The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport Ireland

CILT Ireland Policy Research

An Evaluation of Ireland's Transport Planning Policies' Alignment to the EU's Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning (SUMP) and Sustainable Urban Logistics Planning (SULP)

CILT Policy Committee

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Executive Summary

CILT Ireland conducted this policy study to assess Ireland's transport planning framework and its alignment with Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs) and Sustainable Urban Logistics Plans (SULPs). This research builds upon two previous studies that examined the state of sustainable transport policies in Ireland and the industry's perception of these policies. A key challenge identified in prior research was the spatial planning of transport infrastructure, particularly regarding sustainable mobility and logistics planning in both urban and rural areas.

Transport planning is vital for economic growth, environmental sustainability, and efficient mobility. However, Ireland's current transport planning process is fragmented, involving multiple governing bodies, complex appraisal procedures, and inconsistent policy implementation. The lack of a coherent national framework for SUMPs/SULPs has resulted in varied levels of adoption across different localities, leaving many regions underprepared for the upcoming EU-mandated deadlines. The revised Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) regulations require Member States to establish a national SUMP support programme by July 2025 and mandate that urban nodes within the TEN-T core and comprehensive networks implement SUMPs by 2027. These requirements emphasise the urgency for Ireland to enhance its transport planning strategies to meet EU compliance standards, avoid penalties, and secure long-term urban and economic resilience.

This study examines Ireland's planning guidelines, stakeholder involvement, and barriers to the future adoption of SUMPs/SULPs. Using a mixed-methods approach, including focus groups and structured surveys, the study evaluates stakeholder perceptions and identifies critical gaps in policy alignment, funding availability, and statutory backing. The PROMETHEE multi-criteria decision analysis tool was employed to systematically assess the level of SUMP/SULP integration across different Irish localities, revealing significant disparities in readiness and implementation, particularly in rural areas.

Based on these findings, the report presents key policy recommendations to improve Ireland's transport planning framework. These include establishing a statutory basis for SUMPs/SULPs, creating a national SUMP support framework, increasing funding and resource allocation, and prioritising data-driven planning and inter-agency coordination. By addressing these systemic gaps, Ireland can ensure compliance with EU regulations, enhance sustainable transport planning, and foster a more resilient, efficient, and environmentally sustainable transport system.

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1. Introduction

The growing emphasis on sustainable urban mobility has gained significant traction among scholars, policymakers, and industry practitioners in recent years. This shift is largely driven by technological advancements, an increased focus on sustainability, and the urgent need to mitigate urban transport challenges. While transportation is essential for economic and social activity, it also produces negative externalities such as traffic congestion, greenhouse gas emissions, and air and noise pollution which are issues that have become critical concerns at the local, national, and EU levels (Smith et al., 2023). Traditional transport planning has predominantly focused on passenger comfort, safety, economic development, and public health, often at the expense of environmental sustainability and social equity (Johnson & Litman, 2023). A more comprehensive approach is required to integrate sustainability into transport planning, ensuring that economic growth does not come at the cost of environmental degradation and urban inefficiency.

One significant aspect of sustainable transport planning is the integration of freight and passenger transport, which has historically been implemented in specific modes such as air, ferry, and long-distance rail transport. However, this approach is less common in urban and rural road transport, where several technical, policy, and logistical challenges hinder seamless implementation. Achieving greater coordination between passenger and freight mobility is essential for improving efficiency, reducing congestion, and lowering emissions, but existing frameworks do not adequately facilitate this transition.

In response to these challenges, the Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport (CILT) Ireland has conducted focus groups and surveys with key stakeholders from academia, government, and industry to evaluate Ireland's transport planning policies in relation to the EU’s Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) and Sustainable Urban Logistics Plan (SULP). These frameworks are central to the European Commission’s mobility agenda, with the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) Regulation mandating that Member States establish a national SUMP support programme by July 2025 and that urban nodes within the TEN-T core and comprehensive networks adopt SUMPs by 2027 (Council of the European Union, 2023). These deadlines highlight the critical

need for Ireland to accelerate its adoption of sustainable transport policies to comply with EU mandates and avoid falling behind in urban mobility planning.

This study evaluates Ireland's transport planning landscape, analysing existing policies, planning guidelines, stakeholder engagement, and barriers to sustainable mobility. It aims to bridge the gap between freight and passenger transport, particularly in urban and rural locations, while identifying opportunities for policy enhancement. The findings will inform policy recommendations to support the implementation of SUMPs and SULPs, ensuring that Ireland's transport planning is aligned with EU regulations and global sustainability goals.

1.1 Research Background

Ireland has historically had a dispersed population, but recent years have seen a significant shift towards urban living. As of 2024, approximately 47.5% of the population now resides in cities, 26.3% in towns and suburbs, and 26.2% in rural areas. The State's population reached approximately 5.38 million in 2024, reflecting an increase of about 641,000 people since the 2016 census, marking a growth of around 13.5%. All local authorities have experienced population growth between 2016 and 2024, with Dublin City remaining the most populous area, now exceeding 1.3 million residents, followed by Cork County with over 372,000 residents (CSO, 2024; Eurostat, 2024; Dublin City Council, 2024). A significant 57% of the net population increase is attributed to migration, a trend that has profoundly shaped the demographic landscape. However, population growth in rural areas such as Mayo, Sligo, and Donegal have notably slowed since 2016, reflecting the broader trend of urbanisation (CSO, 2024). Figure 1 and Table 1 illustrate the degree of urbanisation and population distribution in Ireland.

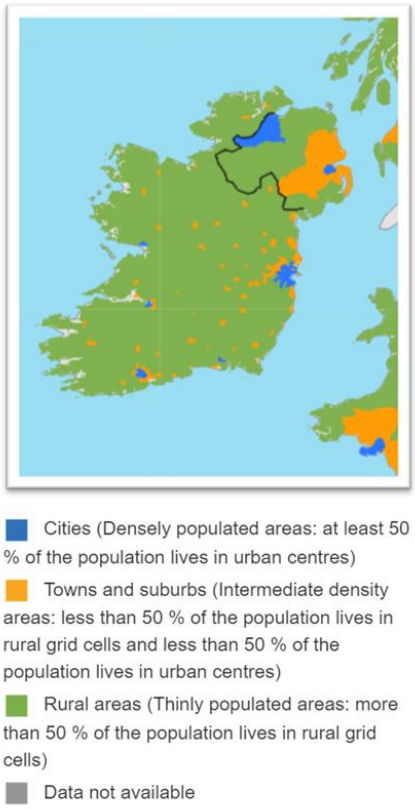

Figure 1 Degree of urbanisation in urban and rural regions in Ireland[1]

Table 1 Degree of urbanisation in Ireland 2024 – Source - Eurostat

Type	**Percentage of Population**
Cities	47.5
Towns and suburbs	26.3
Rural areas	26.2

Future demographic and economic growth will impact decisions in relation to mobility. Future scenarios were undertaken by the ESRI regarding the National Planning Framework. These are critical in defining demand and supply, including the mode of

[1] Source: Eurostat, JRC and European Commission Directorate-General for Regional Policy

freight transport utilised. The road network accounts for more than 90% of internal commerce, as both passenger and freight share the network, it is vital to integrate mobility and transportation planning to gain network quality and fulfil environmental goals.

The European Commission has progressively advanced its approach to sustainable mobility and urban planning, introducing strategic frameworks to tackle evolving urban challenges. The Urban Mobility Package, first launched in 2011 and updated with guidelines in 2013, provided the foundation for the development of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs). These initial efforts emphasised improving urban accessibility while fostering environmentally sustainable transport solutions to address growing mobility demands.

Building on this groundwork, the European Commission introduced SUMP 2.0, reflecting a shift toward more integrated and future-oriented mobility planning. This updated framework incorporates priorities such as climate action, digitalisation, and urban resilience, aligning with broader initiatives particularly the European Green Deal and Fit for 55 goals. SUMP 2.0 emphasises inclusive stakeholder engagement, data-driven decision-making, and adaptive strategies to meet the dynamic challenges of urban mobility systems, ensuring alignment with Europe's climate neutrality and sustainable development objectives.

Inter-urban freight traffic in Ireland is predominantly carried by Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs), with smaller HGVs playing a vital role in urban and rural distribution networks. These smaller vehicles are particularly effective in urban areas, helping to reduce congestion while efficiently managing smaller consignments. The growth of HGV traffic is closely tied to economic expansion and the rapid rise in eCommerce, which has significantly increased the demand for urban deliveries and last-mile logistics. Recent projections by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) estimate that HGV traffic will grow by approximately 2% to 3% annually until 2040, adding pressure to Ireland’s road infrastructure (Transport Infrastructure Ireland, 2023).

The surge in eCommerce has intensified the challenges of urban freight movement, emphasizing the need for innovative and efficient city logistics solutions. Despite its importance, city logistics often lacks adequate prioritization in urban transport planning.

Achieving sustainable solutions requires a blend of behavioural changes, such as shifts in delivery patterns, and technological advancements, including the use of electric and automated vehicles (Hickman & Banister, 2022).

1.2 Research Purpose

This study focuses on transport planning policies in Ireland, with a particular emphasis on evaluating the progress of sustainable mobility planning for passenger and freight transport in both urban and rural areas. Building on prior research, this longitudinal study examines recent developments and trends in Irish transport planning policies, offering a comparative perspective on progress over time. The study is structured around three core research objectives (ROs):

- **RO1:** Investigate stakeholder perceptions of current transport planning policies in Ireland, capturing shifts in attitudes and priorities over time.
- **RO2:** Evaluate the degree of alignment of Irish cities and towns' transport planning policies with the EU's Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) and Sustainable Urban Logistics Plan (SULP) guidelines, identifying changes and persistent gaps.
- **RO3:** Assess the attitudes and readiness of transport planners in Ireland to adopt SUMP and SULP principles, exploring any shifts in receptiveness and perceived challenges.

To achieve these objectives, the research incorporates both desk-based and empirical approaches. This includes an updated review of key academic literature, policy documents, and guidelines (discussed in Section 2: Literature Review). The methodology, outlined in Section 3, combines primary data collection through focus groups and an online survey, allowing for diverse perspectives and longitudinal comparison with prior data.

The analysis and findings, presented in Section 4, provide a detailed examination of the evolving transport planning landscape in Ireland. By addressing the research objectives through comparative analysis, the study highlights both progress and persistent challenges in aligning Irish transport policies with EU sustainability goals. Section 5 offers a set of updated policy recommendations informed by the findings,

and the report concludes with a discussion on research limitations and opportunities for future exploration in this field.

This longitudinal approach enables a deeper understanding of how Irish transport planning policies have evolved over time, offering valuable insights for policymakers and stakeholders aiming to advance sustainable urban and rural mobility.

2. Literature Review

This section reviews relevant published work and academic articles on sustainable transport planning. In Section 2.1, the theory of transport planning and the paradigm shift in planning are discussed. This is followed by a discussion of SUMP and SULP guidelines and plans by the EU in Sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 respectively, and their practices in Europe in Section 2.2.3. Further to this, the focus is shifted to Ireland and its transport planning policies in 2.3.

2.1 Transport Planning

The typical foundation for transportation system planning is the projection of future traffic volumes. This prognosis is based on existing social patterns, forecasts for future economic development, and transport operating costs. The models and trends in place throughout all of Europe indicate that traffic and transportation volumes will continue to increase. New technological advancements in energy-efficient cars that are partially or entirely powered by electricity and the use of biofuels instead of fossil fuels are required to meet climate goals. These remedies, however, fall short. There is a pressing requirement to alter the trajectory of societal planning and infrastructure development to align with shifts in human behaviour (Johansson et al., 2016).

Planning for increased traffic with cars and heavy-duty vehicles (HDVs) is clearly adopting to planning for more sustainable mobility. This includes a focus on accessibility via walking, bicycling, public transportation, and improved logistics. In short, modal shift instead of more vehicles (Johansson et al., 2016).

Transportation has developed a new paradigm according to Litman (2021). The definition of transportation has changed from mobility (majorly automobile travel) to accessibility (means to obtain services). Meanwhile the scope of consideration while

planning transport has changed from reduction of traffic, operating costs, etc, to parking congestion, affordability, public safety, and fitness, amongst others (Litman, 2021). Figure 3 depicts how planning practices can create a cycle which creates a scenario where travelling without a personal vehicle becomes improbable.

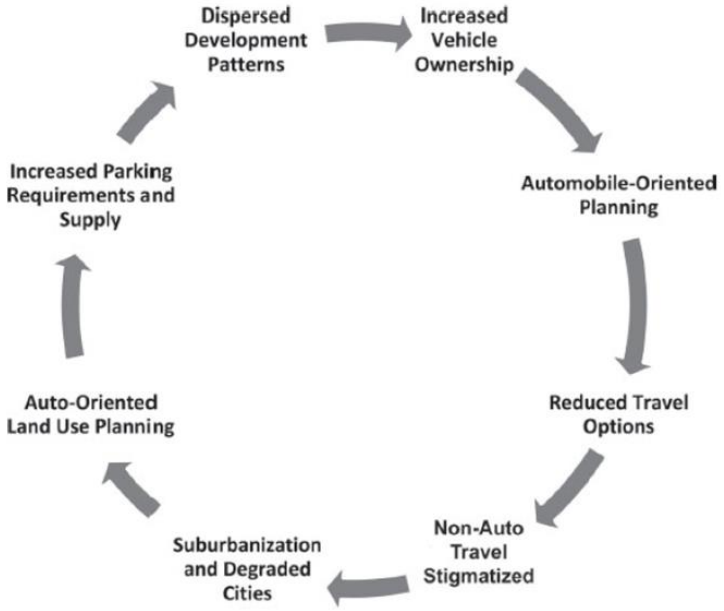

Figure 2 Cycle of Automobile Dependency (Litman, 2014)

In the coming years, governments will need to make bold and innovative decisions regarding new mobility solutions, balancing trade-offs among emerging technologies, policy goals, and strategic approaches. There is an urgent need to shift towards alternative objectives that have not traditionally been prioritized in transport planning. These objectives include addressing diverse consumer demands, implementing effective pricing strategies, and utilizing least-cost planning methods. The rise of new mobilities, such as active travel, micro-mobility options, and vehicle-sharing systems, alongside advancements in transport technologies such as electric vehicles and Mobility as a Service (MaaS), will present significant planning challenges (Docherty, Marsden, & Anable, 2018). Furthermore, the integration of these new mobilities and technologies into a cohesive and efficient transport network is essential for achieving low-carbon transport goals. This integrated approach will require rethinking traditional transport planning concepts, as the emergence of these new mobilities demands a

more adaptive and holistic strategy to ensure seamless connectivity and sustainability (Pangbourne et al., 2023).

2.2 Overview of the EU's SUMPs and SULPs

2.2.1 Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs)

The de facto urban transportation planning paradigm in Europe is Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning. Since 2005, European policymakers have been methodically developing this framework (COM, 2013). The release of the Urban Mobility Package at the end of 2013, when the European Commission formalised the idea of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans, was its most significant turning point (Wefering et al., 2014).

