



EUROPEAN POLICY BRIEF



SOCIAL INNOVATION IN MOBILITY AND TRANSPORT

This policy brief on Social Innovation in Mobility and Transport is based on results of EU funded project “Social Innovation: Driving Force of Social Change” (SI-DRIVE). Highlights are given from results of a quantitative mapping, in-depth case studies of social innovation initiatives in mobility and transport, and policy workshops with external experts in spring 2017.

The main message is that actors of social innovation in mobility and transport are different from those of the established mobility and transport system. They come from different backgrounds, and have the motivation to find alternative transport solutions rather than improving the quality of existing ones. Furthermore, the local public sector plays a crucial role as a stimulator and implementer of social innovation in mobility and transport. Urban planning enabling co-modality, supported by technological developments is another important driver of social innovation initiatives in mobility and transport.

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INTRODUCTION

This policy brief informs political actors and decision makers on results achieved in the work package on social innovation in mobility and transport of the SI-DRIVE project. Following the first policy brief from February 2016, in which the focus was on challenges of mobility and transport and the place of social innovation, this second policy brief presents results of the empirical work. Research is driven by the overall question of how social innovation can drive social change. A variety of sources have contributed to the generation of data, including a quantitative mapping of social innovation initiatives, in-depth case study research and a series of practitioner workshops.

Many of the social innovation initiatives analysed in this work package respond to two overall societal challenges related to transport and mobility within the European Union and many other world regions:

- Sustainability – Air pollution, congestion and high noise levels caused by large volumes of motorised transport in metropolitan areas and larger cities restricting option to use other, more environmentally friendly transport modes.
- Inclusiveness – Mobility is a key characteristic of a modern society and crucial for accessing health, cultural and education infrastructures, and jobs. In many parts of the world, also including Europe, weak or non-existent transport infrastructure is an important reason of (social) exclusion. Reasons are “non-profitable” remote areas, lack of transport modes for people with reduced mobility, unsafe or unaffordable transport, etc.

It is well acknowledged, that social innovation initiatives contribute towards overcoming these societal challenges. By valuing aspects of mobility different from those of “classical” mobility actors (e.g. automotive manufacturers), they attract new kinds of actors, fresh ideas, and find new solutions.

Against this background, the following set of questions was answered during the course of the work:

- What kind of more general “practice fields” are established, assembling similar social innovation initiatives in mobility and transport?
- Who are the actors involved in the social innovation initiatives?
- What are drivers and barriers of the social innovation initiatives, and how are they financed?
- What are future developments with relevance for social innovation in mobility and transport?
- What can policy do in order to foster social innovation initiatives in mobility and transport?

