

DEPLOYING MOBILITY INNOVATION

A Manifesto for competitive and sustainable urban mobility across Europe



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Europe's urban areas face a crucial phase in responding to climate, technological, and socio-economic challenges. Over 70% of EU citizens live in cities facing congestion, pollution and inequalities.

Creating an ecosystem that supports innovation in sustainable mobility is essential – not only to improve health and environmental outcomes but also to strengthen Europe's competitiveness. Success requires aligning with local needs and developing skills. In the EU, local authorities, startups, SMEs, are key to this transition, needing not only funding but also access to ecosystems, investment, and agile city-industry partnerships.

To improve urban mobility and boost Europe's competitiveness, we call on European policymakers to:

1- Safeguard and reinforce urban mobility innovation

Foster a consistent, innovation-friendly policy framework that enables the implementation of ready-to-scale solutions, accelerates transport investment and reduces bureaucratic procedure

2- Support innovative startups and SMEs

Finance and accelerate the growth of innovative startups and SMEs to address local mobility challenges and expand their market reach and societal impact by providing easier access to EU funds and using an agile approach to back pilot projects and living labs for rapid innovation.

3- Invest in skills and training

Bridge the skills gap for Europe's mobility transition by promoting entrepreneurship, innovation, and continuous learning for cities, students, researchers, and professionals.

4- Empower European cohesion

Ensure that the transition to sustainable mobility does not leave people and companies behind, by providing equitable access to mobility services for all, in both urban and rural areas across the EU.

5- Foster multi-stakeholder collaboration

Provide political support for initiatives that promote collaboration between academia, government, industry, and civil society, enhancing implementation capacity and collaborative efforts to address common challenges.

6- Optimise Horizon Europe for greater impact and scalable market-ready solutions

Scale innovation by ensuring the new Framework Programme for Research & Innovation (FP10) simplifies processes, increases financial resources and works in synergy with other programmes, specifically on Horizon Pillars 2 and 3.

This is a key moment to drive impactful change, improve quality of life and secure Europe's leadership in innovation.

By embracing these priorities, we can create resilient cities that meet the needs of all citizens and set a benchmark for future generations.

Join us in turning these ambitions into reality and forging **a more competitive, just, sustainable and connected Europe.**



Context

Urban areas are at the forefront of addressing the Green Deal, Digital Transition, and Resilience Policies, and their success relies on strong mobility systems. Over 70% of EU citizens live in cities¹ facing challenges like air pollution, car dependency, congestion², and social inequalities³. Clean mobility investments offer solutions that enhance competitiveness, environmental outcomes, social integration, and public health⁴, but success requires aligning initiatives with local contexts and focusing on skill development. In the EU, startups and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are crucial to closing the innovation gap with the US and Asia by connecting research with market-ready solutions. Besides funding, these players need access to ecosystems, investment and agile partnerships with cities and industry.

Priorities and policy recommendations

EIT Urban Mobility facilitates innovation that boosts EU competitiveness and sustainability. We help our partners and the broader ecosystem scale up impactful projects that deliver economic, social and environmental benefits, while being grounded in sustainable governance and financial models. To achieve this vision, we urge policymakers to implement the following strategic actions.

1. SAFEGUARD AND REINFORCE URBAN MOBILITY INNOVATION

Foster a consistent, innovation-friendly policy framework that enables the implementation of ready-to-scale solutions and reduces bureaucratic procedures.

Promoting innovative mobility solutions across urban, peri-urban and rural areas is crucial for the EU's sustainability and competitiveness. Cities should lead the mobility transition, by partnering with rural areas to create a more circular and inclusive economy. Recent policy advancements⁵ enable EU institutions to promote a cohesive approach for implementing high-technology readiness level (TRL) innovations such as multimodal hubs, data gathering systems, and smart charging infrastructures. Leveraging the agility and extensive innovation ecosystem of the European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT) can further enhance Europe's pipeline for bringing these mobility innovations to scale across diverse regions.

Recommendations to the EU to further support urban mobility innovation:

Accelerate transport investments

Scale up innovative mobility solutions by incentivising public-private investments in cycling infrastructure, public transport, and charging points. Focus on their development, deployment, and commercialisation⁶.

Streamline procurement regulation and funding

Simplify and innovate procurement rules at the EU level and offer more direct, flexible funding to cities and their partners. Regulatory frameworks should support cities with measures to reduce private car use.

Facilitate context-specific innovation

Acknowledge that each city has a unique geo-socio-economic context and develop expertise to adapt solutions accordingly, such as car-sharing in dense urban centres while improving rural connectivity to public transport systems. Innovation should consider both urban and rural demands.

