







Multimodal Transport and Railways in Mountain Regions

Final Synthesis for Know-How on Awareness Raising and Training

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The ACCESS2MOUNTAIN Project

The ACCESS2MOUNTAIN consortium aims to achieve durable, environmentally friendly tourism, and to ensure accessibility and connection to, between and in sensitive regions of the Alps and the Carpathians. Offers should benefit all users. With the long-term perspective of increasing sustainable tourist mobility, the project partners set up pilot projects to improve the access to tourist areas and to foster sustainable local mobility at destinations. The project is financed under the Southeast Europe Program (SEE).

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Project Partners

Lead partner

• Environment Agency Austria, Austria

ERDF partners

- Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology, Austria
- National Park Gesäuse, Austria
- Mostviertel-Tourism Ltd., Austria
- · Miskolc Holding Local Government Asset Management Corporation, Hungary
- · University of Camerino, Italy
- European Academy Bolzano/Bozen, Italy
- · County Center for Tourism Information, Romania
- · Agency for the Support of Regional Development Kosice, Slovakia

20% ERDF partner

· Rzeszow Regional Development Agency, Poland

10% partners

- Timok Club, Serbia
- Carpathian Foundation Ukraine, Ukraine

Observers

The project enjoys widespread support at transnational, national and regional level: the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention, Focal Points of the Carpathian Convention, European Federation of Museum and Tourist Railways, Ministries of Environment (Austria, Italy), Ministries of Transport (Slovenia, Poland) and other observers at the regional level of the project partners.

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Why multimodal passenger transport solutions ...

Passenger transport has always been multimodal. People commonly changed from carriages to ferries, from trains to ships, and back to trains and carriages. Today, for many journeys, passengers still switch from one mode of transport to another – from bikes to buses, from bikes to trains, from buses to ferries – be it for commuting, a business trip or leisure travel.

Multimodal passenger transport simply means that you offer two or more modes of transportation for completing a journey or moving at a destination. Ideally, people leave the car at home and travel by public transport.

Multimodal passenger transport aims at combining the strengths of various transportation options to

- reduce the use of the car by offering attractive and competitive alternatives (to eventually mitigate CO₂-emissions),
- increase the use of public transport (to increase its utilization and efficiency), and to
- foster the use of soft forms of mobility (slow travel to increase the passenger's well-being).



... in mountain regions?

Mountain regions belong to what the European Commission considers 'sensitive areas with regard to transport'. Meant are areas particularly vulnerable to or highly affected by environmental impacts from transport and tourism (such as noise, air pollution, barrier effects, etc.) due to their location characteristics conditioned by topography, biological and landscape diversity, etc.

¹ European Commission (2003)

Leisure-related transport has considerably increased over the last fifty years². On average, in Alpine countries, about 84% of tourists use the car to travel to a destination³. The situation gives rise to the supposition that noise and air pollution caused by transport to such areas foremost in private cars has harmful environmental effects. In addition to the environmental impacts of leisure travel, problematic issues referring to public transport have also to be pointed out. So it is highly desirable to develop sustainable transport offers and foster the development of a great potential for sustainable tourism.



Hiking or riding the historic Mariazellerbahn in Mostviertel



Optional access to mountain – steam train (Wassertalbahn) or carriage in Maramures

Good practices in passenger transport and mobility in mountains

For the purposes of the ACCESS2MOUNTAIN project, partners analyzed about 70 practice examples from the Alps and the Carpathians, which were chosen according to a set of selection criteria, to prepare two major studies on multimodal transport solutions:

- GOOD-PRACTICE COLLECTION FOR MULTIMODAL TRANSPORT (2012) with more than 50 examples
- REGIONAL AND NARROW GAUGE RAILWAYS GOOD-PRACTICES AND RECOMMENDA-TIONS (2012) with about 20 examples

You can download all studies from our website www.access2mountain.eu/en/downloads/studies

² ARE – Office Federal du développement territorial (ed) (2006): Le tourisme dans lespace alpin. Chances et risques d'un secteur économique important suisse en mutation. Bern: Office federal du développement territorial

³ Permanent Secretartia of the Alpine Convention (ed) (2007): Alpine Convention, Report on the State of the Alps - Transport and Mobility in the Alps. Alpine Signals - Special edition 1, Innsbruck, Bolzano: Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention.

The examples conveyed in this brochure can be considered as reference point for actors in tourism development to find out which mobility and/or touristic activity could be the best for their region or area.

But will a good practice work equally well in different contexts?

"All good practices are an attempt to better understand what works (and what does not work!), how, why and in what conditions." 4

We found it difficult to derive a patent procedure for successfully developing and running a multimodal passenger transport project. Its realization and viability depend on a set of factors, not least the context to which the project should be transferred. One can say, projects are generally tailor-made. But there are aspects contributing to or hindering a project's success. We have singled out a row of success factors and aspects of professional project planning and operation that were also helpful for preparing and implementing our own projects (see page 22). The solution for a problem, which was tested and turned out to work well for one project, may also be a guideline for another one.

That said ...