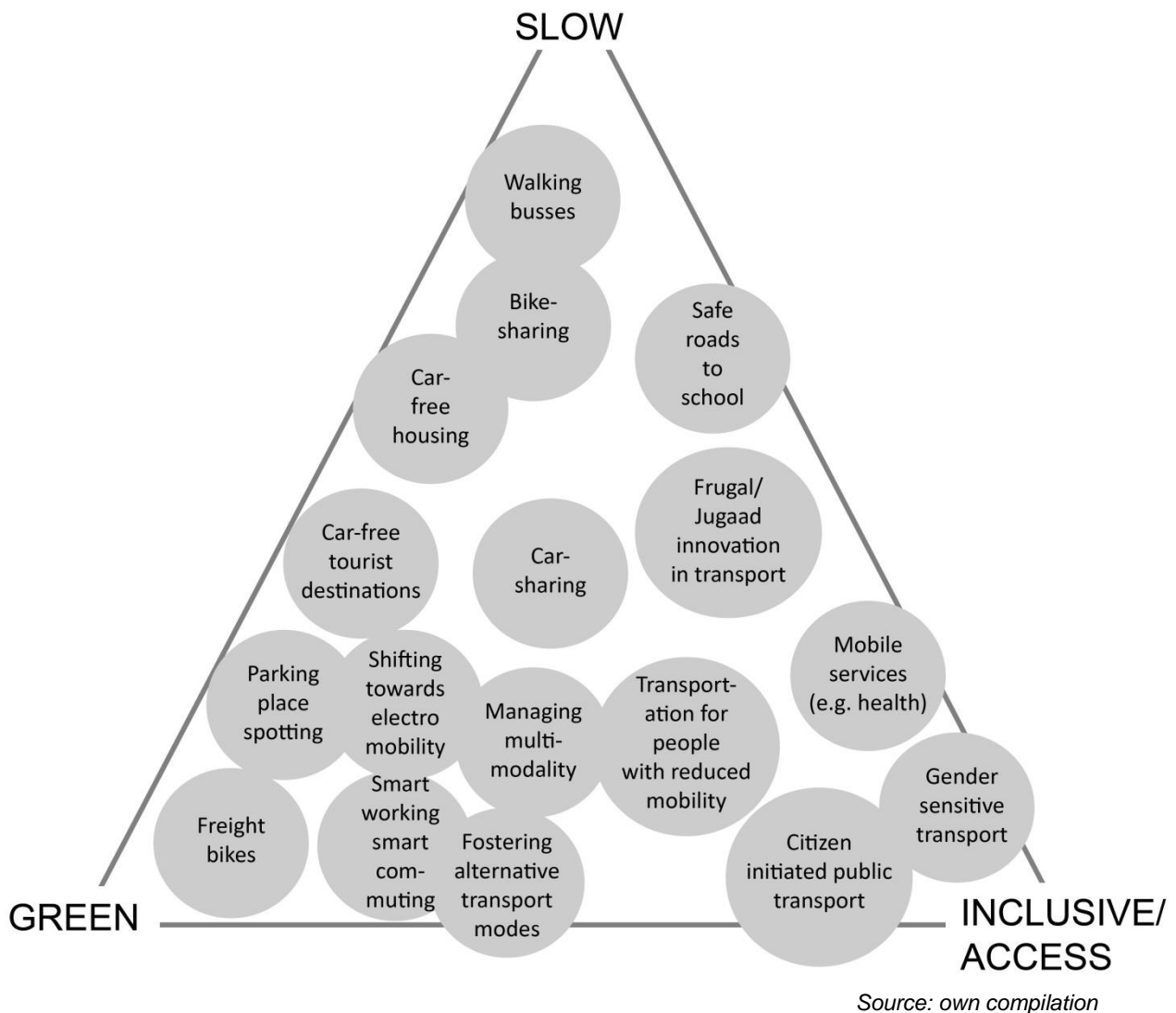
In order to underline the special features of the policy field mobility in transport the quantitative data are analysed and put in comparison in two groups: social innovation cases in mobility and transport on the one hand and the group of all other cases on the other, compound from the social innovation cases of the other six policy fields.

EVIDENCE AND ANALYSIS

Seventeen global practice fields of social innovations in mobility and transport have been defined in SI-DRIVE through an inductive (generated from data about more than 120 cases of social innovation initiatives) and a deductive approach (expert discussions). Practice fields are understood as more general focus areas of social innovation initiatives such as car-sharing, walking school busses, etc. All practice fields have a very local perspective, concentrating on neighbourhoods, cities or regions. Long distance transport seems to be not an area of action for the studied social innovations.

Practice fields of the analysed social innovations in mobility and transport can be grouped into three clusters (cf. figure 1): 1) there is a considerable *inclusiveness/access* dimension assigned to social innovation in mobility and transport which strives to establish or increase access to basic needs and societal life. Practice fields address people with reduced mobility, new transport possibilities realised by citizen initiated public transport, gender sensitive transportation, etc. 2) *Greening mobility and transport* includes fostering co-modality, e.g. through sharing initiatives. It furthermore includes social innovation facilitating usage of electric mobility and multi-modality, i.e. the usage of different transport modes on the same trip. 3) Many social innovation projects and practice fields are based on *slow transportation* meaning that high speed transport or long-distance trips are not in focus. Instead, projects have walking or cycling as their starting point and strive to integrate walking/cycling in the daily activities and make them more comfortable (e.g. in terms of safety).