"A Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan is a strategic plan designed to satisfy the mobility needs of people and businesses in cities and their surroundings for a better quality of life. It builds on existing planning practices and takes due consideration of integration, participation, and evaluation principles" (Rupprecht Consult, 2019).

The effectiveness of SUMPs in promoting sustainability has been increasingly demonstrated across Europe. For instance, the city of Tampere, Finland, implemented a SUMP focusing on meeting residents' mobility needs while enhancing the quality of life. This plan integrates various sustainable mobility elements, including public transport improvements and active travel initiatives, contributing significantly to Tampere's goal of carbon neutrality by 2030 (City of Tampere, 2021). Similarly, Stockholm, Sweden, has utilised Urban Vehicle Access Regulations (UVARs) as part of its SUMP to achieve sustainable mobility. Measures such as congestion charging and low-emission zones have successfully reduced traffic congestion and improved air quality, showcasing their role in advancing urban sustainability (European Commission, n.d.).

The European Commission first introduced the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) development and implementation guidelines in 2014, with significant updates released in October 2019. These guidelines outline the essential principles of the planning process, as well as the objectives that should be included in a SUMP. They

provide detailed steps, practical advice, and examples of best practices to help cities develop effective mobility plans. The concept of SUMPs has gained widespread recognition across Europe and beyond, especially with the introduction of the updated Urban Mobility Package, which emphasizes the integration of sustainable practices into urban transportation planning (Pangbourne et al., 2023).

The revised SUMP guidelines, part of the Urban Mobility Package, are built on eight key principles aimed at promoting sustainable urban mobility. These principles include comprehensive assessment of current and future mobility trends, a shared vision with strategic goals, and the implementation of an integrated package of regulatory, promotional, financial, technical, and infrastructure measures. A crucial aspect of the revised SUMP guidelines is the emphasis on continuous monitoring and evaluation to ensure that the strategic goals are being met effectively. Unlike traditional planning methods, SUMP places a strong focus on stakeholder and public engagement, cross-sectoral policy coordination, and close collaboration with the private sector to achieve sustainable mobility outcomes (Marsden, G., & Docherty, I., 2018).

Figure 3 Principles of SUMP planning (Rupprecht Consult, 2021)

The SUMP process is inherently complex, requiring a holistic approach that includes preparation and analysis, strategy development, planning of measures, implementation, and ongoing monitoring. These components make SUMP a vital tool for local and regional authorities as they work towards creating sustainable urban transport systems. The latest updates to the SUMP guidelines introduce key refinements that address the growing complexity of urban mobility, emphasizing the integration of emerging technologies such as electric vehicles, autonomous systems, smart traffic management, and Mobility as a Service (MaaS) into a sustainable mobility ecosystem (Marsden & Docherty, 2023). The guidelines also stress the importance of fostering multimodal transport systems that seamlessly connect various modes of travel, such as cycling, walking, public transit, and shared mobility, to reduce reliance on private cars (Pangbourne et al., 2023). Additionally, the updated guidelines prioritise environmental and social equity, advocating the introduction of transport policies that reduce emissions, improve air quality, and ensure accessibility for all, including marginalized populations. This holistic approach aims to create urban transport

systems that are sustainable, efficient, equitable, and resilient (Sørensen & Gudmundsson, 2014).

- **Preparation and analysis** – In this phase, data and information on the present mobility situation are gathered, along with opportunities, needs and issues that may be addressed.
- **Strategy development** - In this phase, the SUMP's vision, goals, and targets are developed, along with the approaches and procedures necessary to accomplish them.
- **Measure planning** - The selection and prioritising of the measures and activities listed in the previous phase, in addition to the creation of an implementation strategy, are all part of this step.
- **Implementation and monitoring** - The procedures and activities outlined in the previous phase must now be put into practice, and their efficacy must be monitored and evaluated.

In addition to these key components, the integration of land-use planning and mobility management is essential for improving urban environments, reducing social inequities, and enhancing the overall quality of life. The revised SUMP guidelines advocate for a holistic approach that considers a wide range of issues and objectives, including social, economic, and environmental goals such as accessibility, traffic flow, congestion, noise reduction, traffic safety, and the decarbonization of urban mobility. This integration ensures that urban mobility planning contributes to broader urban development goals and creates more liveable, sustainable cities (Pangbourne et al., 2020).

The European Union also introduced specific requirements for SUMPs within urban nodes of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) to address pressing urban mobility challenges and improve transport efficiency. Under the revised TEN-T Regulation, Member States must designate a national SUMP contact point and establish a national SUMP support programme by July 2025 to provide structured support for urban nodes in adopting and implementing SUMPs (European Commission, 2024a). Furthermore, by 2027, all urban nodes within the TEN-T core and comprehensive networks are required to have an approved SUMP in place,

ensuring alignment with the EU's sustainability and climate objectives (Council of the European Union, 2023).

These mandatory SUMPs aim to tackle critical urban transport issues, including traffic congestion, carbon emissions, air pollution, and inefficiencies in multimodal transport integration. The plans must incorporate measures to enhance public transport, promote active mobility (cycling and walking), improve urban logistics, and integrate Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) and Mobility as a Service (MaaS) to create seamless, sustainable transport ecosystems (European Commission, 2023). This requirement also ties into the EU's long-term net-zero emissions strategy, with urban nodes expected to play a pivotal role in reducing transport-related carbon footprints by 2050 (European Commission, 2024b).

With these deadlines approaching, SUMPs are transitioning from voluntary strategic tools to legally mandated frameworks. Compliance is critical for Member States, as failure to adopt SUMPs within the required timeframe could result in regulatory and funding limitations, impacting national and regional transport investment opportunities (Council of the European Union, 2023). For Ireland, integrating SUMPs within its national and regional planning strategies is imperative to ensure compliance, enhance economic resilience, and create a transport system that is future-proofed, efficient, and environmentally sustainable.

2.2.2. Sustainable Urban Logistics Plans (SULPs)

With a 32% share of overall energy consumption, transportation ranks as the second most energy-intensive industry. The European Commission set an ambitious aim of CO_2-free urban logistics by 2030 (European Commission, 2021). By 2050, 82% of Europeans will be urban dwellers, making it crucial to solve city transportation challenges in functional urban areas (FUAs), while also taking into consideration the functional economic and transport relationships between urban centres and neighbouring metropolitan regions. The plans created in this manner will affect the territorial and economic growth of metropolitan areas in Europe. A policy-supporting instrument called the Sustainable Urban Logistics Plan (SULP) was created for European towns that may not have the financial means to develop and evaluate

policies for sustainable urban logistics in a meaningful manner (Matusiewicz, 2019). A definition of the Sustainable Urban Logistic Plan (SULP) may be found in the European project ENCLOSE.

"... a Sustainable Urban Logistics Plan is a strategic plan designed to satisfy freight mobility needs of people and business in cities and their surroundings, in order to achieve a better quality of environment and of life. It builds on existing planning practices and takes due consideration of integration, participation, and evaluation principles" (Ambrosino, 2015).

SULP is one of the core elements of SUMP, devoted to integrating urban logistics schemes/services/regulations in the overall mobility strategies. The ENCLOSE project consists of 9 municipalities and 7 distinct public/private organisations such as universities, technical research and energy agencies, independent consultant businesses, etc. (Ambrosino, 2015). Since then, SULP has gained popularity as a tool of the European Commission towards zero-emission logistics under the SULPITER project. SULP is intended to be one of the crucial components of the local mobility strategy (Liberato et al., 2015).

It was designed specifically to deal with mid to short term solutions for managing urban freight activities. In the case of larger cities, it has proven difficult to develop a separate urban logistics plan from traditional transport planning as it is challenging to collect data on urban logistics, there is a lack of involvement from ministries, politicians, and policymakers in SULP. Also, there is a lack of financial and technical support for the planning and development of SULP in urban areas (Böhler & Huaylla, 2022). Table 2 provides a comparison of traditional transport planning approaches to that of SUMP and SULP.

The Sustainable Urban Logistics Plan (SULP) approach, similar to the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP), is integral to addressing the complex challenges present at various levels within urban areas. The recent updates to the SULP guidelines emphasize the critical need for seamless integration with SUMP, underscoring their complementary roles in advancing urban sustainability. The revised SULP guidelines place a greater focus on aligning logistics planning with broader urban mobility goals, ensuring that the movement of goods is efficiently managed in tandem with the flow of

people. This alignment is crucial for minimizing environmental impact, enhancing operational efficiency, and supporting the overarching objectives of sustainable urban mobility. The updated guidelines for both SULP and SUMP advocate a coordinated approach that includes policy integration, stakeholder collaboration, and the development of comprehensive solutions tailored to the specific demands of urban transport and logistics systems (Sørensen & Gudmundsson, 2023).

Key integration areas include:

- **Stakeholder Decision-Making:** SULP enhances the decision-making process within SUMP by focusing on reducing external impacts and costs associated with urban logistics. This integration ensures that logistics considerations are factored into broader mobility strategies (Pangbourne et al., 2023).
- **Town Situation Diagnosis:** SULP supports SUMP by helping to establish a comprehensive baseline of the urban situation, incorporating both mobility elements and logistical operations. This collaborative approach allows for a more holistic understanding of urban dynamics (Marsden & Docherty, 2023).
- **Town Measure Design:** The design of measures for both the transport of people and logistics operations should be integrated, particularly regarding the road network and its management. SULP and SUMP mutually reinforce each other through their participatory approaches, involving diverse stakeholders. The successful implementation of one plan can support and enhance the realisation of the other, creating a synergistic effect in urban planning. Table 3 shows the various transport planning elements prevalent in SUMPs and SULPs.

In addition to these key components, the integration of land-use planning and mobility management is essential for improving urban environments, reducing social inequalities and enhancing the overall quality of life. The revised SUMP guidelines advocate for a holistic approach that considers a wide range of issues and objectives, including social, economic and environmental goals such as accessibility, traffic flow, congestion, noise reduction, traffic safety, and the decarbonisation of urban mobility. This integration ensures that urban mobility planning contributes to broader urban development goals and creates more liveable, sustainable cities (Pangbourne et al., 2023).

Table 2 Traditional transport planning vs SUMP vs SULP

Traditional Transport Planning	SUMP	SULP
Focus of traffic	Focus on people.	Focus on effectiveness of the supply chain and last mile delivery
Primary objectives: traffic flow, capacity, and speed	Primary objectives: accessibility and quality of life, sustainability, economic viability, social equity, health, and environmental quality	Primary objectives: emissions free logistics in cities by 2050
Modal-focused	Balanced development of all relevant transport modes and shift towards cleaner and more sustainable modes	Use of fully loaded and alternatively powered delivery vehicles, cargo bikes, and consolidation centres
Infrastructure focus	Integrated set of actions to achieve cost-effective, sustainable mobility solutions.	Targeted measures based on city-specific profiles: dedicated loading bays, access restrictions, time restrictions, ICT systems, etc.
Sectoral planning document	Sectoral planning document complementary to related policy areas (e.g., land use, social services, environment, health, etc.)	An extension of the SUMP, consistent with other transport policy documents at local, regional, and national levels
Short and medium-term delivery plan	Short and medium-term delivery plan embedded in a long-term vision and strategy	Short and medium-term logistics strategies aligned with a long-term sustainable urban logistics vision
Related to an administrative area	Related to a functional urban area based on travel-to-work patterns	Related to a functional area, considering regional logistics hubs and urban freight corridors
Domain of traffic engineers	Interdisciplinary planning teams	Interdisciplinary planning teams, including freight quality partnerships, logistics providers, and area stakeholders
Planning by experts	Planning with stakeholder involvement through a transparent and participatory approach	Planning with logistics stakeholders using a collaborative and transparent approach
Limited impact assessment	Regular monitoring and evaluation to inform structured learning and continuous improvement	Continuous monitoring and evaluation of logistics measures with a clear allocation of responsibilities among actors

Source: European Commission (2023)

Table 3 Key sustainable transport planning elements in SUMPs and SULPs

SUMP	**Decarbonisation**	Reduce urban CO2 emissions via public transport, active mobility, and low-emission vehicles, aligning with EU goals.
	Zero-Emission Zones	Establish ZEZs to restrict fossil-fuelled vehicles and promote EV use.
	Active Mobility	Improve walking and cycling infrastructure to encourage sustainable travel.
	Public Transport	Upgrade systems with MaaS integration for efficiency and accessibility.
	Electrification	Expand EV charging infrastructure and incentivise EV adoption.
	Shared Mobility	Promote car-sharing, bike-sharing, and ride-hailing to reduce car dependency.
	Urban Accessibility	Ensure equitable access to transport for all, including vulnerable groups.
	Land Use Integration	Align mobility strategies with sustainable land-use planning.
	Urban Freight	Optimise logistics with consolidation centres and eco-friendly delivery methods.
	ITS	Leverage Intelligent Transport Systems for safety and emissions reduction.
	MaaS	Combine transport modes into single, user-friendly services.
	Vision Zero	Target zero road fatalities through safety strategies for vulnerable users.
	Monitoring and Adaptation	Regular evaluation and flexible updates to ensure policy effectiveness.
	Sustainable Logistics	Minimise environmental impact with low-emission zones and optimised freight routing.

SULP	**Logistics and Urban Planning**	Integrate freight planning into urban development to reduce congestion.
	Electrification	Expand EV adoption in urban logistics for greener last-mile delivery.
	Smart Logistics	Use delivery time windows, collection points, and automated systems to streamline operations.
	Resilient Logistics	Develop systems that withstand disruptions including pandemics or natural disasters.

Sources: Urban Mobility Observatory, (2024a) and Urban Mobility Observatory, (2024b)

The integration of information technology services and the emerging "smart city" framework with Sustainable Urban Logistics Plans (SULP) is a key priority, as emphasized in the EU Directive 2010/40/EU. The Directive calls for national-level implementation of information and communication technology (ICT) systems designed to interface seamlessly with various mobility services and modalities. This integration is crucial for enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of urban logistics within the broader context of smart city initiatives, ensuring that logistics operations are optimized in tandem with the development of advanced urban mobility solutions (Sørensen & Gudmundsson, 2023).

2.2.3. SUMPs and SULPs practices in Europe

In Europe, there are several instances of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) approaches that have been effective. The dedication of cities to create and execute SUMPs, which increase urban mobility and sustainability, is shown by those initiatives. A number of key initiatives are briefly described below:

Amsterdam, Netherlands and Zurich, Switzerland - In Amsterdam, the city's SUMP and SULP aim to reduce traffic and emissions, targeting a zero-emissions zone by 2025. The CityCargo initiative has been expanded to handle up to 2,500 tons of cargo daily, potentially reducing up to 3,500 truck trips.

