of the SULPs at local level - including technical and financial requirements, limits and policy issues – as discussed in Project’s deliverable “SULP Guidelines”. In particular the methodology defined and adopted by ENCLOSE is presented, along with the basic elements, as the key tool for supporting city stakeholders in SULP development and in monitoring in the 9 ENCLOSE cities. SULP guidelines also address the other actors involved at different level in the freight process (including private sector, transport operators, shopkeepers associations, etc.), with the aim to allow them to well understand the mainstreams and rules followed by local administrations in planning, choosing and implementing city logistics policies and solutions - including technical and financial requirements, limits and policy issues. Furthermore, the presentation highlights the key feedback received by local policy makers, results achieved and limits encountered by the ENCLOSE towns in the implementation and adoption of the SULPs at local level. In this context, the close mutual relation between the SUMP and the SULP methodology will be introduced and summarised as follows:

- SULP is a relevant action or part of the SUMP, dedicated to urban logistics processes;
- SULP provides real and planning workingdetails to implement the specific SUMP approach for what Logistics processes regards;
- SULP follows the participation approach and the political level involvement with a bottom up approach starting from the user needs.

Finally, the SULP, as well as the SUMP methodology, pays a high level of attention to the different levels of urban area governance (institutional, political, operational and infrastructural/technological). The presentation/paper takes as a reference model for explaining ENCLOSE experience and the SULP application the case of the Portuguese Municipality of Almada.

Results and conclusions
Due to the different innovative aspects tackled by the project, the lessons learned can be divided into two main categories.

First of all ENCLOSE identified a robust set of needs, requirements and constraints, which are common to Small and Mid-sized European Historic Towns regarding logistics processes in the historic centre, as well as a wide range of effective and successful possible solutions to be adopted for facing city logistics challenges. ENCLOSE demonstrated the feasibility and assessed the business model of real logistics schemes (mainly based on UCC – Urban Consolidation Centres) thanks to the pilot measures implemented in the towns of Trondheim, Lucca and 's-Hertogenbosch.

Moreover, as regards the SULP approach/methodology, the experience of partners in defining and submitting SULPs to local policy-makers allowed them to identify a specific set of recommendations serving as best practices adaptable to the specific situation of other cities facing similar problems (i.e. implementing gradual measures depending on specific needs, strengthening the cooperation among involved actors and create a forum, efficient solutions can be adopted also in low-resources scenario by, i.e., adapting existing technologies, etc.). Overall, the lessons learned thanks to ENCLOSE deal with environmental, socio-economic and policy aspects but also on cooperation among public and private sectors/actors.

Finally the ENCLOSE SULP guidelines is now a working document under the evaluation of the IEE officers for its possible integration in the more general SUMP methodology of the specific and detailed actions to be developed for the city logistics process. Overall, these Guidelines provide useful tool to develop an adequate Sustainable Urban Logistics Plan tailored on the specific characteristics of the city. Building on existing planning practices and taking into consideration integration, participation, and evaluation principles, SULP represents a strategic plan designed to satisfy the freight mobility needs of people and business in cities and their surroundings, in order to achieve a better environmental and life quality. SULP must be considered as one of the main parts of the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP), devoted to integrate urban logistics schemes/services/ regulation in the overall mobility strategies and solutions.

References
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