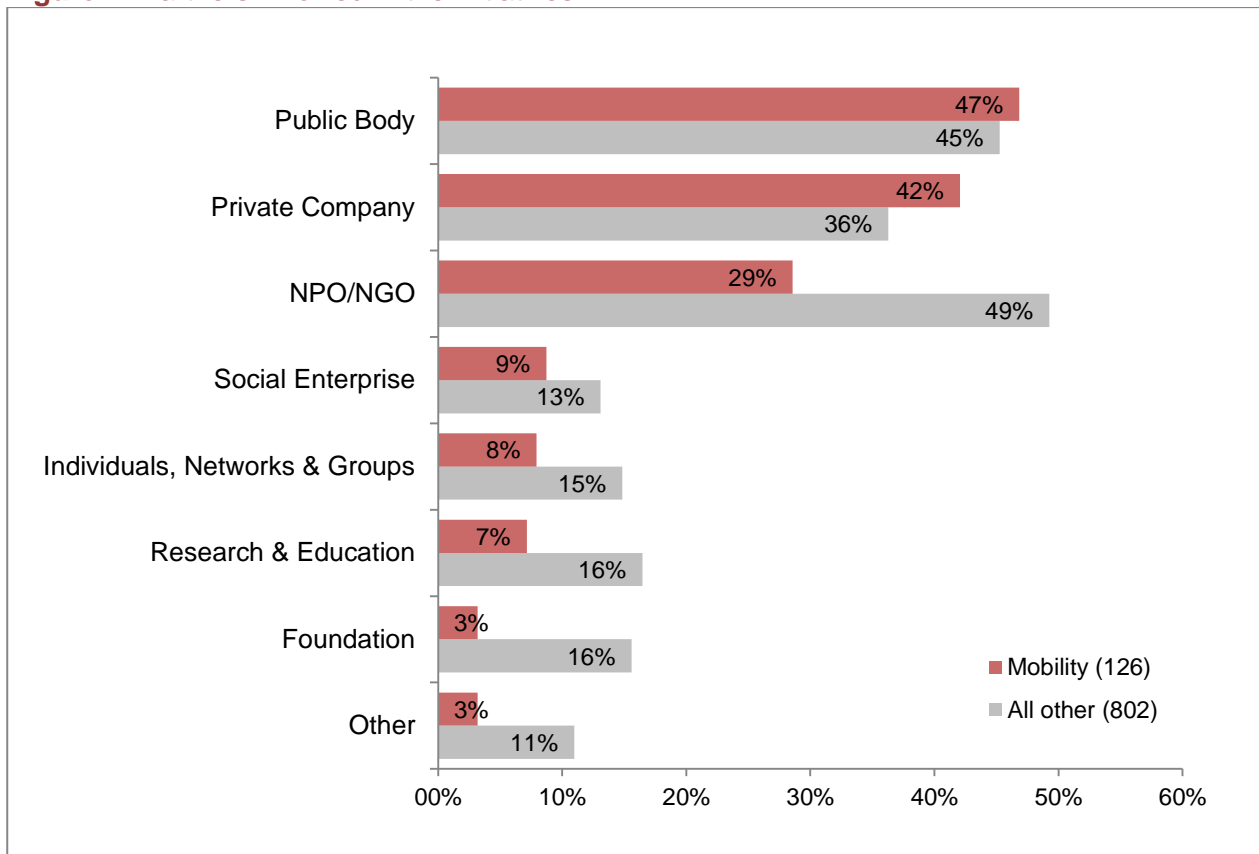
Figure 1: Social Innovation practice fields in Mobility and Transport