Electric cargo bikes and dedicated loading zones are further enhancing urban freight logistics (European Commission, 2024). In Zurich, the Cargo Tram continues to play a pivotal role in urban logistics, with capacity to transport 1,200 tons of waste and freight daily, thereby eliminating approximately 1,700 truck trips from the city centre. Zurich's SUMP complements these efforts by promoting pedestrian and cycling infrastructure and reducing motorised vehicle access to key areas(ULaaDS, 2023)

Malmö, Sweden - The SUMP in Malmö is focused on promoting the use of sustainable transportation options while minimising reliance on personal vehicles. The following are a few of the plan's major objectives: Emissions of carbon dioxide from transportation should be 30% lower in 2020 compared to 2008 base year. By the year 2032, there will be 40% fewer trips taken in automobiles than there were in 2012, and by the same year, the proportion of travel taken on bicycles will have increased by 20% in comparison to the levels seen in 2012. (Determining Malmö's Potential for a Successful SUMP (Sweden) (| Eltis, 2017).

Tampere, Finland – Tampere won the 10th annual award for Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning (SUMP). Their ambitious strategy includes evaluations of how mobility initiatives will affect the local populace, as well as an emphasis on low-carbon mobility, road safety, vulnerable groups, smart mobility solutions, physical and emotional well-being, accessibility, and low pollution levels. The City of Tampere's mobility unit, in collaboration with its educational unit, is now evaluating a number of pilot initiatives, including zebra crossing campaigns, active school visits by bicycle, foot, or scooter, as well as emphasising the critical role that mobility plays in the development of high-quality urban areas (*European Mobility Week Sustainable Urban Mobility Awards Winners Announced*, n.d.).

The Interreg Project, known as the Integrated Regional Action Plan for Innovative, Sustainable, and Low Carbon Mobility, or 'REFORM,' underscores the pivotal role regions play in initiating and promoting the Sustainable Urban

Mobility Plan (SUMP) development process. The REFORM strategy highlights the importance of regional engagement in driving the adoption of SUMPs by cities while creating a strategic framework designed to overcome existing barriers. The project aims to enhance regional operational program policies through mutual learning processes, ultimately supporting the widespread use of SUMP as a key planning tool for transitioning to low-carbon mobility systems (Giarandoni et al., 2018).

In parallel, the ELTISplus project has been instrumental in promoting and enhancing the adoption of SUMP across Europe. As part of the broader ELTIS initiative, ELTISplus focuses on spreading best practices and providing tools, guidelines, and training to facilitate cities and regions with the implementation of SUMP. The project has played a critical role in increasing awareness of the benefits of sustainable urban mobility planning, offering support to municipalities of varying sizes and capacities in their transition toward sustainable and low-carbon transport solutions. ELTISplus has successfully fostered a culture of sustainable mobility planning across Europe by enabling cities to develop and implement effective SUMPs, thereby contributing significantly to the reduction of urban carbon footprints (UBC Sustainable Cities Commission, n.d.). Table 4 illustrates some of the good practices identified in these regions.

In regard to SULP, there are multiple good practices in the form of publicly and privately funded projects which play an essential role in shaping sustainable urban logistics and freight transport associated with it. Table 5 briefly outlines some of the good practices in SULP.

Table 4 REFORM SUMP good practices

Country	**Good Practice**
Austria	• *Mobility management for companies*: Innovative partnerships with local businesses to integrate sustainable mobility practices – Graz. • *Implementation of a voluntary mobility audit scheme*: Enhancing local mobility through community engagement – Judenburg.

Italy	• *Bella Mossa*: Gamification process promoting sustainable mobility, leading to significant reductions in emissions – Bologna. • *LTZ congestion charge:* Citizens' involvement in managing congestion through Low Traffic Zones – Milan. • *Regional funding scheme for SUMP:* Financing SUMP development through regional operating programme funds – Emilia-Romagna. • *Traffic and mobility data management:* Establishing an in-house company to manage regional traffic data – Emilia-Romagna.
UK	• *Integration of SUMP with environmental policy:* Developing a Low Emission Zone to enhance air quality – York. • *Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM):* A unified organization for transport delivery across the region – Manchester. • *Innovative SUMP development:* Utilizing SUMP for creative local transport solutions – Manchester. • *SUMP evidence base and stakeholder consultation:* Comprehensive governance and spatial planning processes – Manchester. • *West Yorkshire Combined Authority:* Effective institutional and governance arrangements for SUMP – West Yorkshire.
Slovenia	• *Citizens' and stakeholders' involvement:* Inclusive SUMP development in small cities, setting a model for citizen participation – Ljutomer.
Greece	• *Mobility monitoring centre:* Advanced monitoring of metropolitan mobility, improving strategic planning – Thessaloniki. • *National SUMP Guidelines:* Development of technical guidelines for national SUMP implementation – Greece. • *Participatory urban development:* Engaging citizens in the strategic plan of Sustainable Urban Development – Thessaloniki. • *Regional funding for mobility:* Use of regional funds to enhance sustainable mobility planning – Epirus Region.
Netherlands	• *Maastricht Bereikbaar:* Influencing employee mobility behaviour through employer engagement – South Limburg. • *Cooperative SUMP development:* Defining vision and goals through collaboration between municipalities and stakeholders – Parkstad Limburg. • *Integration with regional energy plan:* Aligning SUMP processes with the regional energy strategy – PALET, Parkstad Limburg.
Belgium	• *Stakeholder identification:* Comprehensive mapping of SUMP stakeholders across sectors and transport modes – Ghent.
Sweden	• *MaxLupoSE:* Applying mobility management and land use planning guidelines in a network of cities – Multiple cities.
France	• *Micro-SUMP scaling:* Developing localized SUMP strategies (Micro-PDU) to scale urban mobility solutions – Lille.

Source: Rupprecht Consult (2023); European Commission (2023); ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability (2023).

Table 5 SULP good practices

Initiative	Description
ENCLOSE project	The ENCLOSE initiative sought to create SULPs for Europe's small- and medium-sized historic communities. The project put a strong emphasis on a collaborative strategy that included user demands, operator requirements, and town goals. Other European cities may now use the strategy after it was tried in nine ENCLOSE towns (Ambrosino, 2015).
NOVELOG project	To provide direction on the creation and use of SULP, the NOVELOG project created a subject guide on Sustainable Urban Logistics Planning. The guide discusses a variety of topics related to urban logistics planning, such as stakeholder participation, data gathering, and SULP integration with Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs) (Aifandopoulou & Xenou, 2019).
CIVITAS initiative	By outlining best practices and criteria for sustainable urban logistics planning, the CIVITAS initiative aids in the creation of SULPs. The recommendations emphasise developing a unified approach to SULP development, integrating SULPs with SUMPs, and addressing the unique requirements of small and medium-sized historic towns in Europe (Liberato et al., 2015).
Interreg Europe	The Interreg Europe initiative encourages the sharing of best practices and experiences across European cities, which aids in the creation of SULPs. The program has supported a number of initiatives for sustainable urban logistics planning, such as the creation of standards and implementation techniques for SULP (Hunkin & Krell, 2020).

2.2.4. Challenges in the Adoption and Implementation of SUMPs and SULPs

Despite their strategic value in promoting sustainable transportation, SUMPs and SULPs face significant criticisms, particularly concerning their implementation and adaptability. One major drawback is the challenge of policy integration. SUMPs often fail to harmonise the various and sometimes competing objectives of urban planning, transportation, and environmental policies. This lack of cohesion can lead to fragmented and siloed approaches to mobility planning, creating inefficiencies and conflicting priorities within urban transport systems. (Marsden and Reardon, 2017) argue that such governance

issues undermine the holistic vision required for effective sustainable mobility planning, particularly in areas where collaboration between different policy domains is weak.

Another notable criticism is the limited public participation in the development of SULPs. Although public engagement is frequently cited as a cornerstone of sustainable planning, the reality often falls short. (Janjevic and Ndiaye, 2014) Insufficient citizen involvement can compromise the legitimacy and effectiveness of SULPs, as plans may fail to align with the actual needs and preferences of the community. Inadequate engagement also limits the diversity of perspectives and insights that could inform more robust and inclusive mobility solutions. As a result, the plans risk being viewed as top-down initiatives, reducing community support and adoption.

Additionally, the adaptability of SUMPs and SULPs to rapidly changing urban environments has been questioned. Critics suggest that their often-rigid structures make it difficult to respond effectively to emerging trends such as shared mobility, autonomous vehicles, and evolving logistics technologies. Bertolini et al argue that this lack of flexibility can stifle innovation and responsiveness, particularly in cities experiencing dynamic economic or demographic shifts. (Bertolini et al., 2015) . Furthermore, the emphasis on long-term planning horizons, while important for sustainability, may inadvertently deprioritise immediate and adaptive solutions to pressing urban mobility challenges.

These critiques underscore the need for a more integrated, participatory, and flexible approach to the formulation and execution of SUMPs and SULPs. Addressing these shortcomings could ensure that these frameworks not only meet their sustainability objectives, but also remain relevant and responsive in the face of evolving urban mobility needs. By incorporating mechanisms for continuous stakeholder engagement, fostering interdepartmental collaboration, and building adaptability into their structures, SUMPs and SULPs could

significantly enhance their effectiveness in supporting sustainable urban mobility.

2.3 Transport Planning in Ireland

2.3.1 How transport planning is conducted in Ireland

- Planning for urban mobility in Ireland typically falls within the purview of municipal governments. This decentralised approach ensures that local authorities tailor strategies to the specific needs of their areas, while aligning with national and EU-wide objectives. The involvement of municipal governments is crucial in developing and implementing effective urban mobility plans that address local issues and leverage local knowledge (Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, 2023).
- Transport planning in Ireland has evolved to incorporate the development of Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies (MATS) for the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) and other major cities: Cork, Limerick, Galway, and Waterford. These strategies are designed in accordance with the EU's Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning (SUMP) principles, as outlined in the National Sustainable Mobility Policy (SMP) (Department of Transport, 2022) and SMP Year Two Progress Report (Department of Transport, 2024). While there is currently no legal obligation to prepare MATS outside of the GDA, various policy documents, including the SMP, mandate the formulation of comprehensive transport strategies. Furthermore, under the revised TEN-T Regulation, Member States must ensure that all urban nodes on the TEN-T network adopt and monitor Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs) by 2027. There will be an additional requirement to collect and regularly submit urban mobility data, with specific criteria to be finalised, to the European Commission.
- The SMP emphasises the creation of detailed transport strategies to foster sustainable mobility in urban regions. The Limerick-Shannon and Waterford transport strategies have already been completed and

published. A review of the strategy for Cork is due to commence in 2025, whereas the draft Galway Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy is expected to be published for consultation in 2025 (Department of Transport, 2024). These strategies aim to address urban mobility challenges and promote sustainable transport solutions in line with EU guidelines.

- To direct planning and investment in transportation, the government creates national frameworks and policies. The National Transport Authority (NTA) and other stakeholders work with regional and municipal authorities to produce strategic plans for transportation services and infrastructure.
- Throughout the planning stages, a public consultation is required. Stakeholders, including members of public, companies and community organisations are contacted to ensure that their requirements and concerns are considered. Once plans are completed, the NTA and local government implement it.
- The implemented mobility plans and policies are constantly monitored and evaluated to determine their efficacy and guide future planning.
- Every six years, each local authority develops Land Use and Development Plans, which include consideration of urban mobility planning concerns (Ireland | Eltis, 2018).
- The National Transport Authority also develops programmes such as the Smarter Travel Initiative to promote sustainable transport (European Commission, n.d.; National Transport Authority, n.d.)

2.3.2 Transport planning for sustainable mobility in Ireland

In Ireland, the evolution of transport policies over the past two decades highlights a progressive yet challenging journey toward sustainable mobility. Early initiatives, such as the publication of *Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future. A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020*, laid the foundation for promoting sustainable travel and reducing car dependency. This policy, launched in 2009, outlined 49 actions across four key themes and set

ambitious targets, including increasing the share of bicycle trips to 10% by 2020, as supported by the National Cycle Policy Framework (Department of Transport, 2009). These early efforts reflected a growing awareness of the need for sustainable alternatives to private car use.

Despite its ambitious objectives, the implementation of the Smarter Travel policy encountered significant obstacles from the outset. Launched in the wake of the 2008 financial crash which was a period marked by a severe curtailment of investment that continued for the following decade, the policy was already operating under constrained conditions. A 2019 review by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport revealed that many of the proposed actions had made little or no substantive progress, exposing critical gaps in execution and accountability (Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2019). Moreover, An Taisce (The National Trust for Ireland) reported to the OECD in 2020 that the policy's targets had not been met, describing the outcome as "a major public policy failure" and calling for a thorough investigation into the shortcomings and missed opportunities (An Taisce, 2020).

Recognising these challenges, the Irish government introduced a new strategic direction with the National Sustainable Mobility Policy in 2022 to address the limitations of its predecessor by providing a more structured and actionable framework for sustainable mobility. The policy detailed 91 actions aimed at achieving key sustainable mobility targets—which the Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2023 further defines as a 50% increase in daily active travel journeys, a 130% increase in daily public transport journeys, and a 20% reduction in total vehicle kilometres travelled by 2030. In addition, the policy set ambitious goals, including achieving 500,000 additional daily active travel and public transport journeys by 2030 and reducing the kilometres driven by fossil-fuelled cars by 10%. Overall, the strategy focuses on enhancing active travel (walking and cycling), expanding public transport, and implementing demand management and behavioural change measures to reduce car dependency (Department of Transport, 2022).

Reflecting a broader alignment with Ireland’s climate action goals, the Climate Action Plan 2021 (CAP21) built on earlier initiatives by setting a target of a 51% reduction in emissions by 2030 (Irish Government, 2021). Subsequent iterations, namely, the Climate Action Plan 2023 (CAP23) and the Climate Action Plan 2024 (CAP24) further refined these strategies, with CAP24 emphasising the attainment of net-zero emissions by 2050 through a focus on sustainable transport, electrification, and reduced private car usage (Irish Government, 2024). Arising from the momentum generated by CAP23 and CAP24, the Government initiated the development of a new national transport

strategy aimed at addressing congestion and managing transport demand from both private travel and commercial activities. Entitled *Moving Together: A Strategic Approach to the Improved Efficiency of the Transport System in Ireland*, the draft strategy, accompanied by its Implementation Plan and six sub-group reports, was published for public consultation in 2024. It is anticipated that, pending Government approval, this strategy will be finalised in the near future, thereby reinforcing the objectives of the Sustainable Mobility Policy.

This longitudinal perspective reveals a gradual shift in Ireland's transport policy, from early aspirations to more adaptive and structured responses that address previous failures. While earlier efforts such as *Smarter Travel* struggled with implementation, the *National Sustainable Mobility Policy* and updated Climate Action Plans reflect a more integrated approach. These policies aim to bridge the gap between national objectives and EU sustainability goals, ensuring that Ireland remains committed to reducing emissions and promoting sustainable mobility in the long term.

