

4.7 Mobipoints Gembloux (BE)

A Mobipoint is a mobility hub, both a local anchor point and a transfer point between different public and shared modes of transport. It is designed to stimulate sustainable travel by facilitating multimodal transport for local residents, delivery people, commuters and all other travellers.



4.7.1 About Wallonia, Belgium

Country	Region	Target Area	Population	Population density	Visitors/year
Belgium	Wallonia	Gembloux: 95,90 km ² Wallonia 16.884 km ²	Gembloux: 26.330 ² Wallonia: 3.662.495 ²	City of Gembloux: 95,90 km	9.281.177

Wallonia is a region situated in the southern part of Belgium and, alongside Flanders and Brussels, it is one of the three federal regions. The region of Wallonia has a GDP of €115.394 with an employment rate of 65%.

Tourism plays a significant role in boosting Wallonia's appeal, accounting for 60.000 jobs, with its well-preserved forests, valleys, and its remarkable architectural legacy.

4.7.2 Description of the Mobility Solution

The main mobility needs addressed in the target area include facilitating multimodal transport for local residents, delivery people, commuters and travelers, reducing individual car ownership, relieving parking pressure, improving road safety, revitalizing neighborhoods and providing new local services.

Mobipoints aim to meet the needs and requirements of both locals and visitors by serving as local anchor points and transfer points for various public and shared modes of transport. They stimulate sustainable travel, offer improved mobility options, create human-sized neighborhoods with green spaces, and contribute to the evolution of polycentric and peaceful cities.

The development of Mobipoints in Wallonia is part of the 2019 Regional Mobility Strategy ([Stratégie Régionale de Mobilité](#)). In 2017, MPact, a company dedicated to developing more efficient and accessible mobility solutions, launched the concept of Mobipoint in Flanders. The following year, as part of the European eHUBS project, the concept of Mobipoints was adopted by 5 municipalities in Wallonia and Brussels. The most urban municipality in the project was in Brussels, the most rural one is the municipality of La Bruyère. The present analysis focuses on a medium-sized rural city called Gembloux.

In Gembloux, Belgium, two Mobipoints are planned:

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- one in the city centre, defined as a “small neighbourhood hub”, consisting of two shared modes with less than 10 vehicles. This mobility hub includes one PT service (bus) and a carsharing service.
- one next to the railway station, defined as a “central urban hub”, including two PT services (bus, train) and one carsharing service. The railway station is on the Brussels-Luxembourg line and serves as a central transfer hub for the entire municipality and beyond.

The project is still in its planning stage. The implementation of the hubs, firstly intended for 2023, is postponed by the regional authorities.



Figure 71 – Smart Hub locations in Gembloux

Involved Bodies

The concept of Mobipoint was developed, in Belgium, by MPact. The implementation of the hubs in Gembloux is coordinated by the Wallonian government. The municipality of Gembloux is the main stakeholder of this mobility solution.

Two service operators were part of the eHubs project. However, they have not expressed their interest in the Mobipoint in Gembloux (yet), due to the uncertain demand for the mobility solutions.

Ridership and other key metrics/results

There is a budget of 210 million euros available for the implementation of the hubs in Wallonia. It is not entirely clear how much the two hubs in Gembloux will cost. 30% of the total budget is reserved for infrastructure investments to implement the hubs. Currently, there is a discussion on making a subsidy available for the mobility provider that will offer services at the hubs in Gembloux. It is not the intention to make this funding indefinitely, but to make the subsidy available for at least for the first years.

Engagement aspects

Service providers were engaged during a market consultation for the eHubs project. MPact explained the project and asked them what their ideal plan would be and how to best collaborate with them. In eHubs,