Integrate training into EU-funded mobility initiatives

Ensure all EU-funded initiatives include capacity building and training programmes to help cities of all sizes and stakeholders better manage technological adoption and future-proof the workforce.

EIT Urban Mobility Agile Innovation Calls help us test innovations with startups and SMEs quickly and effectively, making it easier for us to introduce impactful mobility services to our city.

Margarida Lopez Romero

– Director of Innovation & Digital Transformation,
Transports Metropolitans de Barcelona



How EIT Urban Mobility contributes to champion urban mobility innovation

EIT Urban Mobility creates the conditions necessary for the take-up of sustainable mobility solutions to bridge the gap between innovation and its wide-spread adoption by the public sector:

175+

innovation projects have been supported and

200+

new solutions have been introduced to the market, while

290+

pilots have been implemented in over

140

European cities.



The **Rapid Applications for Transport (RAPTOR)** programme, recognised by the European Commission industrial transition pathway for the mobility ecosystem, has implemented **43 PILOTS** in **36 CITIES** from **21 COUNTRIES**; 95% led to procurement by the pilot client or other entity⁷.



2. SUPPORT INNOVATIVE STARTUPS & SMES

Finance and accelerate the growth of innovative startups and SMEs to address local mobility challenges and expand their market reach and societal impact. Use an agile approach to back pilot projects and living labs for rapid innovation.

Local innovators have the capacity to create blueprints for scalable solutions with lasting positive impact on urban mobility and infrastructure. The EU can support platforms that take an agile approach to fostering these innovative projects.

Recommendations to the EU to further innovative startups and SMEs:

Provide easier and direct access to EU funds

Simplify the administrative processes for startups and SMEs and provide a one-stop-shop to easily illustrate all growth, financing and funding opportunities provided at the EU level.

Scale startups and pilot projects for broader impact

Integrate startups and SMEs into larger projects and partnerships for broader market penetration and societal impact. Industry support as mentors and financial backers is essential for their growth, along with increased venture investments and accelerator programmes.

Create innovation-friendly environments

In line with the New European Innovation Agenda⁸, set up EU-wide legislative sandboxes that enable startups and SMEs to test innovations with public authorities in a controlled and

regulated environment, while ensuring EU regulations compliance and supporting cross-border scaling.

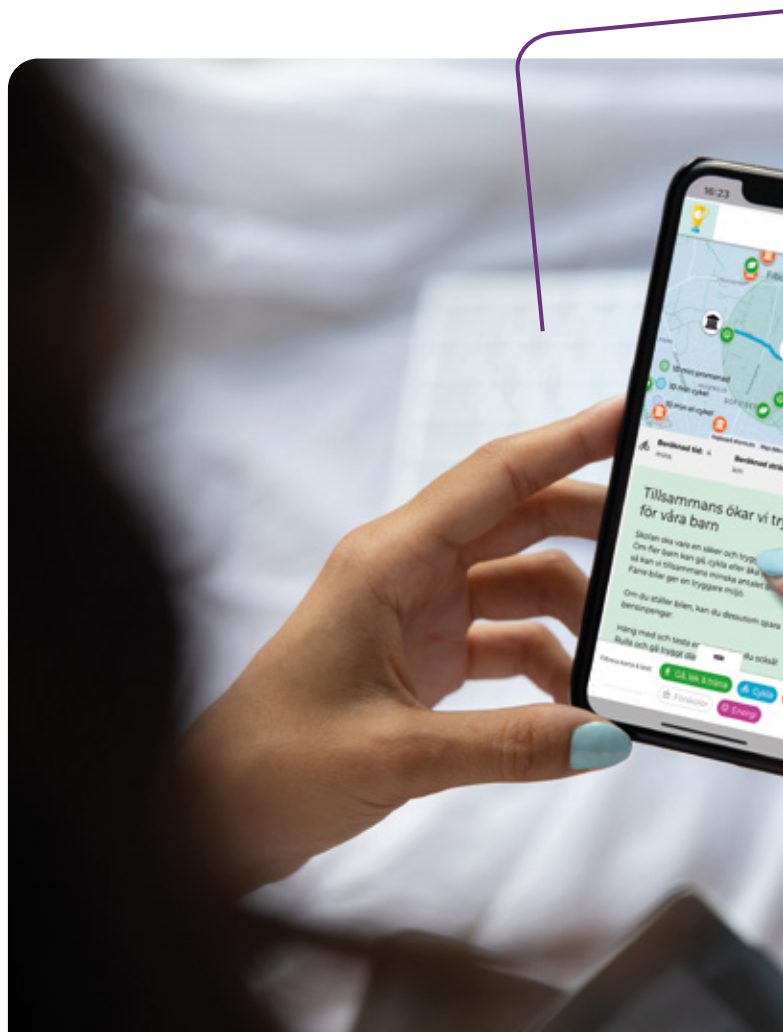
Facilitate talent retention and development

Reinforce strategies to help students transition into entrepreneurs after graduation, fostering innovation and supporting their growth. This will encourage the retention of (non-EU) skilled talent and drive long-term progress in urban mobility.