2.3.3 Irish Sustainable Mobility Policy and Legislation

Table 6 A summary of recent transport planning policies in Ireland

Year	Gov. agency	Policy/Legislation	Region	Note
National level policies				
2021	The Irish Government	Climate Action Plan 2021 (CAP21)	National	Updates and enhances the 2019 plan with more ambitious targets, aiming for a 51% reduction in emissions by 2030.
2022	Department of Transport	National Sustainable Mobility Policy	National	Provides a strategic framework for active travel and public transport, aiming to significantly reduce car journeys and emissions by 2030.
2023	The Irish Government	Climate Action Plan 2023 (CAP23)	National	Continues to build on previous climate action plans with updated strategies and measures to meet emission reduction targets.
2024	The Irish Government	Climate Action Plan 2024 (CAP24)	National	Further refines and implements policies to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, with a focus on sustainable transport initiatives.
Regional level policies				

2021	Dublin City Council	Dublin City Development Plan 2022 - 2028	Dublin	https://www.dublincity.ie/residential/planning/strategic-planning/dublin-city-development-plan/development-plan-2022-2028
2021	South Dublin County Council	South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2022-2028	South Dublin	Focuses on integrating transport infrastructure with urban development, including new cycling and public transport projects.
2022	Cork City Council & Cork County Council	Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS) 2040 Strategy (CMATS) 2040	Cork	Derived from the National Planning Framework (NPF) 2040; Cork is the fastest-growing city region in Ireland: https://www.nationaltransport.ie/planning-and-investment/strategic-planning/regional-metropolitan-area-transport-strategies/cork-metropolitan-area-transport-strategy-cmats/
2022	Fingal County Council	Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029	Fingal	Includes strategies for sustainable transport and urban development, aligning with the Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy:
2022	Limerick City & County Council	Limerick Development Plan 2022 - 2028	Limerick	Includes a focus on sustainable mobility and transport: https://mypoint.limerick.ie/en/consultation/draft-limerick-development-plan-2022-2028/chapter/chapter-6-sustainable-mobility-and-transport
2022	NTA	Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy	Limerick	Updated to align with the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy: https://www.nationaltransport.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Limerick-Shannon-Metropolitan-Area-Transport-Strategy.pdf
2022	NTA	National Cycling Framework	National	Aims to increase the percentage of trips made by bicycle to 15% by 2030, supporting active travel across all regions: https://www.nationaltransport.ie/
2022	NTA	Waterford Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy	Waterford	Aligns with the National Planning Framework; focus on sustainable transport: https://www.nationaltransport.ie/planning-and-investment/strategic-planning/regional-metropolitan-area-transport-strategies/waterford-metropolitan-area-transport-strategy-wmats/

2022	Waterford City & County Council	Chapter 5: Transport & Mobility - Waterford City Development Plan 2022-2028	Waterford	Focuses on integrating transport with urban planning: https://consult.waterfordcouncil.ie/ga/system/files/materials/805/Chapter%205.pdf
2023	NTA	Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2022-2042	Dublin	https://www.nationaltransport.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Greater-Dublin-Area-Transport-Strategy-2022-42-1.pdf
2023	Dublin City Council	Public Realm Masterplan for Dublin City Centre	Dublin	Updates the 2016 plan; focused on creating a pedestrian-friendly city centre with sustainable urban mobility: https://www.dublincity.ie/sites/default/files/2020-08/public-realm-masterplan.pdf
2023	Galway City Council & Galway County Council	Galway Transport Strategy (GTS)	Galway	Updated to reflect new national guidelines and the NPF: https://www.galwaycity.ie/services/roads-and-transport/galway-transport-strategy
2023	NTA, Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)	National Roads Programme 2023-2030	National	Focuses on the expansion and maintenance of national roads, with a significant emphasis on reducing transport emissions: https://www.nationaltransport.ie/
2024	Kilkenny County Council	Kilkenny Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (in development)	Kilkenny	A pilot effort aligning with SUMP 2.0 principles; aims to serve as a model for smaller urban areas.
2024	NTA	Updated National Cycling Network Plan	National	Expands the original framework, focusing on inter-regional cycling routes and urban-rural connections.
Previous policies (prior to the introduction of EU's SUMP in 2014)				
2002	NTA	National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020	National	land-use decisions must take into account existing public transport networks or support the development of new or upgraded networks.
2009	Department of Transport	Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future	National	as national policy on sustainable transport development and it informed Irish metropolitan transport strategies.
2012	Dublin city council	Dublin City Public Realm Strategy	Dublin	https://www.dublincity.ie/residential/planning/strategic-planning/public-realm-strategy

Table 7 A summary of how transport planning policies in Ireland align with key sustainable transport planning elements in SUMPs and SULPs

2.3.4 How transport planning policies in Ireland align with key sustainable transport planning elements in SUMPs and SULPs

The alignment of Irish transport planning policies with the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) and Sustainable Urban Logistics Plan (SULP) frameworks reveals a mix of progress and ongoing challenges when viewed through a longitudinal lens. Over the past decade, national-level policies have evolved, showing increasing alignment with sustainable transport goals. Early efforts such as the Climate Action Plan 2021 (CAP21) laid foundational commitments to decarbonise urban mobility and promote active travel, while the National Sustainable Mobility Policy (2022) represented a pivotal shift by introducing comprehensive measures to reduce car dependency, improve public transport, and prioritise active travel infrastructure. More recent iterations, including CAP23 and CAP24, demonstrate continuity and include a supplementary Annex of Actions. Furthermore, the development of CAP 24 incorporated a call for expert evidence and public consultation enabling the submission of evidence-based views from expert stakeholders, academic institutions, researchers, and analysts in the climate, energy, environment and industry sectors. Conversely, CAP23 and CAP24 fall short in delivering detailed implementation pathways, particularly in areas such as urban freight, zero-emission zones (ZEZs), and intelligent transport systems (ITS). However, while CAP23 and CAP24 did not provide sufficiently detailed implementation pathways in these key areas, the national transport strategy, *Moving Together*, was designed to address these gaps. By offering targeted, evidence-based action plans and incorporating extensive stakeholder feedback, *Moving Together* aims to deliver clear and actionable pathways that will integrate these critical elements into Ireland’s transport planning framework.

From a longitudinal perspective, the progression of Ireland's transport policies reflects a gradual but uneven integration of SUMP and SULP principles. While policies have consistently addressed decarbonisation and transport electrification, the integration of innovative solutions such as Mobility as a Service (MaaS) and ITS has been slow due to a lack of enforceable targets and funding mechanisms. Policies since 2022 have emphasised active mobility and shared transport systems, but challenges persist in translating high-level strategies into measurable, region-specific outcomes.

At the regional level, the evolution of transport planning strategies highlights varying degrees of progress. Development plans and regional strategies for major urban centers, such as Dublin, Cork, and Limerick, have advanced active travel infrastructure and public transport enhancements, aligning with SUMP goals over time. However, this progress has not been uniformly replicated in smaller towns and rural areas, where gaps in urban logistics planning, resilient delivery systems, and integration of freight and land-use planning remain prominent. In response, the new *Moving Together* strategy proposes the development of regional freight strategies and enhanced coordination mechanisms to address these disparities. While some advancements have been observed in the electrification of urban logistics, particularly in larger urban centres, sustained policy support, increased investment, and stronger collaboration between public and private stakeholders are required to accelerate implementation nationwide.

The longitudinal analysis underscores that while Ireland has made notable strides in aligning transport policies with SUMP and SULP frameworks, systemic gaps remain, particularly in terms of policy specificity, enforcement mechanisms, and consistent implementation across urban and rural contexts. Addressing these issues will be critical to ensuring that Ireland achieves its long-term climate targets, strengthens urban mobility resilience, and fully aligns with EU sustainable transport requirements.

Appendix E provides a detailed breakdown of how Irish policies align with key SUMP and SULP elements over time.2.4. SUMPs and SULPs in Ireland
The evolution of Ireland's transport planning policies over the past decade demonstrates incremental alignment with the European Union's Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) and Sustainable Urban Logistics Plan (SULP) frameworks. Initially, Ireland's approach to sustainable mobility was fragmented, with local and national policies focusing predominantly on reducing car dependency and improving active travel through initiatives such as the 2012 Smarter Travel Areas Programme. This early phase set the groundwork for sustainable travel by promoting walking, cycling, and carpooling in local towns but lacked the integrated, strategic focus outlined in SUMP and SULP guidelines.

In recent years, Ireland has made significant strides in adopting SUMPs, particularly in major metropolitan areas. The Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies (MATS), developed for the Greater Dublin Area, Cork, Limerick, Galway, and Waterford, mark a substantial shift toward integrated, SUMP-aligned planning. These strategies reflect a commitment to sustainable urban mobility through multimodal integration, public transport improvements, and active travel infrastructure, addressing priorities including accessibility and decarbonisation. For instance, Dublin's City SUMP 2030 integrates 25 strategic measures, including urban area planning, multimodal transport systems, and stakeholder engagement, providing a blueprint for future urban mobility planning (O'Brien, 2016). Similarly, the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS), developed as part of the National Planning Framework, identifies sustainable transport as a core priority, balancing land use and mobility objectives to reduce car dependency (NTA, 2024).

At the local level, the National Transport Authority (NTA) has advanced the rollout of Local Transport Plans (LTPs), which increasingly incorporate SUMP principles. Cities such as Kilkenny are now in the process of developing SUMP-aligned strategies, reflecting a broader trend of embedding sustainable mobility

planning in regional and local policies (NTA, 2024). While progress has been uneven across regions, the integration of SUMPs into urban development plans has become a key priority, signalling Ireland's growing alignment with EU mobility frameworks.

In contrast, Sustainable Urban Logistics Plans (SULPs) remain underdeveloped in Ireland, despite their critical role in addressing freight movement and urban logistics challenges. Although national policies including the Climate Action Plans (CAP21, CAP23, CAP24) emphasise emissions reductions and the electrification of transport, specific strategies for urban logistics such as efficient delivery systems, freight electrification, and integration with land use planning have received limited attention. This gap is particularly evident in smaller urban areas and rural regions, where logistics planning continues to rely on traditional frameworks rather than SULP-aligned approaches.

Nevertheless, recent policy refinements reflect an increasing awareness of urban logistics' importance within Ireland's sustainable mobility agenda. For example, elements of sustainable logistics, such as last-mile delivery solutions and the electrification of freight vehicles, have been acknowledged within broader climate action plans. However, the absence of formal SULPs means that urban freight planning often remains ad hoc and fragmented, particularly when compared to the structured SUMP initiatives observed in metropolitan areas.

Over time, Ireland's transport planning has shown clear progress, particularly in adopting SUMP principles across national, metropolitan, and local levels. However, the longitudinal analysis highlights a persistent gap in the adoption of SULPs, which remains a significant challenge for addressing freight and logistics efficiency. Moving forward, a more comprehensive approach that integrates SUMP and SULP frameworks will be essential to ensure Ireland's

alignment with EU sustainable transport goals, particularly in the context of urban resilience, decarbonisation, and digital innovation.

This evolving landscape underscores the need for Ireland to not only strengthen its commitment to SUMP principles but also to prioritise the formal integration of SULPs as part of its broader transport strategies. Achieving this balance will support sustainable freight systems, reduce urban congestion, and ensure that all aspects of urban mobility planning contribute to Ireland's long-term environmental and economic objectives.

3. Methodology

To address the research objectives, this study follows an exploratory mixed methods approach using focus groups and an online survey questionnaire to collect empirical data. The research approach was structured into five stages (see Table 7).

Table 8 Method stages of the research project

Stage	Methods	Research objective
Stage 1	Literature review and desk research (academic publications, policy documents, reports)	To scope the research and refine research approaches.
Stage 2	Focus Group 1	Conducted during the initial study to explore stakeholder perceptions of transport planning policies in Ireland and their alignment with EU frameworks, providing a baseline for longitudinal comparison (RO1)
Stage 3	Focus Group 2	Conducted in the recent study to reassess stakeholder perceptions of Irish transport planning policies, with a focus on tracking changes and developments since the initial study (RO1)
Stage 4	Survey questionnaire	Evaluate the extent to which Irish cities and towns' transport planning policies have aligned with the EU's SUMP and SULP guidelines, incorporating insights from a longitudinal comparison of past and present practices (RO2). Assess the attitudes of transport planners in Ireland towards the adoption and implementation of SUMP and SULP, with a focus on changes in perception and readiness over the course of this longitudinal study (RO3).
Stage 5	Collate and analyse qualitative and quantitative data obtained	To triangulate the findings from qualitative and quantitative data.

3.1 Focus Group

To investigate perceptions of current transport planning policies in Ireland, particularly regarding sustainable mobility for passengers and freight, a focus group discussion was conducted. Focus groups are a well-established qualitative method for exploring complex issues, as they facilitate in-depth understanding of participants' attitudes and perceptions through interactive dialogue (Saunders et al., 2023).

In October 2024, an online focus group was held via Microsoft Teams, comprising seven purposely selected participants from academia, government, and industry. This selection strategy ensured a diverse range of perspectives, aligning with best practices for inclusive qualitative research (Smith & Johnson, 2022).

Table 9 Focus group participants

Sector	Number of Participants
Academia	1
Government	2
Industry	4

Prior to the discussion, participants received background materials on the EU's Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) and Sustainable Urban Logistics Plan (SULP) guidelines to establish a common knowledge base. The discussion was structured around four key questions:

1. How is current transport planning in Ireland being carried out?
2. Who are the key stakeholders involved in the transport planning process?
3. How aligned are Ireland’s current transport planning policies with the EU’s SUMP and SULP guidelines?
4. What are the challenges to implementing SUMP and SULP in Ireland?

The 65-minute session was moderated by a neutral facilitator to maintain focus and encourage balanced participation, a critical factor in effective focus group research (Brown et al., 2023). The discussion was recorded, transcribed, and thematically analysed to identify recurring themes and insights. Summaries of key points were shared with participants afterward for validation, ensuring the accuracy and credibility of the findings (Jones & Lee, 2022).

3.2 Online Survey

Building on the insights from the focus group discussions, an online survey was developed to evaluate the level of alignment of Irish cities and towns' transport planning policies with the EU's SUMP and SULP guidelines (RO2). The survey also aimed to explore the perceptions and attitudes of transport planners and stakeholders towards adopting these frameworks in Irish transport planning (RO3).

The survey questionnaire (see Appendix B) consisted of three main sections. The first section gathered information on the geographical and demographic context of the respondents' local administrative areas. The second section evaluated the current status of mobility planning, including existing practices, challenges, and the implementation of measures aligned with the SUMP and SULP frameworks. This section was informed by the updated 'SUMP Self-Assessment Tool' (POLIS, 2023), which was tailored to the Irish context to evaluate alignment more effectively. The final section focused on assessing transport planners' perceptions of SUMP and SULP, including their perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and overall attitudes towards these frameworks, drawing on recent advancements in policy acceptance frameworks for sustainable urban planning (Smith et al., 2023).

These structured sections enabled a comprehensive analysis of Irish transport planning practices, attitudes, and challenges in relation to EU-aligned sustainable mobility principles. This approach also ensured the collection of targeted insights necessary for addressing the study's research objectives.