... this brochure targets in general at people, who steer, plan, develop, implement and market multimodal passenger transport projects in tourism destinations. This includes actors and stakeholders on local and regional level involved in tourism offer development as well as railway companies/operators, who want to get an idea of good practices to design concepts and create multimodal passenger transport solutions for their own regions. The brochure conveys the advantages of multimodal mobility solutions and hints to how approach project planning.

⁴ UNICEF, www.unicef.org/evaluation/index_goodpractices.html

Common challenges

Destinations may find themselves at different stages of development in terms of tourism and mobility offers. They may face location conditions advantageous or disadvantageous in terms of accessibility (difficult or easy to reach by private and public transport) and environments unfavorable of cooperation, thus hindering an improved coordination. Challenges exemplary for both highly developed and less developed tourist destinations, which have been named by project partners, are (a selection):



Selected challenges in the ACCESS2MOUNTAIN pilot regions

Car-free travelling = care-free travelling

When travelling without a car, it is crucial for a tourist to move smoothly to as well as within a destination.

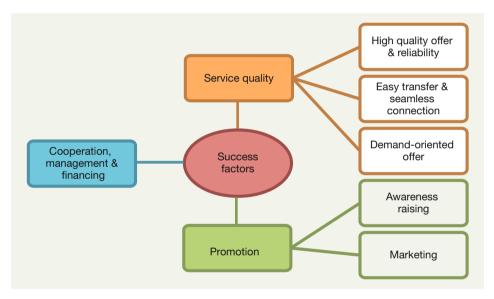
- For the **origin-destination (O-D) journey**, this means direct connections, short waiting times, transnational digital solutions, and possibilities to cover also the last mile to arrive at the holiday accommodation.
- For **on-site mobility**, this means easily accessible public transport and combined offers, soft mobility and little traffic (bus/train & bike, hike & bike, etc.).

But even where train or bus infrastructures are in place, there can be gaps in the connection between them. These gaps need to be filled by alternative transportation modes. Similarly, where no infrastructures are in place and accessibility is limited, alternative demand-oriented transport services must be created.

Success factors of multimodal transport solutions

Evaluation of the collected good-practices for railways and multimodal transport enabled the project partnership to single out factors that can contribute to successfully realizing a transportation project. The following aspects concern initiatives for both the origin-destination journey and on-site mobility.

In general, the text passages refer to success factors of both multimodal transport and railways only. The coloured boxes contain selected examples (a concrete project or a collection of equally representative examples) for the respective success factor.



Overview of the success factors of multimodal transport and railway projects

Cooperation, management and financing

An important condition for successful projects is that partners (tourism stakeholders such as tourism associations, hotels, restaurants, huts, bus and railway companies) (pro)actively work on good cooperation solutions. Ideally, projects base on a **shared vision, joint efforts, stable collaboration and financing**. Regular meetings of the stakeholders and (yearly) evaluation allow assessing the project statistics/results to adapt the offered services and improve costs management. Communication and cooperation between all actors should be strong.

SchweizMobil is the national Swiss network for non-motorized individual transport, in particular for leisure and tourism, with offers in the areas of hiking, biking, mountain biking, skating and canoeing. This way, Switzerland nowadays has a dense network of long-distance routes for walkers, cyclists, mountain bikers, inline skaters and canoeists. The aim of the project is to promote the non-motorized individual traffic and its combination with the public and private transport. The project was realized with public and private funds; today it is run by the SchweizMobil non-profit foundation. For further information: www.schweizmobil.ch, www.schweizmobil.org.

Guest Cards

Offering a *guest card* is one way for tourism actors to collaborate. In a network, tourism associations together with various service providers (public transport, accommodation, restaurants, museums, shops etc.) develop a financing mechanism for a card functioning as ticket for the regional and local public transport, as entrance ticket or voucher. In this way, it is a means to shift the guests' preference from the private car to public transport and to encourage them to spend more money in the holiday region. Cards can be distributed to all guests who stay a minimum number of nights and are usually free of charge for them. The price for the guest card is already included in the costs of the accommodation.



Source: www.nationalpark-hohetauern.at



Source: www.bregenzerwald.at



Source: www.berchtesgadener-land.com

Regional integration

For railway projects, a broad support by policy makers contributes decisively to their success. Therefore, a core aspect is integrating regional railways in regional and national traffic concepts. Measures taken by municipalities often help to win more passengers, such as contributions for construction and maintenance of railway stations or for improved pedestrians and cyclists accessibility.



New and old narrow gauge train sets of the Mariazellerbahn in Mostviertel: the Himmelstreppe (left) and the Ötscherbär (right)

Service quality

High quality offer and reliability

Good service quality is a prerequisite for "pulling" more travelers from the car. Guests considerably rely on the correctness and up-to-dateness of information materials provided. An offer must function as good in practice at the destination as it was set out in theory (in a leaflet, at the tourist office, on the internet, or where the trip was booked).

Alpine Pearls

The tourism association's objective is to support and promote soft mobility: that is offering the possibility for guests to arrive without a car at the holiday destination and to have easy access to public transportation on site as well as numerous offers of environmentally friendly holiday activities.