EIT Urban Mobility's product- and market-focused approach has had a significant impact on our company, helping us conduct pilots, grow and reach new clients.

Carles Sentís

– CEO and Co-Founder
Parkunload



How EIT Urban Mobility contributes to supporting innovative startups & SMEs

As of today, EIT Urban Mobility has supported:

440+
startups

36.5%
being women-led

Along side a total of investment of **€17.3 MILLION**, these startups in the EIT Urban Mobility Equity Portfolio have collectively raised **€117.5 MILLION**, reflecting a significant leverage ratio where each €1 invested by EIT Urban Mobility attracts an additional €7 from external sources.

This impact stems from EIT's ecosystem-building approach, which equips startups with skills, customer connections, and access to testbeds, prioritising collaborative partnerships and enhancing the ability to attract external funding rather than maximising individual grants.



Testing our mobility solutions in various European cities was a major challenge. Our partnership with EIT Urban Mobility has been crucial in helping us enter new markets, advance product development, and scale internationally.

Alexandre Durand

– Head of International Sales,
Instant System



3. INVEST IN SKILLS AND TRAINING

Bridge the skills gap for Europe's mobility transition by promoting entrepreneurship, innovation, and continuous learning for cities, students, researchers, and professionals.

Europe's urban mobility sector faces a skills shortage as the industry evolves. Planning paradigms such as the Climate and Energy Plans or Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP) have shifted the focus from planning and engineering to environmental and safety aspects, requiring multi-disciplinary education and new professions with digital and green skills.

Recommendations to the EU to bridge the skills gap for Europe's Mobility Transition:

Address skill gaps

Leverage the EIT's expertise to align education with market needs, focusing on electrification, automation, and digitalisation. Industry involvement in curriculum design ensures market relevance.

Expand VET for mobility industries

Integrate vocational education and training (VET) elements into all EU industry support initiatives, including automotive, to equip professionals with skills for emerging mobility technologies and future-proof the workforce.

Enhance capacity building for public authorities

Expand the scope and reach of existing EU platforms to provide comprehensive capacity-building initiatives for city planners and policymakers, to equip them with the knowledge and tools needed to adopt and manage innovative practices and technologies.

EIT Urban Mobility has helped us turn scientific research into real-world applications. Their interdisciplinary approach enables us to innovate quickly and make a tangible impact on urban livability and resilience, while building a strong international network

Benjamin Büttner

– Chair of Urban Structure and Transport Planning,
Technical University of Munich



How EIT Urban Mobility contributes to skills and training

We are shaping the next generation of urban mobility leaders through hands-on training and education programmes.

With over
32,000
experts trained, EIT Urban Mobility equips them with skills for the green transition

Our **Urban Mobility Explained (UMX)** platform and **EIT Campus**, make learning accesible, preparing cities and innovators for future challenges.

EIT Urban Mobility collaborates with **77 EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS** from **31 COUNTRIES**, including leading European universities, to offer advanced educational programmes in urban mobility.



Funded by the European Union



4. EMPOWER EUROPEAN COHESION

Ensure that the transition to sustainable mobility does not leave people and companies behind, by providing equitable access to mobility services for all, in both urban and rural areas across the EU.

Supporting a just mobility transition requires a European framework that focuses on bridging disparities and fostering balanced regional development and equitable access to innovation for all people and companies across the entire EU.

Recommendations to ensure that the transition to sustainable urban mobility is inclusive:

Expand the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS) to bridge the innovation gap

Provide tailored, place-based support to low-innovation countries. Partnering with industry will unlock resources and expertise in traditionally underperforming regions.

Position cities at the core of Social Climate Fund (SCF)

Give cities a central role in designing SCF national plans, ensuring these plans provide measures and financial support to help low-income households transition to cleaner transport modes.

Tackle transport poverty and car dependency

Use advanced data models and indicators to understand the impacts of digital and green transitions on rural areas, SMEs, and low-income households. This will help direct investments toward solutions providing safe, secure, efficient, affordable, and accessible public transport options.

Make the Cycling Declaration a reality

Support public authorities with funding and incentives for cycling infrastructure and e-bike use, focusing on countries with weaker cycling networks. Industry partnerships will be key to scaling these solutions and extend the market availability of e-bikes.