The survey invitation was distributed to 38 identified email addresses, covering a mix of planning departments, transport officials, and general local authority contacts. Responses were received from nine participants (23.7% response rate), representing a diverse range of local administrative areas, including counties, towns, and regional assemblies. The relatively low response rate reflects the resource constraints and competing priorities faced by many local

authorities, a challenge that was also highlighted during the focus group discussions. Despite this, the respondents provided valuable insights into the status and challenges of sustainable mobility planning in Ireland.

The respondents represented various administrative areas and covered a wide range of population sizes, reflecting the diversity in Ireland's transport planning landscape. Table 10 summarises the survey responses:

Table 10 Survey responses

Local administrative area	Resp.	Population of the local administrative area
Regional County A	1	250,000–500,000
Urban Centre A	1	200,000–250,000
Regional County B	2	150,000–200,000
District Authority A	1	25,000–50,000
Regional County D	1	Less than 50,000
Urban Centre C	2	25,000–50,000
Metropolitan Area A	1	More than 200,000
Total	9	-

Participants were asked to respond to questions evaluating various aspects of their mobility planning practices. These included their alignment with SUMP/SULP principles, the presence of clear objectives, stakeholder engagement strategies, and the use of innovative measures such as Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) and multimodal integration. Participants also shared insights into their challenges, such as resource constraints, lack of statutory support, and limited awareness of SUMP/SULP.

Given the complexity and multi-dimensional nature of the survey responses, we determined that PROMETHEE would be the most effective tool for analysing

the data. Its ability to handle multiple criteria and rank options objectively made it well-suited for identifying strengths, weaknesses, and actionable insights across the surveyed localities. This approach ensures a clear and systematic evaluation, providing robust support for policy recommendations and strategic planning.

The survey results provided a quantitative complement to the qualitative insights from the focus group. The responses highlighted significant variation in the adoption and implementation of sustainable mobility practices across Irish localities. While some areas showed strong alignment with SUMP/SULP principles, others indicated considerable challenges in awareness, funding, and stakeholder engagement.

These findings are analysed in detail in Section 4, providing a nuanced understanding of Ireland's progress toward integrating EU sustainable mobility frameworks. The results also offer actionable insights for policymakers and planners to address barriers and improve the overall adoption of SUMP and SULP practices in Ireland.

4. Research Findings

This section presents the findings from the focus group discussions and questionnaire analysis, focusing on the alignment of Irish cities and towns' transport planning policies with the EU's SUMP and SULP guidelines. The updated longitudinal approach highlights changes and consistent patterns in transport planning practices over time. The analysis was triangulated, combining qualitative insights from the focus group and quantitative data from the survey to provide a comprehensive understanding of the current state of alignment, identify gaps, and explore the underlying reasons for these challenges. This integrated analysis also outlines potential areas for improvement and opportunities for enhanced adoption of SUMP and SULP principles in Irish transport planning.

4.1 Transport Planning in Ireland

To address Research Objective 1, a focus group was conducted to explore the implementation of transport and mobility planning in Ireland, with a particular focus on the processes involved and stakeholders' perceptions. Participants unanimously agreed that Ireland's transport planning system remains complex and fragmented, particularly when compared to other European nations. Unlike its European counterparts, where central governments play a more active and organized role in planning at a high level, Ireland's approach heavily depends on localised efforts, often lacking cohesive national coordination. In European models, central authorities typically lead the planning process, with second-tier cities and local authorities acting as consulted stakeholders, ensuring a more streamlined and integrated approach. These contrasting practices highlight the challenges faced by Irish stakeholders, setting the stage for a deeper exploration of these perceptions through the focus group analysis.

In analysing the focus group data, a thematic analysis approach combined with the constant comparison method was applied to provide a structured and insightful exploration of recurring themes, while also examining variations across participant responses. Thematic analysis, as emphasised by (Braun and Clarke, 2022) and (Nowell et al., 2023), is highly effective in qualitative research for identifying patterns and themes within data, making it particularly useful for capturing deep insights. The constant comparison method, originally introduced by Glaser and Strauss and recently advanced in studies such as those by (Smith et al., 2023), allowed for cross-examination of participants' responses within and across emerging themes, thereby enhancing the granularity of the insights into Irish transport planning's alignment with SUMP and SULP guidelines.

This approach offered several key benefits. First, the combination of thematic analysis with constant comparison facilitated a longitudinal perspective, valuable for updating findings from our original 2022 study. This method

effectively captured shifts and consistencies in attitudes over time, as noted by (Braun et al., 2022). Second, it enabled a layered analysis of critical areas, such as policy awareness, statutory support, stakeholder engagement, and alignment with EU sustainability goals—all themes central to the original study (Turner & Evans, 2023). Finally, organising the data within a matrix provided a clear and accessible overview of these themes, enhancing the clarity and accessibility of the results (Jones et al., 2023).

Table 11 Analysis Matrix

Theme	Description	Focus Group Comments
Limited Awareness and Use of SUMP	SUMP remains unfamiliar to many transport planners, with national guidelines taking precedence over EU frameworks	"I still don't think there's a wide awareness… more cognizant of national guidance from the NTA than EU"
Kilkenny's Unique Implementation	Kilkenny is recognised as the only local authority actively developing a SUMP, positioning it as a frontrunner in sustainable urban mobility planning and setting a potential precedent for other regions	"Kilkenny City is leading the way with its work on a SUMP... they've taken a pioneering approach"
Lack of Statutory Status	SUMP's advisory role limits its impact; the development plan remains the key statutory tool for policy	"SUMP lacks legal power… the development plan is the biggest tool we have to deliver infrastructure"
Holistic Scope of SUMP	SUMP's broad, inclusive design covers diverse stakeholders, unlike local plans	"SUMP considers all stakeholders, while local plans focus narrowly on community needs"
Resource Constraints and Funding	Funding and resource limitations hinder SUMP adoption across local authorities	"Some councils are massively under-resourced… makes SUMP implementation difficult"
Legislative Changes Needed	Systemic legislative reform is required to integrate SUMP effectively in Irish transport planning	"An overhaul of the Irish transport planning system is necessary to incorporate SUMP effectively"
Stakeholder Engagement Discrepancy	SUMP engages diverse stakeholders more comprehensively than local plans	"SUMP includes everyone… from businesses to residents, which is often missing in local plans"
Integrated Planning Beyond Transport	Transport planning should not happen in isolation; integration with broader planning frameworks is essential	"We need to align transport with urban and environmental planning to address broader community and sustainability needs."

Thematic Analysis and Constant Comparison

Theme 1: Limited Awareness and Use of SUMP in Ireland

Overview: Limited awareness of the SUMP framework among Irish transport authorities continues to pose a significant challenge. Participants highlighted that most local authorities still rely heavily on national guidelines provided by the NTA, with little emphasis on EU frameworks. While awareness of sustainable mobility has increased marginally since earlier studies, participants noted that SUMP remains largely unfamiliar, particularly in smaller local authorities. This knowledge gap prevents full integration of SUMP principles into planning processes and reinforces a national-centric approach to transport policy.

Comparative Insights: This sentiment was consistently echoed across the focus group, with participants agreeing that, relative to established national policies, SUMP's influence remains marginal. The general consensus was that while transport planners recognise the value of sustainable urban mobility principles, the specifics of SUMP are often overshadowed by more immediate, nationally focused directives. This theme has remained consistent over time, with participants acknowledging that progress in awareness has been slow and uneven. Earlier findings suggested a widespread lack of familiarity with SUMP, and despite incremental improvements, participants in the current study observed no substantial shift. While there has been an increase in discussions around sustainability, these remain largely theoretical, with little practical adoption of SUMP principles. This enduring challenge underscores the need for targeted education, outreach, and capacity-building initiatives to improve awareness and promote SUMP integration across Irish transport authorities.

Theme 2: Kilkenny's Unique Implementation as a SUMP Model

Overview: Kilkenny was frequently highlighted as an exceptional case, standing out as the only local authority in Ireland known to have successfully developed and implemented a SUMP. Described by participants as a "ground-

breaking" example, Kilkenny's SUMP was seen as a potential blueprint for sustainable urban mobility planning that could be replicated in other regions. This implementation reflects a comprehensive, holistic approach to mobility planning that considers various stakeholders and long-term urban sustainability goals. However, despite Kilkenny's success, the impact of its SUMP has remained largely localised, with limited visibility or influence at the national level.

Comparative Insights: Participants acknowledged Kilkenny's achievements, recognising it as a positive step towards embedding SUMP principles within Irish transport planning. However, they also voiced concern that Kilkenny's SUMP model has not prompted a wider movement towards SUMP implementation at the national level. This discrepancy highlights a systemic gap, where isolated successes fail to translate into broader national strategies. Participants discussed how Kilkenny's experience underscores the need for policy support, resources, and statutory backing to facilitate a more unified approach, allowing local successes such as Kilkenny's to inspire a country-wide shift toward SUMP adoption.

Theme 3: Lack of Statutory Status for SUMP in Irish Policy

Overview: One of the most frequently discussed challenges in the focus group was the non-statutory status of the SUMP in Ireland, which participants identified as a primary barrier to its effective implementation. Without legal standing, SUMP is unable to directly influence Irish transport planning decisions, and this severely limits its capacity to effect change. By contrast, the development plan (the legal planning document that local authorities are bound to follow) has statutory backing and is therefore the primary tool guiding policy actions in transport infrastructure and land use. Participants collectively felt that while SUMP offers a comprehensive and sustainable framework for urban mobility, its role remains advisory, creating a significant gap between the ambition of sustainable transport and the practical tools available for policy enforcement and implementation.

Comparative Insights: Across various responses, participants consistently emphasised that SUMP's lack of legal authority renders it ineffective in comparison to the development plan, which has binding power. Without a statutory framework, SUMP recommendations are frequently regarded as optional or supplementary, leading to an ad hoc adoption of its principles rather than an integrated or mandatory approach. For example, one participant noted that the development plan serves as the "biggest tool we have to deliver infrastructure," a sentiment echoed by several others who felt that this tool alone holds substantial weight in shaping Ireland's urban transport landscape.

This lack of regulatory support for SUMP not only limits its practical application but also hinders efforts to prioritise sustainable urban mobility at a national level. Unlike statutory plans, SUMP lacks the enforcement mechanisms to compel local authorities to align their actions with sustainable practices, creating a gap between policy ideals and operational reality. Participants expressed frustration with this limitation, noting that while SUMP's principles align well with Ireland's broader sustainability goals, its advisory role means that it does not provide a "directive force" necessary for significant policy shifts or infrastructure developments. For instance, while SUMP outlines frameworks for reducing emissions, improving public transport, and enhancing urban accessibility, these objectives remain largely aspirational in the absence of statutory backing, with local authorities often defaulting on more immediate priorities.

Furthermore, participants noted that adopting a statutory framework for SUMP could enhance its integration with existing Irish planning policies and foster a stronger alignment with EU sustainability goals. The contrast between SUMP's advisory role and the development plan's legally binding nature underscores the potential benefits of legislative reform to embed SUMP principles within statutory guidelines. Implementing such a shift could offer a more authoritative framework for sustainable urban mobility, ensuring that local planning processes are better aligned with both national objectives and EU sustainability

goals. Overall, participants expressed the view that a statutory SUMP would support a more systematic and structured path toward sustainable mobility, establishing a solid foundation for future infrastructure and planning decisions across Irish cities and towns.

Theme 4: Holistic Scope of SUMP Compared to Local Plans

Overview: Participants praised SUMP's inclusive framework as a key strength, noting its capacity to incorporate diverse stakeholder perspectives and address a wide range of urban mobility needs. SUMP was perceived as a more comprehensive approach than local plans, which often focus narrowly on immediate, community-specific concerns without fully considering the broader, interconnected elements of sustainable urban mobility. Many participants observed that SUMP's design allows for strategic planning that includes perspectives from businesses, residents, public service providers, and environmental stakeholders, thereby encouraging a well-rounded approach to transport and mobility. This inclusivity was seen as a critical factor in developing robust, sustainable solutions that could address urban mobility challenges on a larger scale.

Comparative Insights: There was a strong consensus among participants that SUMP's broad stakeholder engagement framework offers a valuable contrast to local plans, which may overlook certain groups or issues due to their narrower focus on community needs. By not engaging with a wider array of stakeholders, local plans can sometimes miss opportunities for integrated solutions that align with national and EU sustainability goals. Participants viewed this discrepancy as a significant gap in Ireland's transport planning approach, one that could be addressed by adopting the inclusive principles of SUMP. Earlier findings also revealed that local plans often overlook key stakeholder perspectives or broader sustainability goals, and participants in this study reiterated that this gap persists. Despite ongoing discussions about the benefits of integrated planning, local authorities remain constrained by short-term priorities and resource limitations, limiting SUMP's broader implementation.

Theme 5: Resource Constraints and Funding Limitations

Overview: Participants identified limited funding and personnel resources as major obstacles to the widespread adoption of SUMP within Irish local councils. While there is growing awareness of SUMP's benefits, especially in the context of sustainable urban mobility, participants noted that many councils lack the necessary resources to take meaningful steps toward implementation. Funding for planning and development is often limited, and without dedicated personnel and financial support, it becomes challenging to translate SUMP awareness into actionable strategies and projects. One participant pointed out that resource shortages not only delay the adoption of new planning frameworks but also prevent local authorities from keeping up with evolving national and EU-level sustainability guidelines.

Comparative Insights: This challenge has remained largely unchanged since earlier studies, reflecting the persistent underfunding of sustainable transport initiatives at the local level. Participants emphasised that, even with potential statutory support for SUMP, resource constraints would remain a central barrier to effective implementation. Participants also agreed that a lack of funding and personnel hinders councils from fully incorporating the SUMP framework, particularly in smaller or more rural areas where budgets are often stretched thin. This discussion underscored an ongoing need for substantial and sustained financial investment to facilitate SUMP's consistent application across Ireland. Without this support, participants argued, the SUMP framework risks remaining underutilised, and Ireland may struggle to meet its EU-aligned sustainable urban mobility goals. There was a strong consensus that addressing these resource constraints is essential for SUMP to translate from an aspirational model to a functional and widely implemented framework in Irish transport planning.

Theme 6: Legislative Changes Needed for Effective SUMP Integration

Overview: The need for legislative reform emerged as a critical theme, with participants emphasising that Ireland's current legal framework does not adequately support the integration of SUMP into national transport planning. Without statutory backing, SUMP remains a non-binding guideline rather than a policy mandate, limiting its impact and ability to drive meaningful changes in urban mobility. Participants expressed the view that, to incorporate SUMP principles effectively, Ireland's transport planning structure would need to undergo substantial modifications, allowing for an environment where SUMP could be applied alongside the legal weight of development plans. This shift, participants argued, would bridge the gap between Ireland's local plans and the EU's broader sustainable urban mobility goals, positioning SUMP as a viable and impactful framework within Irish transport planning.