The main engaged **actors** in social innovation initiatives of mobility and transport are private companies, public bodies and NGOs (cf. figure 2). These actors are also the most frequent in all the other analysed social innovation initiatives (the sum of initiatives studied in the policy fields of education, health, poverty reduction, energy, environment, employment). However, public bodies and private companies are slightly more actively engaged in mobility and transport initiatives as compared to all other cases (47% against 45% and 42% against 36%). There is economic interest for example in many car and bike sharing initiatives, but many companies are also engaged in smart working, smart commuting approaches as part of their CSR strategies. Another difference to be mentioned is the low engagement of NGOs as compared to all the other studied cases (29% against 49%). One explanation could be that NGOs act more people-oriented rather than means-oriented (transport as a means) and do not consider mobility and transport as an important area of action.

In addition, the in-depth case studies show that many actors developing social innovations in mobility and transport have not been professionally involved in the mobility and transport system beforehand. Digital solutions for shared mobility for example are usually developed from users facing certain demand and trying to answer it on their own. In recent years, traditional players such as automotive developers and insurance companies are also joining the market of shared mobility, however the case studies show that the initial social innovations are not necessarily developed by them.

Figure 2: Partners involved in the initiatives



Source: own calculation based on SI-DRIVE global mapping

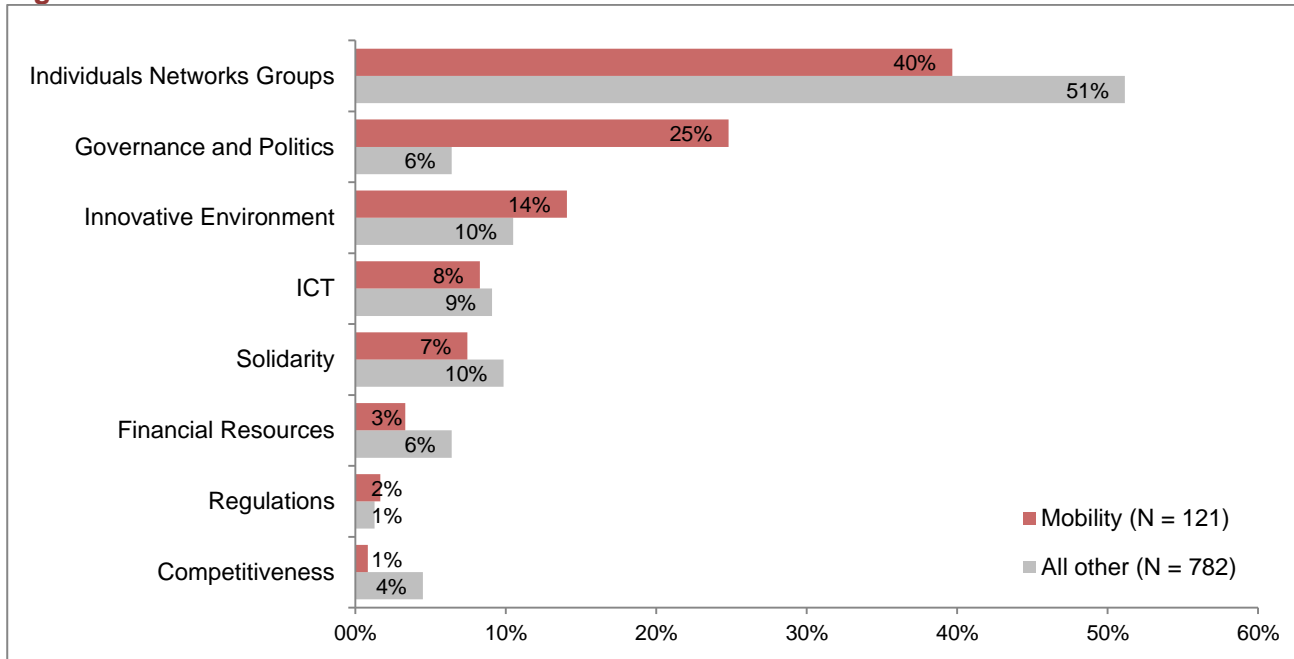
The most important **drivers** of the mobility and transport initiatives are slightly different from those of all other initiatives studied in SI-DRIVE (cf. figure 3). Networks and individuals are the most important driving force of both groups of cases (40% in mobility and transport 51% all other cases). However, governance and politics as a driver is much more important in mobility and transport (25% against 6%). This corresponds to the large share of public sector actors engaged in the initiatives (see above). An innovative environment, too, seems to play a slightly more important role for social innovation in mobility and transport than in the other cases (14% to 10%).