Create equal opportunities for shared mobility

Promote the availability, affordability and accessibility of shared mobility solutions, ensuring viable business models and supporting individuals and companies.

The successful pilot for the development of a strong carpooling user community, based on a digital platform supported by EIT Urban Mobility and KAROS, proves how the ambition for a more sustainable city and innovation can go hand in hand.

Beatriz Artolazabal

–Deputy Mayor and Councillor for Public Space,
Vitoria-Gasteiz City Council

How EIT Urban Mobility contributes to empowering european cohesion

Through **Innovation Hubs** and **Regional Innovation Scheme** (RIS) hubs, EIT and the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) – including EIT Urban Mobility – boost innovation in underrepresented regions and support public authorities in implementing equitable mobility solutions. Key activities include facilitating partnerships, reducing funding barriers for RIS applicants, and providing resources for education, training, and market integration to build robust innovation ecosystems in these areas.

The market-ready mobility solutions of the **Mobility Innovation Marketplace** tackle inequality, mobility needs, and security concerns, while our educational resources, like e-courses and videos, help implement inclusive transport initiatives.



RIS



5. FOSTER MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION

Provide political support for initiatives that promote collaboration between academia, government, industry, and civil society, enhancing implementation capacity and collaborative efforts to address common challenges.

Public sector capacity for innovation deployment is critical for achieving smart and inclusive growth in the EU⁹. Funding EU-level communities based on the EIT approach promotes sustainable innovation ecosystems, which integrate education, innovation, and business to bring mobility solutions closer to market readiness. Building on models like the European Battery Alliance¹⁰ can drive impactful innovation through industry cooperation and public funding.

Recommendations to ensure that the transition to foster multi-stakeholder collaboration:

Enhance EU-level co-creation

Involve industry, cities, and academia in the co-creation process of policy and funding programmes, to align innovation with market demands, local needs, and expert knowledge.

Empower a wider range of cities and promote synergies by design

Support more cities in setting bold innovation and policy goals. Leverage and connect existing EU-led city initiatives like CIVITAS, the Covenant of Mayors, and Net Zero Cities to foster collaboration and ensure local needs shape EU policies and funding.

Foster cross-sectoral innovation ecosystems

Expand the EIT's model of cross-sector innovation to bridge gaps between urban mobility, energy, and digitalisation, accelerating breakthroughs and commercialisation of new solutions.

Braga faces significant challenges with illegal parking at bus stops, compromising accessibility for people with disabilities. Partnering with the EIT Community Artificial Intelligence Challenge, we piloted an AI-powered bus-mounted vision platform that detects illegal parking in real-time. EIT Urban Mobility's agile approach also allowed us to quickly test and implement innovative last-mile logistics solutions.

Pedro Moreira

–Head of Transport Authority and Mobility Management
City of Braga



How EIT Urban Mobility contributes to fostering multi-stakeholder collaboration



From groundbreaking events like the **Tomorrow.Mobility World Congress**, to ongoing collaborations with EU initiatives, EIT Urban Mobility makes sure cities, startups, and innovators are working together to accelerate innovation and make real impact.

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AIT works with EIT Urban Mobility to test sustainable solutions in cities. EIT Urban Mobility's network and expertise help ensure these solutions have real impact while supporting French startups in scaling and accessing European markets.

Estelle Sturtzer & Guillaume Roger
–French Transport Innovation Agency (AIT)

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6. OPTIMISE HORIZON FOR GREATER IMPACT AND SCALABLE MARKET- READY SOLUTIONS

To effectively scale innovation, the new Framework Programme for Research & Innovation (FP10) should simplify processes, increase financial resources, and ensure synergies by design across various programmes, specifically on Horizon Pillars 2 and 3.

Horizon Europe has been crucial in advancing urban mobility innovation. The ecosystem depends on these funding sources to support the efforts of innovators, including SMEs, startups, and city planners, in developing economically viable solutions that contribute to the EU's decarbonisation, climate neutrality and social progress. In this context, the EIT model uniquely positions itself as a builder of ecosystems, through its KICs and by acting as a facilitator of skills and innovation across sectors. This role amplifies EIT's impact in bridging knowledge, resources, and partnerships to foster long-term market-ready solutions.

To advance on Europe's goals of creating impact-driven R&I framework, it is now essential to focus on deployment and replication of solutions at scale:

Enhance support and cooperation of EU instruments

Reassess Horizon Europe's Pillars 2 and 3 and clarify the roles of the European Innovation Council (EIC), the European Innovation Ecosystems (EIE), the EIT and its KICs, emphasising their differences and synergies. The EIT's role as a partnership orchestrator is crucial to facilitate technology transfer and commercialisation.