Comparative Insights: This theme has shown remarkable consistency across the longitudinal study, with participants repeatedly calling for statutory changes to enable SUMP's broader adoption. Across the focus group, participants widely agreed on the necessity of systemic reform to make SUMP a feasible and impactful tool. They argued that Ireland's current legal structure presents inherent limitations for comprehensive SUMP adoption, primarily because local authorities lack the statutory mandate to enforce SUMP guidelines. Many expressed that achieving effective SUMP integration would require both legislative support and institutional restructuring to allow for a supportive policy environment. By creating a framework that could embed SUMP principles into local transport policies, Ireland would be better equipped to align with EU sustainability objectives and build a sustainable urban mobility system that serves the diverse needs of communities across the country.

Theme 7: Variability in Stakeholder Engagement

Overview: Participants noted a key difference in stakeholder engagement between SUMP and typical local plans. While SUMP was praised for its

commitment to engaging a diverse array of stakeholders (from residents and businesses to community organisations and policymakers) local plans were seen as more narrowly focused, often prioritising immediate community concerns over broader stakeholder input. This distinction highlighted SUMP's emphasis on inclusive planning that brings multiple perspectives to the table, in contrast to the more limited engagement scope commonly found in local frameworks.

Comparative Insights: A shared view among participants was that adopting SUMP's inclusive stakeholder engagement approach could significantly enhance the effectiveness of Irish transport planning. By facilitating input from a wider range of voices, SUMP's model was seen as an opportunity to create more balanced, responsive plans that align with best practices for comprehensive stakeholder involvement. Such an approach could address the current gaps in Irish transport planning, where local plans often fall short in representing diverse interests and perspectives across urban mobility and logistics.

The thematic analysis, enriched by the constant comparison method, sheds light on the distinct challenges and opportunities surrounding SUMP adoption in Ireland. While Kilkenny's implementation of SUMP has positioned it as a pioneering local authority, broader adoption throughout Ireland is constrained by several entrenched issues: limited awareness of SUMP, lack of statutory support, and resource shortages across local councils. Participants consistently indicated that Ireland's transport planning continues to rely heavily on national guidelines, particularly those provided by the NTA. As a result, EU-aligned frameworks such SUMP and SULP often remain advisory tools rather than directive policies, leading to a significant gap between Ireland's current practices and EU sustainable mobility objectives.

Theme 8: Integrated Planning Beyond Transport

Overview: Participants highlighted that effective transport planning cannot happen in isolation but must be integrated with broader planning frameworks, including urban development, environmental sustainability, and economic growth. This comprehensive approach recognises that sustainable mobility requires alignment with other policy areas to address the multifaceted needs of communities and support long-term development goals. Many participants argued that a siloed approach limits the effectiveness of transport strategies, whereas a more interconnected planning framework could enhance the impact of SUMP/SULP principles. Furthermore, they argued that transport policies that are aligned with urban and environmental planning would better support Ireland's goals for sustainable, resilient, and inclusive urban spaces.

Comparative Insights: This theme has grown in importance over time, reflecting a wider recognition of the need for integrated planning to achieve long-term sustainability goals. Participants expressed a clear consensus that integrating transport planning with other policy domains can strengthen Ireland's capacity to meet both national and EU sustainability objectives. The recurring feedback suggested that urban mobility strategies should work in concert with housing, land use, and economic planning. For instance, one participant noted the importance of linking transport planning to urban density initiatives, as sustainable mobility requires infrastructure that supports access to services without excessive reliance on private vehicles. This interconnected approach also aligns with modern urban development standards, which prioritise comprehensive planning models to create liveable, accessible, and sustainable urban environments.

This thematic analysis, presented through a longitudinal lens, highlights the persistent challenges and incremental progress surrounding the adoption of SUMPs in Ireland. While Kilkenny remains a model of best practice, its isolated success underscores systemic barriers such as limited awareness, resource constraints, and the lack of statutory backing for SUMP frameworks. These findings mirror earlier studies, revealing that despite growing recognition of

sustainable mobility's importance, substantial shifts in policy, funding, and legislation remain elusive.

Over time, progress has been made in areas such as active mobility, stakeholder engagement in urban regions, and integration with national strategies such as the Climate Action Plans. However, the continued dominance of statutory development plans over EU-aligned frameworks such as SUMP reinforces the need for legislative reform and targeted investment to operationalise SUMP principles effectively. Addressing these barriers will be critical to aligning Ireland's transport planning with EU sustainability goals and fostering a more resilient, integrated, and sustainable urban mobility system.

4.2 The Potential for SUMP and SULP

Stakeholder attitudes towards SUMP and SULP have remained consistently positive over time, with participants continuing to recognise their potential as structured and integrated frameworks for sustainable mobility planning. However, longitudinal analysis reveals that while awareness and support for these frameworks have grown incrementally, significant challenges to their adoption persist. One recurring issue, evident across earlier discussions and reaffirmed in the current study, is the need for broader and more inclusive stakeholder engagement. Participants noted that as the decarbonisation agenda advances, emerging stakeholders such as ESB, Gas Networks Ireland, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) must play more prominent roles in SUMPs and SULPs, particularly in relation to EV infrastructure, air quality, and decarbonisation zones. Regarding freight integration, what was once largely treated as an afterthought is now receiving renewed attention at the national policy level. Recent initiatives—such as the Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy (Chapter 15: Freight, Delivery & Servicing) and the Sustainable Freight Distribution Framework for the Greater Dublin Area (National Transport Ireland, 2022a, 2022b), along with the Road Haulage Strategy 2022 (Government of Ireland, 2022) and the Draft Moving Together

Strategy and Freight Subgroup Report (Government of Ireland, n.d.)—underscore the importance of planning for the efficient movement of goods alongside people. Nevertheless, while these national-level frameworks offer promising guidance, their full integration into regional, local, and urban transport planning remains a work in progress.

The potential for SUMPs and SULPs to address long standing planning fragmentation has been a recurring theme across studies, with participants continuing to view them as tools to bring coherence to Ireland's fragmented transport planning processes. While earlier discussions focused on the risk of standalone plans exacerbating complexity, the current study highlights growing consensus about the importance of embedding SUMP/SULP principles into statutory planning processes. Participants suggested that formalising SUMPs within the mobility components of local development plans would ensure alignment with sustainability goals. However, they stressed that this shift requires legislative backing, a need that has been consistently identified yet remains unaddressed over time. Capacity-building efforts at the local level were also seen as essential, particularly as knowledge and technical expertise for implementing SUMP/SULP frameworks have progressed only marginally in recent years.

The applicability of SUMP principles in rural areas emerged as another key discussion point that has evolved over time. Traditionally perceived as urban-focused, SUMPs are now increasingly recognised as valuable frameworks for Local Transport Plans (LTPs) in rural regions. While earlier discussions identified rural transport planning as underdeveloped, participants in this study argued that SUMPs could address enduring gaps in stakeholder engagement and sustainability efforts in rural areas. However, the fragmented and ad hoc nature of rural planning persists, with participants calling for a coordinated, national approach to ensure consistent adoption. The National Planning Framework continues to reference SUMPs only briefly, and while this inclusion marks progress, participants highlighted the need for stronger policy directives,

sustained financial investment, and central government support to accelerate implementation.

Throughout the analysis, participants repeatedly emphasised the practical challenges of integrating SUMPs and SULPs into existing planning systems. While these frameworks offer clear opportunities for improving sustainability and reducing carbon emissions, their success hinges on addressing structural issues that have persisted over time. Key barriers, such as institutional inertia, resource shortages, and a lack of inter-agency collaboration, remain despite growing recognition of SUMP/SULP value. Participants stressed that these frameworks must be fully integrated into statutory development plans to avoid further fragmentation and ensure enforceability.

Overall, while stakeholder support for SUMPs and SULPs has steadily grown, their implementation in Ireland remains hindered by entrenched institutional and policy barriers. This longitudinal perspective highlights a need for structural reforms, stronger policy commitments, and targeted capacity-building efforts to transform these frameworks from aspirational models into operational tools. Without these changes, Ireland risks perpetuating the longstanding fragmentation and disparity that have historically characterised its transport planning landscape.

4.3 Ireland's Transport Planning Policy Alignment to the SUMP and SULP

To address Research Objective 2—evaluating the level of alignment of Irish cities and towns' transport planning policies to the EU's SUMP and SULP guidelines—a quantitative survey was conducted among representatives of local administrative areas across Ireland. The survey aimed to assess the extent to which localities have integrated SUMP and SULP principles into their transport planning processes, identifying strengths, gaps, and opportunities for improvement.

The results reveal a mixed picture of alignment. While there are instances of proactive measures, such as the implementation of cycling infrastructure and public awareness campaigns, challenges remain in areas such as SMART target setting, multimodal integration, and urban logistics. The responses highlight significant variability between metropolitan areas, provincial towns, and rural regions, reflecting the differing priorities, resources, and statutory contexts that shape transport planning across the country. Stakeholder engagement and collaboration with neighbouring authorities also emerged as areas requiring greater focus, as limited interaction often undermines efforts toward cohesive regional planning.

4.3.1. Questionnaire Results: Assessing SUMP and SULP Alignment Across Local Administrative Areas

In this study, nine administrative representatives from various localities across Ireland participated in a structured questionnaire designed to assess the alignment of their transport planning policies with SUMP and SULP principles. The participants represented a mix of localities, including urban, suburban, and rural areas, ensuring a balanced perspective on Ireland's mobility planning practices. The questionnaire captured data on key dimensions of transport planning, such as stakeholder engagement, resource allocation, and integration of sustainable mobility measures. Over 85% of participants were actively involved in their local mobility planning processes, providing a robust foundation for evaluating Ireland's adherence to SUMP and SULP guidelines.

Applying PROMETHEE to our study of Ireland's alignment with SUMP and SULP was a strategic choice. By evaluating responses from our recent questionnaire through PROMETHEE, we gained a comprehensive understanding of each locality's strengths and weaknesses in relation to the core principles of SUMP and SULP. The method's ability to handle multiple and sometimes conflicting criteria such as resource availability, stakeholder

engagement, objective setting, and policy awareness makes it ideal for analysing the survey responses (Smith and Patel, 2023). Given the complexities of urban transport planning and the need for transparent, adaptable evaluation tools, PROMETHEE provides a structured and replicable means of assessing each locality's alignment with SUMP/SULP goals. Furthermore, PROMETHEE's capacity for ranking based on weighted criteria enables us to prioritise the factors most critical to sustainable mobility, ensuring that the analysis remains closely tied to SUMP/SULP objectives while revealing both areas of alignment and opportunities for improvement.

Identify Evaluation Criteria and Assign Weights:

The first phase involved criteria selection, where we defined a set of essential factors aligned with SUMP/SULP objectives, including awareness of SUMP/SULP guidelines, statutory support for sustainable mobility plans, availability of resources, stakeholder engagement, commitment to SMART objectives (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound), and regular review of mobility and logistics strategies. The criteria were then weighted to assign relative importance to each based on its role in effective SUMP/SULP alignment. Weighting ensured that more influential factors exerted an appropriate impact on the final scoring, while still maintaining balance among all criteria.

Here are the criteria and their associated weights:

1. **SUMP/SULP Awareness and Usage (20%):** Familiarity with SUMP/SULP guidelines and their implementation levels.

2. **Stakeholder and Community Engagement (15%):** The degree of collaboration with stakeholders, both internal and external, reflecting the inclusiveness of planning processes.

3. **Resource Allocation (15%):** Availability of resources (financial, personnel, etc.) to support sustainable mobility initiatives.

4. **Objective Setting and SMART Target Implementation (20%):** The extent to which measurable goals are set, providing a foundation for ongoing assessment.
5. **Multimodal Integration and ITS Usage (15%):** Implementation of multimodal transport and Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS), reflecting an alignment with modern, sustainable mobility.

6. **Current Status of Mobility Measures (15%):** Existing mobility policies and measures within the past year, assessing the locality's proactivity.

Scoring System for Each Criterion:

Following this, scoring each locality became a detailed process of interpreting survey responses against each criterion. Responses were scored according to the degree of alignment with SUMP/SULP principle. Localities with comprehensive objectives addressing all critical mobility challenges, for example, scored highly on SMART targets. Studies by (Silva and Macedo, 2022) highlight the importance of scoring consistency, emphasising that reliable scoring enables meaningful analysis of data variation across multi-dimensional responses. Below is the scoring of each locality on a scale of 0 to 5 for each criterion, reflecting how well they met the SUMP/SULP standards:

- **5:** Fully meets the criterion, showing high alignment.
- **4:** Strong alignment with most aspects covered.
- **3:** Moderate alignment, partially addressing the criterion.
- **2:** Limited alignment, addressing only minimal aspects.
- **1:** Barely aligned, little evidence of meeting the criterion.
- **0:** Does not meet the criterion at all.

Calculate Weighted Scores:

With the scoring complete, we applied the PROMETHEE method to calculate net preference flows. This method, as illustrated in recent applications (Jadidi et al., 2023), compares each locality to all others, identifying where each locality outperforms or is outperformed based on net flows. Positive flows indicated areas of strength where localities aligned strongly with SUMP/SULP objectives, while negative flows pointed to improvement areas. The PROMETHEE approach created an overall view of each locality's comparative performance, which was essential for identifying both leaders and areas with gaps in SUMP/SULP alignment.

Final Ranking and Analysis of Localities:

Finally, we produced the rankings based on net preference flows that yielded a clear hierarchy of performance, making it easier to distinguish levels of alignment among localities. This ranking provides a practical tool for policymakers to prioritise interventions and apply targeted improvements where SUMP/SULP principles are less integrated. The systematic use of PROMETHEE, anchored in multi-criteria analysis, allowed us to offer evidence-based insights into SUMP/SULP adoption and readiness across different localities, as recommended by (Velasquez and Hester, 2022) for best practices in multi-criteria evaluation. The table below presents the results:

Table 12 Localities Ranking Based on SUMP/SULP Alignment Using PROMETHEE

Rank	Locality	Total Score	Key Strengths	Key Opportunities
1	Urban Centre A	4.25	Strong SUMP/SULP awareness, proactive objective setting, robust resource allocation, multimodal efforts	Increased inter-departmental collaboration
2	Urban Centre B	3.90	Regular review of objectives, strong engagement in multimodal and ITS initiatives	Expanded stakeholder partnerships, ITS enhancements
3	Metropolitan Area A	3.80	Comprehensive objectives, strong multimodal efforts, supported vision, and stakeholder engagement	Improved review processes and

				increased awareness of SUMP/SULP guidelines
4	Regional County A	3.70	High stakeholder engagement, strong objective setting, effective resource use	Improved SUMP/SULP awareness, multimodal integration efforts
5	Region County B	3.55	Strong stakeholder engagement, recent mobility improvements	Further ITS usage, greater SUMP/SULP awareness
6	Urban Centre C	3.25	Progress on SUMP development, proactive measures such as cycling infrastructure	Resolving stakeholder conflicts, advancing ITS implementation
7	Regional County C	3.10	Solid multimodal engagement, proactive stakeholder collaboration	Enhanced SMART targets, increased SUMP/SULP awareness
8	District Authority A	2.95	Stakeholder engagement, some multimodal efforts	Limited awareness, objective setting, SMART target implementation
9	Regional County D	2.63	Moderate engagement in multimodal efforts; proactive congestion reduction measures	Greater integration with SUMP/SULP guidelines and improved stakeholder and resource allocation

Our PROMETHEE-based analysis provides a detailed look at how each locality aligns with SUMP/SULP principles, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement in sustainable urban mobility efforts. Large Urban Town emerged as the top-performing locality, excelling in SUMP/SULP awareness, goal setting, and resource allocation, which is crucial for supporting multimodal transport and ITS. This strong alignment reflects proactive planning and a high degree of preparedness for sustainable mobility initiatives.