Funding challenges are recognised as a **barrier** in all cases (cf. figure 4), nevertheless for mobility and transport initiatives absence of participants and lack of personnel seems to be of importance as well (15% and 14% respectively). These results are confirmed by the in-depth case studies, where most of the initiatives suffer from low participation/engagement levels. In addition, a lot of the cases rely strongly on volunteer engagement and complain about the difficulty to find reliable people.

Another relevant conclusion from the case studies was the importance of technology for the development and spread of the initiatives. Next to ICT and internet-based services other relevant software and hardware solutions were mentioned, that make the development and growth of social innovations possible: e.g. GPS tracking, electrical vehicles, board computers for car-sharing vehicles, computation in wheelchair delivery systems etc.

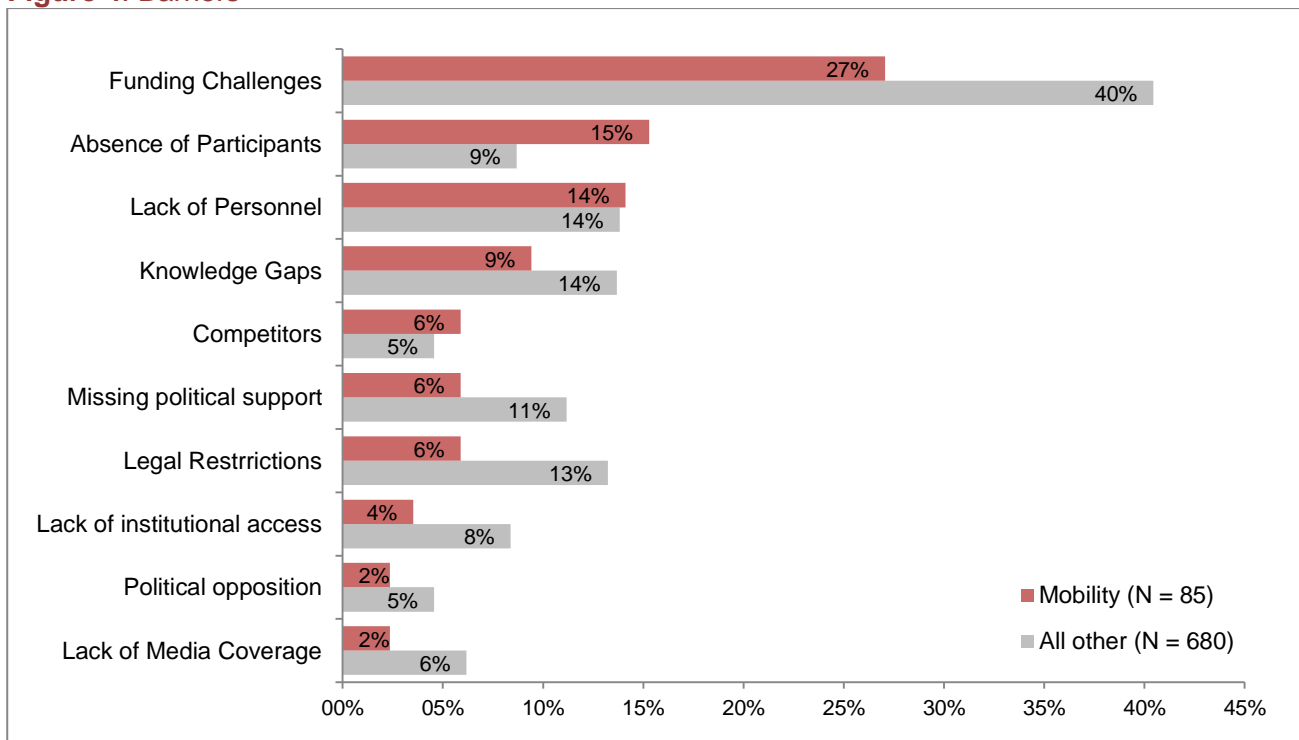
¹ The results are based on the number of cases and mean that the type of partner is mentioned at least once among all partners of a certain case.