Through our collaboration with EIT Urban Mobility, we are integrating micromobility with public transport. We value their unique approach bringing research into practical, real-world applications. This allows us to collaborate with potential partners and engage directly with city users.

Fabio Nussio

–Head of International Affairs
Fund raising Group, Roma Servizi Mobilità

Strengthen coordination among EU funds

Encourage collaboration across funding sources to scale successful projects. The EIT's network of over 2,400 key organisations, with proven support for startups and scaleups, can help integrate outcomes with EU structural funds and financial instruments. These include Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) and the ELENA programme of the European Investment Bank (EIB), able to support major urban transport investments.

Encourage an impact-driven, KPI-focused framework with faster funding for innovation agility

The EIT KICs model scales solutions by ensuring measurable impact and competitiveness. Adopting this approach across the new R&I Framework, with a stronger focus on KPIs, will accelerate the EU's decarbonisation and mobility goals. Moreover, by reducing time lags in the funding process, the framework can better serve startups and SMEs, which often rely on agility to keep innovations relevant.

Leverage KIC expertise for future EU programmes

KICs can provide valuable insights to the EU by managing cascade funding and defining calls for other programmes. This will integrate lessons from KICs and their ecosystems into future initiatives, as the Climate KIC's role in NetZeroCities and EIT Urban Mobility in the European Digital Infrastructure Consortia (EDIC).

How EIT Urban Mobility supports market-ready innovation

Promoting knowledge valorisation, managing intellectual capital effectively, supporting risk-taking enterprises, and strengthening links between academia, industry, citizens and policymakers is essential. The EIT and its KICs have demonstrated their value in developing innovative products, services, and training while facilitating interactions among their community members¹¹.

The Horizon Europe (HE) strategic plan for 2025-2027 emphasises the need for continued support for EIT KICs to facilitate technology transfer and commercialisation, complementing HE Pillar 2 actions¹².

Munich needed to integrate new data sets for mobility services, but testing solutions before committing to large-scale purchases was challenging. EIT Urban Mobility's agile approach allowed us to quickly and easily explore new technologies with much less effort than the traditional procurement process.

Pia Schauz

–Smart Mobility Project Manager,
SWM - MVG (Munich Mobility Provider)



ABOUT

EIT Urban Mobility is Europe's leading network for transport innovation in cities. We accelerate the transition to sustainable mobility and liveable urban spaces by fostering innovation and promoting cutting-edge solutions across social, environmental, and economic dimensions. We empower our partners to transform urban mobility, by improving public health, enhancing quality of life, decarbonising transport, and boosting Europe's competitiveness. With five Innovation Hubs¹³ and 11 Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS) Hubs across Europe¹⁴ – increasing to 24 in 2025 – we drive regional impact, enhance cohesion, and connect stakeholders across Europe, fostering a collaborative ecosystem of over 250 partners and more than 1,000 organisations, including cities, universities, research institutes, large enterprises SMEs, startups and NGOs.

For more information and to connect regarding the EIT Urban Mobility Manifesto, please reach out to:

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- 3 <https://www.polisnetwork.eu/news/new-report-calls-for-greater-inclusion-and-diversity-in-transport-sector/>
- 4 New EIT Urban Mobility study on the costs and benefits of the sustainable urban mobility transition: <https://www.eiturbanmobility.eu/publi/study-on-the-costs-and-benefits-of-the-urban-mobility-transition/>
- 5 The Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) Regulation establishes a comprehensive EU-wide transport network to enhance connectivity and economic cohesion of urban nodes. The Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) Directive provides a framework for deploying innovative transport technologies. The Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation (AFIR) mandates the deployment of recharging and refuelling points for clean vehicles in Europe. The European Mobility Data Space (EMDS) is a proposed framework designed to foster the sharing and exchange of data across the mobility sector.
- 6 The new EIT Urban Mobility study on the costs and benefits of the sustainable urban mobility transition estimates that achieving the Green Deal transport goals in EU cities by 2030 will require over €1,500 per capita in net costs. These investments could yield benefits of up to €2,900 per capita, including reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, pollution, and injuries. – <https://www.eiturbanmobility.eu/publi/study-on-the-costs-and-benefits-of-the-urban-mobility-transition/>
- 7 Innovation introduced on the market with a sales revenue of at least 10 000 EUR from the pilot end-client, or other entity as per EIT KPI.
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- 12 [Horizon Europe strategic plan 2025-2027 \(pages 27- 28\)](#)
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