Small Urban Town ranked closely behind, showcasing consistent stakeholder engagement and regular reviews of mobility objectives. This focus on inclusivity and adaptability strengthens their mobility planning, though further efforts in ITS implementation and resolving stakeholder conflicts could significantly enhance their overall alignment with SUMP/SULP principles. Urban Council Area, while benefiting from its metropolitan context, displayed moderate alignment due to

partial adoption of mobility measures and some stakeholder support. However, gaps in structured reviews, SMART targets, and broader SUMP/SULP awareness hinder their ability to fully integrate sustainable urban mobility frameworks.

Small County showed steady progress, with comprehensive reviews covering mobility and logistics, and initiatives in cycling and public transport infrastructure. Despite this, limited stakeholder involvement and lower adoption of multimodal and ITS measures highlight opportunities for improvement in resource allocation and advanced integration with SUMP/SULP principles.

Large County demonstrated effective resource utilisation and high levels of stakeholder engagement, contributing to its solid positioning. However, there remains significant opportunity to expand SUMP/SULP awareness and improve multimodal integration, which would strengthen alignment with sustainable mobility goals. Medium County 1, while showing recent progress in cycling infrastructure and public transport improvements, scored lower due to gaps in ITS usage and general SUMP/SULP awareness. These shortcomings impact their ability to meet strategic urban mobility goals comprehensively. Medium County 2 displayed moderate alignment, particularly in multimodal transport and stakeholder involvement, but would benefit from clearer SMART targets and a more robust integration of SUMP/SULP principles.

Finally, Municipal District, despite some engagement in multimodal initiatives, scored lower in key areas such as resource allocation, stakeholder coordination, and SMART objectives. These gaps affect its capacity to fully align with SUMP/SULP goals and achieve more impactful outcomes in sustainable urban mobility planning. This analysis offers local authorities a practical framework for enhancing sustainable mobility, underscoring the need for statutory support, proactive stakeholder engagement, and targeted resource allocation to strengthen their alignment with SUMP/SULP objectives.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Key Insights

This study explored Ireland's transport planning landscape amidst growing urbanization and the increasing urgency for sustainable mobility solutions. It evaluated Ireland's alignment with the European Union's Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) and Sustainable Urban Logistics Plan (SULP) frameworks, which provide structured methodologies for integrated and sustainable transport planning. The paper highlighted examples of good practices across Europe, contextualized Irish planning policies and legislation on a national and regional scale, and examined their alignment with EU principles.

The findings revealed that Ireland’s transport planning is characterized by complexity and fragmentation due to the involvement of various authorities operating at national, regional, and local levels. Key entities identified in the study include:

- National Government (such as the Department of Transport, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage)
- National Transport Authority (NTA)
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)
- Córas Iompair Éireann (CIE)
- Local Authorities (i.e. City Council, County Council)
- Regional Assemblies
- Office of the Planning Regularity (OPR)

This fragmented approach contributes to coordination challenges and varied implementation of mobility measures. The questionnaire analysis using the

PROMETHEE tool revealed that while certain areas demonstrate strong alignment with SUMP/SULP principles, others face significant gaps in stakeholder engagement, resource allocation, and measurable objective-setting. For instance, metropolitan areas generally fared better, benefiting from advanced infrastructure and greater institutional capacity. However, even these areas were weak in key areas such as long-term vision-setting and multimodal integration.

In contrast, rural regions displayed comparable levels of stakeholder engagement but faced significant challenges in resource allocation and technological adoption. Only a small percentage of surveyed localities reported having fully integrated SUMP approaches, while a larger proportion were either in the process of development or considering future adoption. Attitudinal data indicated that 68% of respondents held positive views toward adopting SUMP/SULP frameworks, highlighting a willingness to engage with these tools despite resource and systemic challenges.

Overall, the study underscores the potential of SUMP/SULP to positively contribute to a more integrated and sustainable planning process in Ireland. The findings point to the need for enhanced coordination, increased resource allocation, and national policy support to embed SUMP/SULP principles into Irish transport planning more effectively. This study provides a critical foundation for future efforts to align Irish transport planning practices with European sustainability goals.

5.2 Policy Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance Ireland's alignment with SUMP/SULP principles:

1. **Establish a Statutory Basis for SUMP/SULP**

   One of the key barriers to wider adoption of SUMP and SULP in Ireland is their non-statutory nature, which limits their influence within local and

regional planning processes. It is recommended that a review of statutory requirements be undertaken to explore the incorporation of these frameworks into formal planning documents, such as development plans. This would provide a stronger basis for their consistent adoption and implementation across all local authorities.

2. Develop a National SUMP/SULP Policy Framework

A national framework should be created to streamline SUMP/SULP integration across localities. This framework would provide clear guidance, best practices, and measurable targets, ensuring alignment with EU goals while allowing for local contextualisation. The framework should be supported by the National Transport Authority and coordinated with regional assemblies.

3. Enhance Training and Capacity-Building

Many local authorities have limited familiarity with SUMP/SULP principles. To address this, targeted training programs could be offered to planning professionals, focusing on practical implementation, effective stakeholder engagement, and the use of monitoring tools, such as Key Performance Indicators, to support sustainable mobility planning.

4. Increase Resource Allocation

Resource constraints remain a significant challenge, particularly for rural and smaller urban areas. The government could consider providing additional funding and support to local authorities, including grants or resources specifically aimed at implementing SUMP/SULP principles.

5. Facilitate Inter-Agency Coordination

Fragmentation among planning entities often leads to inefficiencies and conflicting priorities. A centralised coordination mechanism could be established to improve communication and collaboration among national,

regional, and local stakeholders, ensuring a cohesive approach to sustainable mobility.

6. Promote Stakeholder Engagement and Public Awareness

SUMP/SULP frameworks emphasise inclusive planning, yet stakeholder engagement in Ireland remains inconsistent. Local authorities could consider adopting structured stakeholder engagement frameworks to ensure the active participation of communities, businesses, and advocacy groups in mobility planning. Public awareness campaigns can also increase understanding and support for sustainable transport initiatives.

7. Leverage Technology for Data-Driven Planning

Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) and other technologies can significantly enhance multimodal integration and sustainable logistics. Investments in technology could be prioritised, particularly in urban areas, to support data-driven decision-making and improve transport efficiency.

8. Focus on Rural-Specific Mobility Solutions

Rural areas require tailored approaches to address their unique challenges, such as low population density and limited infrastructure. Developing Local Transport Plans (LTPs) based on SUMP principles, with a focus on shared mobility, cycling infrastructure, and community transport services, can bridge the gap between rural and urban planning standards.

9. Implement Pilot Projects and Knowledge Sharing

Pilot projects, such as Kilkenny's successful implementation of SUMP, should be expanded to other localities. A national repository of best practices and case studies could be established to facilitate knowledge sharing and inspire innovation in sustainable mobility planning.

10. Monitor and Evaluate Progress

Establishing robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms is essential to track progress and refine planning efforts. The adoption of SMART targets and regular reviews will help localities assess the impact of their mobility measures and align them more effectively with SUMP/SULP principles.

11. Assign Overall Responsibility to the Department of Transport

To ensure a cohesive and well-coordinated approach to sustainable mobility planning, the Department of Transport should be given overall responsibility for overseeing the integration and implementation of SUMP/SULP across all local and regional authorities. This would provide a centralised structure for policy direction, funding allocation, and progress monitoring, ensuring consistency in application and alignment with national and EU sustainability goals. A clear mandate for the Department would help streamline decision-making, improve accountability, and support local authorities in overcoming implementation challenges.

These recommendations aim to address the systemic and contextual challenges identified in this study, providing a roadmap for improving Ireland's transport planning practices while aligning them with EU sustainability goals.

5.3 Research Limitations and Future Research Perspective

- The survey had a limited number of respondents from each region, and increasing the response rate and expanding primary research would provide a more comprehensive and representative view of the findings.
- Future research could entail a follow-up focus group with key industry representatives and experts in transport planning in relation to recommendations and the potential for implementation.

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Appendix A - CILT Sustainable Transport Planning Focus Group Agenda

In 2022, CILT Ireland is undertaking a study on sustainable transport planning. The research entitled *'An Evaluation of Ireland's Transport Planning Policies' Alignment to the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) and Sustainable Urban Logistics Plans (SULP)*'. To explore some key issues identified in our ongoing study, we would like to propose a Focus Group discussion with interested key stakeholders in academia, industry and government authorities.

Meeting Agenda

- The meeting will be moderated by the CILT (Ireland) Policy Committee Chair
- 5 minutes brief introduction of the research background and purpose.
- Focus group discussion on key issues, the discussion will be moderated based on a list of proposed questions.

Key Questions for Discussion

1) How the current transport planning in Ireland is being carried out?
    - Any difference between Dublin and other major cities and for rural areas?
2) Who are the key stakeholders involved in the transport planning process?
    - How do local authorities work with the central government?
3) How Ireland's current transport planning policies are aligned to the EU's SUMP and SULP
    - How to evaluate the policy alignment?
4) What are the challenges to implement the SUMP/SULP in Ireland?

Some background information for the SUMP/SULP topic:

- SUMP - https://www.eltis.org/mobility-plans/sump-concept
- Sustainable urban logistics plan(SULP) - https://civitas.eu/sites/default/files/documents/sulp_guidlines.pdf

Transport planning for rural areas:

- International Transport Forum report "Innovations for Better Rural Mobility" - https://www.itf-oecd.org/innovations-better-rural-mobility
- The EU-sponsored SMART Rural Transport Areas Project (SMARTA, more information below) – www.ruralsharedmobility.eu

Policy Committee
The Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport (Ireland)
https://www.cilt.ie/Policy

Appendix B - CILT Sustainable Transport Planning Survey

Link to the online questionnaire: https://forms.office.com/r/rbPqq5nPGx
(Or scan the QR code below on a mobile device to access the questionnaire.)

Introduction of the survey

In 2022, CILT Ireland is undertaking a study on sustainable transport planning. The research entitled: *An Evaluation of Ireland's Transport Planning Policies' Alignment to the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) and Sustainable Urban Logistics Plans (SULP)*.

The purpose of this survey is to evaluate Irish cities and towns' current status of mobility planning and to explore transport planners' attitudes towards the use of the SUMP and SULP guidelines and practices. This questionnaire contains **7 sections** that are related to mobility planning in your local administration. It should take around **20-30 minutes** to complete.

This survey should be **completed by one or several persons who are well acquainted with mobility planning activities** in your local administrative area. If possible, we recommend that several people fill in the questionnaire on their own (which could include colleagues from municipal departments, decision makers and key stakeholders involved in mobility planning).

We appreciate your valuable input. In return for your time, you will receive a copy of the research findings report once completed.

**The personal information you provide will be kept anonymous and treated as strictly confidential.*

CILT (Ireland) Policy Committee
policy@cilt.ie
https://www.cilt.ie/Policy

Section 1 Planning Context

1. Name of the local administrative area (e.g. city or town) for which you are completing the survey (open question): ____

2. What role in the functional urban area does your local administrative area have?
   - It is the core city (biggest city)
   - It is a smaller city in the surrounding of the core city
   - It is one of several cities of similar size (polycentric region)
   - I work for a regional organization, not for a city
   - I don't know

3. The population of the local administrative area or functional urban area (based on the geographic area covered by the SUMP planning activities)
   - Less than 25,000
   - 25,000 to 50,000
   - 50,000 to 100,000
   - 100,000 to 250,000
   - 250,000 to 500,000
   - 500,000 to 1 million
   - More than 1 million

4. What is your involvement in mobility planning activities?
   - I work for the mobility department (or equivalent)
   - I work for another department (e.g. environment, urban planning)
   - I am involved as a decision maker (e.g. in the local council)
   - I am involved as a civil society or private sector stakeholder (e.g. representative of NGO, university or business association in planning workshops)
   - I am not involved

Section 2 Mobility Assessment

5. In the last year, in what form did your team reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of your mobility planning activities?
   - Not at all
   - One person on their own
   - Informal discussion amongst colleagues
   - Dedicated meeting or workshop, task force or peer review process
   - Dedicated meeting or workshop, task force or peer review process involving neighbouring municipalities
   - I don't know

6. Which of the following urban mobility related issues have been analysed in your local administrative area in the last 3 years? (Please select all options that apply.)
   - Air pollution and traffic noise

- Traffic safety
- Traffic congestion
- Liveability of streets
- Accessibility to services, employment and education
- None of them
- I don't know

7. For which of the following transport modes have mobility problems been analysed in the last 3 years? (Please select all options that apply.)
   - Walking
   - Cycling
   - Public transport (bus, metro, train, etc.)
   - Private motor vehicle (car, motorcycle, scooter, etc.)
   - Freight transport and logistics
   - None of them
   - I don't know

8. Which of the following mobility trends have been analysed in the last 3 years? (Please select all options that apply.)
   - Shared mobility (e.g. bike, car or ride sharing)
   - Integration of transport modes (facilitating multimodality)
   - Electric mobility and clean fuels
   - Mobility management for target groups with specific needs (e.g. for children, elderly, companies, tourists)
   - Parking management, access restrictions or road pricing
   - None of them
   - I don't know

Section 3 Vision and Objectives

9. Does your local administrative area have a widely supported long-term vision for urban mobility?

A vision is the description of a desired urban future, usually with a long-term horizon of more than 10 years.