Figure 3: Drivers



Source: own calculation based on SI-DRIVE global mapping

Figure 4: Barriers

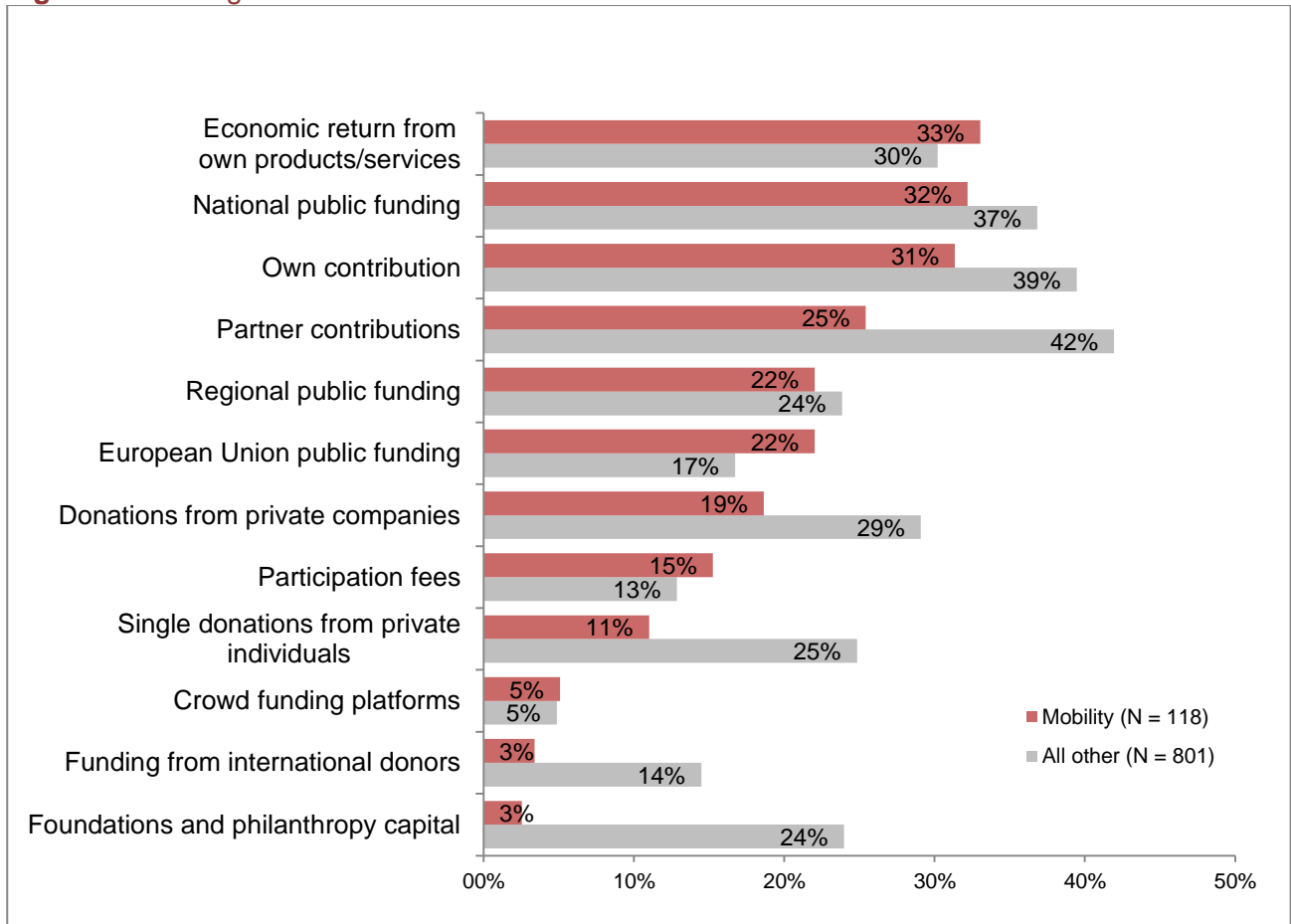


Source: own calculation based on SI-DRIVE global mapping

Financing sources of the initiatives are highly diverse and often a mixture of different financial sources is combined in one initiative (cf. figure 5). The comparably strong economic focus of the social innovation initiatives in mobility and transport is also reflected in the way the initiatives are financed. Economic return from own investments is the most important financial source. It is directly followed by national public funding and own contributions from members of the initiatives. Different sorts of donations, philanthropic capital and capital provided by foundations plays only a minor role in the finance model of the initiatives. This is a striking difference as compared to the

other initiatives studied in SI-Drive, in which these financial sources have a much more substantial part. The explanation might be similar to the one above, i.e. the immediate link to peoples' needs (easier to be communicated in fields such as poverty reduction or education).

Figure 5: Funding Sources



Source: own calculation based on SI- DRIVE global mapping

The results were used as an input for a workshop with experts and innovators in mobility and transport who helped define **future developments and goals** with relevance for social innovation in the field. The most important are:

- Zero-fication of mobility, including the goal of zero emissions, zero fatalities and noise level. Social innovation related to infrastructure, mobility behaviour, and urban planning is seen to be of key relevance in this respect.
- Increasing the quality of mobility for all: focusing on inclusion of vulnerable groups, personal mobility and managing existing mobility modes, rather than increasing overall mobility.
- Increase social innovation in parts of the mobility and transport system where it has high potential:
 - Social innovation as a boundary object that enables to combine different types of actors, interests, ideas, knowledge, experience, etc.
 - Accessibility: technology for social needs
