GUIDEMAPS

Gaining Understanding of Improved Decision Making and Participation Strategies

**Funding:** European (5th RTD Framework Programme)
**Duration:** Jan 2002 - Dec 2004
**Status:** Complete with results

**Background & policy context:**

Developing sustainable transport strategies and delivering transport schemes are often contentious and high profile activities that require skill and sensitivity in engaging with a broad range of stakeholders, ranging from local politicians and the media, through local residents and businesses, to national pressure groups.

Stakeholder engagement is being taken increasingly seriously by local authorities, and in recognition of the value of effective engagement as a means of minimising public opposition and designing more effective schemes.

However, until now there has been relatively little guidance available on how to engage stakeholders in a variety of transport strategies and schemes, and as part of an efficient and effective project management process:

- Who are the key stakeholder groups?
- How can effective engagement and media strategies be devised?
- Which tools are appropriate in different situations?

The underpinning rationale for the project was that an understanding of subjective factors is as important as objective measures of performance and impact if authorities are to succeed in introducing transport schemes that promote behavioural change. Carrying out the project at the EU level enabled the identification of a variety of good practice in Member States and by encouraging widespread adoption across the Union.

**Objectives:**

The principle aim of GUIDEMAPS was to identify procedures and tools to improve policy decision-making and achieve sustainable mobility throughout the European Union, by overcoming barriers and delivering better policy outcomes.

The detailed objectives of the GUIDEMAPS project were:

- to look at the state-of-the-art of decision-making and engagement in the transport-planning in Europe;
- to identify the barriers to successful decision-making;
- to identify procedures and tools to improve policy decision-making and achieve sustainable mobility throughout the EU; and
- to propose a set of guidelines and tools for overcoming barriers and to design a efficient project management.

**Methodology:**

The project workplan was based on different steps:

- methodological and contextual framework, based on a broad overview of current practice in decision-making and public participation processes (WP1);
- synthesis of key-factors and best-practices (WP2);
- a sound methodological basis for analysing and identifying barriers, as well as for managing successful decision making and participation processes (WP3);
- comprehensive, relevant and user-friendly guidelines, that have been thoroughly field-tested and elaborated during the course of the project (WP4);
- Field-test of guidelines/handbook through selected Case-Studies (WP5); and
- Dissemination of handbook and training-course activities (WP6).

An important part of the work was to analyse best practice and to provide a set of practical decision-making guidelines, covering different kinds of schemes and at all the various discrete stages. A wide range of policy areas from strategic city-wide planning, major infrastructure projects, major transport demand management projects to neighbourhood traffic management schemes were involved. Reflecting the main stages of the research, the project tried to generate a number of tangible outputs. The main stages were:

- to briefly review the material on recent advances in the knowledge about decision-making processes in urban transport, in order to deliver effective and efficient policy outcomes;
- to provide a comprehensive survey and evaluation of participatory practices used by local authorities in several public policy areas across Europe in order to identify best practices;
- to establish an accessible and practicable model of the decision-making process in urban transport;
- to prepare draft guidelines for identifying and overcoming barriers, based on the literature review, survey of decision-taking bodies' experience and needs, and a more detailed analysis of selected Practice Examples;
- to examine how these tools and strategies might improve decision-making on local and regional transport schemes and provide an evaluation of current institutional capacity;
- to field test the draft guidelines with local authorities in a series of Case Studies;
- to seek comments on the guidelines from other experts and potential end-users during a workshop;
- to prepare a handbook and a CD-

**Related Projects:**

- PROSPECTS
- TAPESTRY

**Parent Programmes:**

- FP5-GROWTH KA2 - Sustainable Mobility and Intermodality

**Institute type:** Public institution

**Institute name:** European Commission, Directorate-General for Energy and Transport (DG TREN)

**Funding type:** Public (EU)

**Partners:**

Austria:
Universitaet für Bodenkultur, Institute for Transport Studies, Vienna

Czech Republic:
CDV Centrum dopravního výzkumu (Transport Research Center), Brno - Magistrat mesta Brno, Utvar hlavního architekta, Brno