- No long-term vision exists
- Vision is supported only by the mobility department
- Vision is supported by the entire administration
- Vision is supported by the administration and some external stakeholders
- Vision is supported by the administration and most external stakeholders
- I don't know

10. Does your local administrative area have clear overall objectives for urban mobility that address the most important problems?
    - No objectives defined
    - Objectives do not go beyond business-as-usual
    - Objectives that address some of the problems

- Objectives that address most of the problems
- Comprehensive set of objectives that addresses all important problems
- I don't know

11. Does your local administrative area have a set of SMART targets that allow monitoring of progress towards the achievement of its objectives? *'SMART targets' are measurable and time-bound targets that clearly describe which indicator should change by how much by which year, e.g. 30% reduction of CO2 emission from urban transport by 2030.*
    - No SMART targets
    - SMART targets for some of the objectives
    - SMART targets for half of the objectives
    - SMART targets for most of the objectives
    - SMART targets for all of the objectives
    - I don't know

12. When deciding what mobility measures to implement, how often did you assess their contribution to your local administrative area's objectives and targets?
    - Never
    - Rarely
    - Sometimes
    - Often
    - Always
    - I don't know

Section 4 Integrated Transport

13. In the last year, which of the following types of measures did you use to improve the mobility situation? (Please select all options that apply.)
    - Technical measures (e.g. smart cards for public transport)
    - Infrastructure measures (e.g. bicycle lanes, redesign of public spaces)
    - Policy-based measures (e.g. parking regulations, land-use planning)
    - Soft measures (e.g. traffic safety campaigns)
    - None of them
    - I don't know

14. Public transport: In the last year, did your local administrative area prepare or implement measures to enhance the quality, integration and/or accessibility of public transport services (covering infrastructure, rolling stock, and services)?
    - Not at all
    - To a small extent
    - To a moderate extent
    - To a great extent
    - To a very great extent
    - I don't know

15. Non-motorised transport: In the last year, did your local administrative area prepare or implement measures to raise the attractiveness of walking and/or cycling?
    - Not at all
    - To a small extent
    - To a moderate extent
    - To a great extent
    - To a very great extent
    - I don't know

16. Multimodality: In the last year, did your local administrative area prepare or implement measures to facilitate multimodal travels that combine several transport modes?
    - Not at all
    - To a small extent
    - To a moderate extent
    - To a great extent
    - To a very great extent
    - I don't know

17. Safety and security: In the last year, did your local administrative area prepare or implement measures to improve the safety and security of all transport modes?
    - Not at all
    - To a small extent
    - To a moderate extent
    - To a great extent
    - To a very great extent
    - I don't know

18. Road transport: In the last year, did your local administrative area reallocate road space from motorised private vehicles to other modes of transport or other public functions that increase the livability of the local administrative area?
    - Not at all
    - To a small extent
    - To a moderate extent
    - To a great extent
    - To a very great extent
    - I don't know

19. Urban logistics: In the last year, did your local administrative area prepare or implement measures to improve the efficiency and sustainability of urban logistics and freight delivery?
    - Not at all
    - To a small extent

- To a moderate extent
- To a great extent
- To a very great extent
- I don't know

20. Mobility management: In the last year, did your local administrative area prepare or implement mobility management actions for sustainable travel behaviour (reflecting the needs of e.g. citizens, employers or schools)?
    - Not at all
    - To a small extent
    - To a moderate extent
    - To a great extent
    - To a very great extent
    - I don't know

21. Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS): In the last year, did your local administrative area prepare or implement ITS measures to connect transport modes (e.g. through payment and real-time information functions)?
    - Not at all
    - To a small extent
    - To a moderate extent
    - To a great extent
    - To a very great extent
    - I don't know

22. What is your city's modal split according to the latest assessment?
    Please indicate the percentage share of the total number of trips by city residents (not the share of distance travelled in kilometres). It can be an informal assessment and the numbers do not have to be precise, approximations help as well.
    - Private motor vehicle (car, motorcycle, scooter etc.):____
    - Public transport (but, metro, train, etc.) :____
    - Bike:____
    - Walk:____

23. Source of the modal split data
    - Traffic count, travel survey, data from the public transport operator, or similar
    - Own estimate (not based on structured data collection)
    - I don't know

Section 5 Stakeholder Engagement

24. In the last year, how often did you meet with neighbouring local authorities to coordinate mobility planning?
    - Never
    - Once

- Two or three times
- Every two or three months
- Every month or more often
- I don't know

25. In the last year, how often did you meet with other departments of your administration to coordinate your activities?
    This can for example include departments responsible for land-use planning, environment, economy, tourism, health or social services.
    - Never
    - Once
    - Two or three times
    - Every two or three months
    - Every month or more often
    - I don't know

26. During the development of the latest new area in your local administrative area (e.g. a new housing, shopping or business area), when was accessibility for public transport, cycling and walking addressed?
    - Not specifically addressed
    - After finishing the development
    - Towards the end of the planning process
    - A while into the planning process
    - From the start of the planning process
    - I don't know

27. In the last year, how often did you involve stakeholders outside the local administration in mobility planning?
    - Never
    - Once
    - Two or three times
    - Every two or three months
    - Every month or more often

Section 6 Monitoring and Evaluation

28. After implementing a mobility measure in the last year, how often did you evaluate its success?
    - Never
    - Sometimes
    - About half the time
    - Most of the time
    - Always
    - I don't know

29. When it comes to strategic urban mobility plans in your local administrative area, what is the status at the moment? (Please select all options that apply.)
    - o No activities
    - o Considering to develop our first strategic mobility plan (SUMP)
    - o Developing our first strategic mobility plan (SUMP) – Preparing and analysing the mobility situation
    - o Developing our first strategic mobility plan (SUMP) – Developing a vision and setting targets
    - o Developing our first strategic mobility plan (SUMP) – Selecting measures and developing an action plan
    - o We have a finalised strategic mobility plan (SUMP)
    - o Other (please specify):____
    - o I don't know

Section 7 Attitude towards the use of the SUMP and SULP guidelines

Questions in this section are set to explore users' attitudes towards the SUMP and SULP guidelines. Please indicate your agreement level with the statements below.

	Questions	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
User's perceived usefulness of SUMP and SULP guidelines	30. SUMP / SULP would enable me to manage the sustainable transport planning in our local administrative area more efficiently.					
	31. The changes from SUMP / SULP will benefit me and the transport planning in our local administrative area.					
User's perceived ease of use of the SUMP and SULP guidelines	32. Learning the details of the SUMP / SULP was easy for me and/or our transport planning in our local administrative area.					
	33. The changes from the SUMP / SULP that have been implemented and are coming are clear and understandable.					
	34. Implementing the change from the SUMP / SULP will be easy for me and/or our transport planning in our local administrative area.					

Attitude towards the use of SUMP and SULP	35. I feel that implementing the SUMP and SULP was needed.					
	36. The SUMP and SULP practices will improve our sustainable transport planning in the local administrative area.					
Behavioural Intention	37. I look forward to the changes that are to come from the SUMP / SULP adoption and implementation.					
	38. I intend to adopt changes to our transport planning as a result of the uptake of the SUMP / SULP practices as soon as possible.					

39. Please provide your contact information if you wish to receive a summary report of the survey result. The personal information you provide will be kept anonymous and treated as strictly confidential.
    - Name: :____
    - Email address: :____

(End of the survey)

Appendix C - List of Local Authorities in Ireland

County Councils

1. Carlow County Council
2. Cavan County Council
3. Clare County Council
4. Cork County Council
5. Donegal County Council
6. Dun Laoghaire / Rathdown
7. Fingal County Council
8. Galway County Council
9. Kerry County Council
10. Kildare County Council
11. Kilkenny County Council
12. Laois County Council
13. Leitrim County Council
14. Limerick City & County Council
15. Longford County Council
16. Louth County Council
17. Mayo County Council
18. Meath County Council
19. Monaghan County Council
20. Offaly County Council
21. Roscommon County Council
22. Sligo County Council
23. South Dublin County Council
24. Tipperary County Council
25. Waterford City and County Council
26. Westmeath County Council
27. Wexford County Council
28. Wicklow County Council

City Councils

29. Cork City Council
30. Dublin City Council
31. Galway City Council

Regional Assemblies

32. Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly
33. Northern and Western Regional Assembly
34. Southern Regional Assembly

Appendix D - Results of the SUMP Self-Assessment

Code ID	SUMP ID	Local administrative area	Population of the local administrative area	Mobility Assessment	Assess Current and Future Performance	Vision and Objectives	Integrated Transport	Stakeholder Engagement	Monitoring and Evaluation	Rank
1	RA1	Regional County A	250,000-500,000	60%	50%	75%	70%	60%	50%	3
2	UCA1	Urban County A	200,000-250,000	60%	60%	80%	75%	70%	60%	2
3	RCB1	Regional County B	150,000-200,000	45%	40%	60%	50%	55%	45%	5
4	DA1	District Authority A	25,000-50,000	40%	30%	50%	40%	35%	30%	6
5	RCD1	Regional County D	Less than 50,000	35%	25%	40%	30%	25%	20%	7
6	UCC1	Urban Centre C	25,000-50,000	55%	45%	70%	60%	50%	40%	4
7	MAA1	Metropolitan Area A	More than 200,000	65%	60%	85%	80%	70%	60%	1

Appendix D - A summary of how transport planning policies in Ireland align with key sustainable transport planning elements in SUMPs and SULPs

SUMP/SULP Factor	CAP21 (2021)	National Sustainable Mobility Policy (2022)	CAP23 (2023)	CAP24 (2024)
Decarbonization of Urban Mobility	**Aligned:** Targets 51% reduction in emissions by 2030, promoting low-emission transport.	**Aligned:** Focuses on reducing car journeys and emissions.	**Aligned:** Continuation of emissions reduction strategies.	**Aligned:** Further refines strategies for achieving net-zero emissions by 2050.
Zero-Emission Zones	**Partially Aligned:** Encourages low-emission transport but lacks specific focus on ZEZs.	**Partially Aligned:** Does not explicitly focus on ZEZs but encourages reduced car usage.	**Partially Aligned:** Continues to encourage low-emission transport without specific ZEZ focus.	**Partially Aligned:** Further encouragement of low-emission transport; possible development of ZEZs.
Active Mobility	**Partially Aligned:** Promotes cycling and walking as	**Strongly Aligned:** Explicit focus on active travel and	**Partially Aligned:** Continues to support active	**Partially Aligned:** Likely continuation of support for

	part of emissions reduction.	infrastructure development for walking and cycling.	travel but with less emphasis than the 2022 policy.	active travel as part of the broader strategy.
Public Transport Transformation	**Partially Aligned:** Promotes public transport to reduce emissions but lacks detailed transformation strategies.	**Strongly Aligned:** Aims to significantly improve public transport systems.	**Partially Aligned:** Continues support for public transport improvements.	**Partially Aligned:** Refines public transport initiatives within a broader net-zero strategy.
Electrification of Transport	**Strongly Aligned:** Supports the transition to electric vehicles.	**Aligned:** Encourages electrification, particularly in public transport.	**Strongly Aligned:** Continuation of support for electrification of transport.	**Strongly Aligned:** Further emphasis on electrification as part of net-zero strategy.
Shared and Integrated Mobility	**Partially Aligned:** Encourages shared mobility as part of emissions reduction but lacks	**Aligned:** Supports shared mobility to reduce car journeys.	**Partially Aligned:** Continues support but lacks strong emphasis on integration.	**Partially Aligned:** Further encouragement of shared mobility; integration likely considered in refinement stages.

	specific integration focus.			
Urban Accessibility and Social Inclusion	**Partially Aligned:** Broad focus on emissions reduction, some consideration of accessibility.	**Aligned:** Aims for equitable access to mobility services.	**Partially Aligned:** Accessibility remains a consideration, though not a primary focus.	**Partially Aligned**: Continuation of accessibility considerations within broader strategy.
Integration with Land Use Planning	**Partially Aligned:** Some integration efforts but not a primary focus.	**Aligned:** Emphasises integration with land use planning for sustainable urban development.	**Partially Aligned:** Integration continues but is not a key focus.	**Partially Aligned:** Integration likely refined as part of net-zero planning.
Urban Freight and Logistics	**Partially Aligned:** Emphasis on reducing emissions but less focus on logistics specifically.	**Partially Aligned:** Addresses logistics in the context of reducing car usage but lacks	**Partially Aligned:** Continuation of emissions reduction strategies, some logistics considerations.	**Partially Aligned:** Further refinement of logistics strategies expected as part of net-zero plan.

		specific logistics focus.		
Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS)	**Partially Aligned:** Broad focus on emissions reduction, ITS not specifically highlighted.	**Partially Aligned:** Some focus on improving transport systems, but ITS not a primary focus.	**Partially Aligned:** ITS not explicitly emphasised but likely considered in broader transport improvements.	**Partially Aligned:** ITS may be integrated as part of broader net-zero strategies but not a primary focus.
Mobility as a Service (MaaS)	**Partially Aligned:** Encourages integrated mobility services but lacks detailed MaaS strategies.	**Aligned:** Supports the integration of MaaS to reduce car journeys.	**Partially Aligned:** Continues support but lacks detailed focus on MaaS.	**Partially Aligned:** Further development likely, but not a primary focus.
Urban Road Safety and Vision Zero	**Partially Aligned**: Safety is a consideration in emissions reduction strategies.	**Aligned:** Focuses on safe active travel and public transport.	**Partially Aligned:** Continuation of safety considerations, but Vision Zero not emphasised.	**Partially Aligned:** Likely continued focus on safety within broader net-zero goals.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adaptation	**Aligned:** Emphasises the need for monitoring progress toward emissions targets.	**Aligned:** Monitoring and evaluation are key to ensuring the success of mobility strategies.	**Aligned:** Continues to emphasise monitoring and adaptation of strategies.	**Aligned:** Further refinement of monitoring and evaluation as part of achieving net-zero targets.
Sustainable Urban Logistics Planning (SULP)	**Partially Aligned:** Focuses on emissions reduction, some logistics considerations.	**Partially Aligned:** The National Sustainable Mobility Policy (2022) focuses broadly on reducing car dependency, while SULP specifically targets urban logistics, making their alignment partial due to SULP's narrower focus within urban mobility.	**Partially Aligned:** Continuation of logistics considerations within broader emissions reduction efforts.	**Partially Aligned:** Further refinement of logistics strategies expected as part of the net-zero plan.

Integration of Logistics with Urban Planning	**Partially Aligned:** Some integration efforts but not a primary focus.	**Partially Aligned:** Some integration with logistics planning but not a primary focus.	**Partially Aligned:** Integration likely considered but not explicitly highlighted.	**Partially Aligned:** Likely refinement of integration with logistics as part of broader net-zero planning.
Electrification of Urban Logistics	**Partially Aligned:** Promotes electrification broadly, less focus on logistics.	**Aligned:** Supports the electrification of transport, including urban logistics.	**Aligned:** Continuation of electrification strategies, including logistics.	**Aligned:** Further emphasis on electrification as part of the net-zero plan, including logistics.
Smart and Efficient Delivery Systems	**Partially Aligned:** Some focus on reducing emissions in transport, including deliveries.	**Partially Aligned:** Encourages efficiency in logistics but lacks specific focus on smart systems.	**Partially Aligned:** Likely continuation of efficiency strategies in logistics, with some emphasis on smart systems.	**Partially Aligned:** Further development of smart logistics likely as part of net-zero goals.

Resilient Urban Logistics	**Partially Aligned:** Resilience considered in emissions reduction but not logistics specific.	**Partially Aligned:** Some focus on resilience in logistics but not a primary emphasis.	**Partially Aligned:** Resilience likely considered but not a key focus.	**Partially Aligned:** Further refinement of resilience in logistics expected as part of the net-zero strategy.

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