 - Mobility education in schools in order to stimulate behavioural change.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Taking into consideration the results of the working package mobility and transport, important implications and recommendations can be made with respect to three areas: i) actors' support; ii) creating incentives and awareness and iii) urban planning and technology solutions.

Actors' Support

Support of social innovation initiatives as a driver of change in the mobility and transport system implies support of different kinds of actors. Understanding of mobility and transport actors needs to be broadened and go beyond the established sectoral boundaries in order to spread the many ideas developed in social innovation initiatives. Right now, the transport and mobility system is characterised by high path dependency. Path dependency is continuously reinforced by hard infrastructural settings (roads, rail system), the established transport modes, extremely powerful actors (e.g. automotive companies), and the regulation and tax system. **Achieving change towards a more sustainable and inclusive mobility system means to support actors who follow a different logic and who act in niches on a much smaller scale.**

Incentives & Awareness

Furthermore, **social innovation can be supported by creating incentives for companies, schools and other actors to support alternative transport modes.** There are many approaches fostering alternative transport modes that could be better communicated in order to spread more broadly. Furthermore, local decision makers can actively promote social innovation by engaging in the implementation of ideas in their municipalities that originally have been developed elsewhere (imitation of good ideas).

Urban Planning & Technology Solutions

Planning of transport infrastructure is still very car-friendly in many urban areas. **Shifting away from one dominant model of mobility (car driving) towards planning for multi-modal mobility solutions provides a plethora of opportunities for new social innovations** within mobility and transport. Supporting development of technological solutions as a facilitator of behavioural change and a means of a more inclusive transport system needs to go hand in hand with new planning modes and can act as an accelerator.