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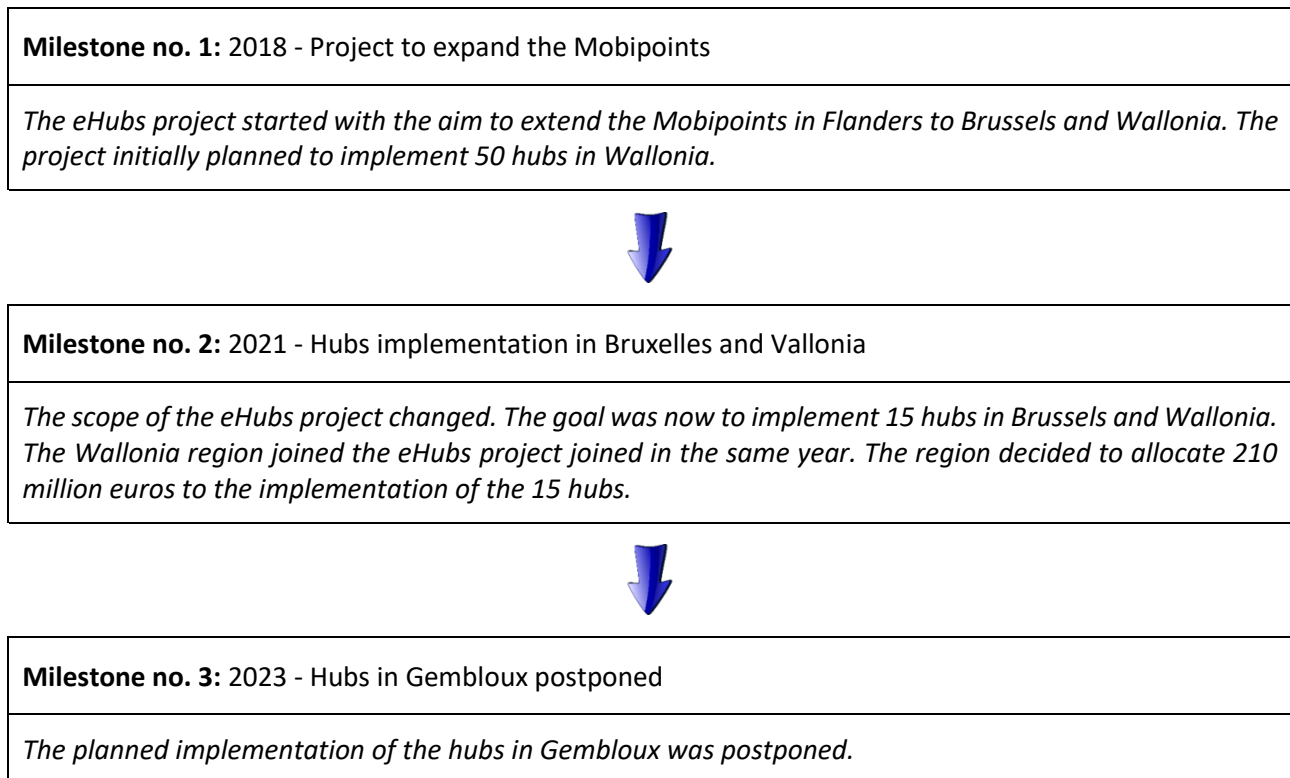
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there were already 2 operators involved but since they were involved in the first part of the project, they could not work on the second part (with Wallonia).

One of the results of the market consultation is that service operators do not know the market for rural areas, which is the main problem. However, if presented with a plan for a group of municipalities, they seem to be interested. The solution seems to be to talk more about Wallonia and the potential of shared mobility.

Preferably, the 5 Wallonian municipalities will tender together to find suitable mobility providers that will offer their services at the Mobipoints. This joint tender will alleviate the administrative burden on the municipalities and will hopefully make the tender more attractive since it creates more potential users for the contractor.

4.7.3 Timelines and Milestones



4.7.4 Long-term assessment

Success, Durability and Expansion

The region conducted several studies within the eHubs project as well as several surveys to citizens. Furthermore, as part of an ongoing plan to review the bus network, there were citizen workshops that included the mobility hubs concept. The implementation of hubs in Wallonia is hindered by the limited executive power of local and regional administrations. The budget for the hubs is available, but the manpower to implement them within the desired timeline is not.

The Wallonian region implements about 200 projects per year. When the Wallonian region stepped in the eHubs project it was unable to implement a hub within the 1,5 years left of the project.

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Furthermore, the main difficulty was the governance model of the hubs in Wallonia. The 5 municipalities of the eHubs project together were not represented. The Wallonian region would like the municipalities to take more ownership of the project, while at the same time acknowledging their limited capacity. The Wallonian region is still in the lead of implementing the hubs but involves the municipalities closely in their activities.

Why is it considered a Good Practice?

Since they are adapted to the needs of the district, several Mobipoints may be available in the same municipality. Each new Mobipoint can be a part of a growing network at local, regional and (inter)national level since they are uniform, identifiable, accessible, and connected.

4.7.5 Transferability considerations

CONTEXT PECULIARITIES	TRANSFERABILITY CONDITIONS
<p>The Mobipoints are especially useful in neighborhoods with high population density, parking pressure, existing shared mobility offer and public transport network. Moreover, while planning the implementation of new Mobipoints, it is useful to consider real estate projects and planned road works in the area.</p>	<p>The Mobipoints will only be successful if there is sufficient support among the population to use them. Information sessions, co-creation processes, workshops and so on help create that support.</p>
DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED/WEAKNESS	LESSONS LEARNT
<p>The main barriers to the implementation were: (i) administrative capacity; (ii) form of governance; (iii) and potential of shared mobility solutions and (iv) requirement that all shared mobility solutions at Mobipoints must be electric</p>	<p>Ideally the municipalities are the main stakeholders taking the lead on the territory. It was not ideal to have the region as a middleman. The region believes that shared mobility solutions should be connected to hubs and developed around them. In rural areas a bus for few people is not viable and not sustainable, so shared mobility is really a more appropriate solution for rural areas (also on-demand solutions).</p>

References for further details
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