France:
DREIF/DIT/Groupe Etudes des Stratégies des Transports, Paris

Germany:
RWTH-Aachen, ISB Institut für Stadtbauwesen und Stadtverkehr (Co-ordinator), Aachen - SOCIALDATA Institut für Verkehrs- und Infrastrukturforschung GmbH, Munich

Greece:
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Transport Section at the Department of Civil Engineering

Spain:
Sener Ingeniería y Sistemas, S.A., Madrid - Consorcio Regional de Transportes de Madrid, Área de Estudios y Planificación, Madrid

United Kingdom:
The decision-making process

The starting point for the development of the decision-making framework was the assumption that effective transport decision making needs to recognise the various discrete stages involved in the process and to identify the appropriate tools for each stage. Typically, stages of the decision-making process can be portrayed as linear or cyclical, with the latter providing scope for stages to feedback into previous stages. The GUIDEMAPS project proposed a six-stage process (i.e. problem definition, option generation, option assessment, formal decision-making, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation).

State-of-the-art of decision-making and participation in Europe

The lessons learnt from the survey undertaken in GUIDEMAPS indicate that there is a wide variation in the practice of decision-making between and within European countries. Findings suggest that the type of project makes a big difference to the form and content of the decision-making process. However, in general it appears that national factors are more important in explaining differences in the decision-making processes than differences due to the nature of the project being undertaken. The results of the survey revealed that there is a strong dominance of official actors (decision-makers) within local authorities in transport planning schemes. This provided an interesting focus for understanding the decision-maker’s needs for the development of the handbook. The experience gained from the survey indicated that there are also a wide variety of actors involved and tools used in participation and communication practices undertaken within Europe. All countries investigated provided a degree of legal regulation for participation in urban and regional transport projects, but they were respectively are sometimes very limited. It is often a voluntary decision whether to deal with a broad-based consultation or just to make an announcement. Within this range, the variations between the countries can partly be considered as different ‘degrees of development’ of participation, more or less related to the economic situation, to the development of the democratic experiences and to the emancipation of the individuals over the power of government. Other influencing factors related to the history and culture can be observed, too. It has to be stated that the advanced technique of mediation to overcome communication barriers did not occur in any project.

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Policy implications

It is strongly recommended by the GUIDEMAPS consortium that the European Commission should further stimulate an exchange of knowledge and experience in the field of stakeholder engagement and project management for transport projects (especially in new member states and accession countries). The GUIDEMAPS consortium feels, that both the handbook and the training-material form a very good basis for further training-course activities at a good cost-benefit value.

Decision-support tools

Key findings State-of-the-art of decision-making and participation in Europe: The lessons learnt from the survey undertaken in GUIDEMAPS indicate that there is a wide variation in the practice of decision-making between and within European countries. Findings suggest that the type of project makes a big difference to the form and content of the decision-making process. However, in general it appears that national factors are more important in explaining differences in the decision-making processes than differences due to the nature of the project being undertaken. The results of the survey revealed that there is a strong dominance of official actors (decision-makers) within local authorities in transport planning schemes. This provided an interesting focus for understanding the decision-maker’s needs for the development of the handbook. The level of participatory involvement and tools used within the projects analysed revealed that there are distinct differences between many countries Barriers and factors of success:

- The results of the survey showed that the suggestion to focus on barriers was well reflected in the
views and priorities of the information providers. GUIDEMAPS considered five different types of barriers; from a more general point of view, they can be summarised into two broad categories.

- Legal, financial, management and institutional barriers; these refer to problems in the decision-making process or between the official partners of the process.
- Communication barriers, which are related to the participation process, even if communication problems may sometimes also arise between official partners. Although barriers can be encountered in all stages of decision-making processes, the survey showed that there is some kind of relation between the stage in which barriers occur and the type of the transport project.
- Barriers in ‘strategic city-wide transport plans’ and ‘local traffic management schemes’

**STRIA Roadmaps:** Smart mobility and services  
**Transport mode:** Multimodal transport  
**Transport sectors:** Passenger transport  
**Geo-spatial type:** Other