RESEARCH PARAMETERS

Social Innovation – Driving Force of Social Change", in short **SI-DRIVE**, is a research project aimed at extending knowledge about Social Innovation (SI) in three major directions:

- Integrating theories and research methodologies to advance understanding of Social Innovation leading to a comprehensive new paradigm of innovation.
- Undertaking European and global mapping of social innovation initiatives, thereby addressing different social, economic, cultural, and historical contexts in twelve major world regions.
- Ensuring relevance for policy makers and practitioners through in-depth analyses and case studies in seven policy fields, with cross European and world region comparisons, foresight and policy round tables.

SI-DRIVE involves 14 partners from 11 EU Member States and 11 partners from other states of all continents, accompanied by 13 advisory board members, all in all covering 30 countries all over the world.

Research is dedicated to seven major policy fields: (1) Education and Lifelong Learning (2) Employment (3) Environment and Climate Change (4) Energy Supply (5) Transport and Mobility (6) Health and Social Care (7) Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development.

The approach adopted ensures cyclical iteration between theory development, methodological improvements, and policy recommendations. Two mapping exercises at the European and the global level were carried out in the frame of SI-DRIVE: Initial mapping captures basic information of more than 1,000 actual social innovations from a wide variety of sources worldwide, leading to a

typology of social innovation. Subsequent mapping focused on well documented social innovation, leading to the selection of 82 cases for in-depth analysis in the seven SI-DRIVE policy areas. The results of the global mapping and the in-depth case studies were analysed on the ground of the developed theoretical framework, further discussed in policy and foresight workshops and stakeholder dialogues - carefully taking into account cross-cutting dimensions (e.g. gender, diversity, technology), cross-sector relevance (private, public, civil sectors), and future impact.

Beneath the comprehensive definition of Social Innovation and defined practice fields, five key dimensions (see figure) are mainly structuring the theoretical and empirical work.

The outcomes of SI-DRIVE will cover a broad range of research dimensions, impacting particularly in terms of changing society and empowerment, and contributing to the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy.



PROJECT IDENTITY

PROJECT NAME SI-DRIVE - Social Innovation: Driving Force of Social Change.

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Applied Research and Communications Fund – ARCF -, Sofia, Bulgaria
Australian Centre for Innovation - ACIIC -, Sydney, Australia
Austrian Institute of Technology – AIT -, Vienna, Austria
Bertha Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship, University of Cape Town – UCT-, Rondebosch Cape Town, South Africa
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Centre de recherche sur l'innovation sociale, Center for research on social innovation
University of Quebec - CRISES -, Montreal, Canada
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Institut Arbeit und Technik / Institute for Work and Technology, Westfälische Fachhochschule Gelsenkirchen – IAT -, Gelsenkirchen, Germany
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Tata Institute of Social Sciences - TISS -, Mumbai, India
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United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean - ECLAC -, Santiago de Chile, Chile
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**FUNDING
SCHEME**

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DURATION

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BUDGET

EU contribution: 4 888 551.20 €.

WEBSITE

www.si-drive.eu.

**FOR MORE
INFORMATION**

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**FURTHER
READING**

SI-DRIVE Policy Briefs on Social Innovation in Education, Employment, Environment, Energy Supply, Transport and Mobility, Health and Social Care, and Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development SI-DRIVE Policy Briefs 2016: Social Innovation in Employment, Environment, Energy Supply, Transport and Mobility, Health and Social Care, and Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development. <http://www.si-drive.eu/?p=1934>

SI-DRIVE Policy Briefs 2017: Social Innovation in Education, Employment, Environment, Energy Supply, Transport and Mobility, Health and Social Care, and Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development. <https://www.si-drive.eu/?p=2834>

Rabadjieva, Maria and Butzin, Anna: Social Innovation in Mobility and Transport: Case Study Results, SI-DRIVE Deliverable 8.3 (https://www.si-drive.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/SI-DRIVE-Deliverable-D8_3-Mobility-1.pdf)

SI-DRIVE Newsletter (http://www.si-drive.eu/?page_id=333)