In *Werfenweng (Austria)*, guests leaving their car key at the tourist center can use the shuttle service free of charge and enjoy a wide array of benefits (e. g. personal e-taxi and night-time mobility service, pick-up service, use of e-mobility service, e-bicycles, excursions, entrance fees etc.) by using a "soft mobility" key. The offer is a connection service between train and local public transport. For further information: www.werfenweng.org.

In *Pfelders (Italy)*, innovative mobility offers enable guests to experience stress-free holidays in the Texelgruppe Nature Park. Softly mobile summer activities include horse-drawn carriage rides, mountain bike tours and numerous guided

nature walks. In winter, the "Dorf-Express" bus and two city buses ensure hustle-free shuttle between car parks, town center, and lift facilities. For further information: www.pfelders.info.



Soft mobility in Werfenweng



Fun bikes in Werfenweng



Fun mobility in Pfelders

Buffets and dining cars on rails

Most of the passengers in leisure and holiday traffic enjoy drinks and the possibility to eat something. For longer trips, buffet or dining cars offer food services to guests. For shorter trips or at small train stations, kiosks provide a snack, drinks and souvenirs. Examples are the Zillertalbahn (www.zillertalbahn.at), Harzer Schmalspurbahn (www.hsb-wr.de), or the Vaser Valley Railway (www.wassertalbahn.ch) where a grilled menu is served in the open space in the valley.



Train ticket, drink and food vouchers for snacks and grill menu on the Mocăniţa (Vaser Valley Railway), Romania



Multifunctional kiosk opposite the station with park ticket and train ticket sale, souvenirs and drinks, Tatra Electric Railway



"Fasslwagen" – buffet-car in a barrel on a steam train of the Zillertalbahn



A simple – but charming – form of entertaining passengers of the Harzer Schmalspurbahn

Good view on the landscape

A major plus of travelling by train is to enjoy watching the landscape. It is a big advantage compared to travelling by car. Thus, "panorama wagons" and on some lines open "cabrio wagons" are appreciated by rail passengers.

Some examples are the Bernina-Express (www.rhb.ch/Bernina-Express.2188.0.html), the Glacier-Express (www.rhb.ch/Glacier-Express.2190.0.html), both of the Rhätische Bahn, and the Golden Pass (www.goldenpass.ch).



Enjoying the landscape in the panorama wagon of the "Bernina Express"

Easy transfer, seamless connection and a demand-oriented offer

To convince tourists of the advantages of public transport, clear, transparent and flexible services and offers are required. Coordination of arrival/departure times between the different modes of transportation along a journey is essential for reducing interruptions and waiting times and give the guest a continuous and pleasant travel experience. This goes for both origin-destination travel and mobility at the destination itself.

Railway and multimodal transportation offers have to meet the demand of the people; they must be in accordance with current and potential passengers, also at peak times. They ought to be planned for various target groups that means both tourists **and** inhabitants – kids, adults and seniors alike. Projects have a higher acceptance level and are tentatively more viable outside peak season if addressed to a larger audience. Good knowledge of the territory, the environment and a constant monitoring of local/regional traffic enable stakeholders to opt for transportation offers corresponding to the setting of an area and its target groups.

Regional mobility offers

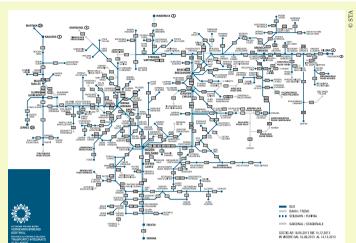
The Vinschgau Bahn/Treno Val Venosta (Italy) is an outstanding example for a reliable, convenient, competitive transport solution for commuters and occasional travelers in the Venosta Valley in South Tyrol (catchment area approx. 80.000 inhabitants) with a straightforward timetable coordinating train and bus services. Trains run hourly; in times of higher demand, RegioExpress trains, which only stop at stations with higher frequency are added, especially to meet the demand of commuters. Local bus lines are well coordinated with the regional railway. The bikemobil Card, a combined ticket for bus, train and rental bike, allows passengers to rent a(n) (e-)bike for a small surcharge, which they can afterwards return at another contracted bike rental station, whereby bike transport on the train is not included. Passengers can also take their own bike on the train, obliterating a special bike-train ticket. Further information on: www.ferroviavalvenosta.it.



Seamless connection from train to bus ...



... and from bike to train on the Vinschgerbahn



Coordination and integration of railway and bus transport throughout South Tyrol, "SüdtirolTakt", Vinschgerbahn

The **Electric Tatra Railway / Tatranská elektrická železnica** (Slovakia) is another example of a flourishing regional (narrow gauge) railway for both tourists and locals. The network consists of three lines – one of which is a rack railway – in the highly touristic High Tatras region, covering a catchment area of ca. 73.000 inhabitants and is connected to Košice, the biggest city in Eastern Slovakia. All trains – with the exception of the rack railway – are low floor vehicles which are accessible for the physically impaired and facilitate the transport of bicycles and sport equipment. Trains circulate every hour, at the same minute; e.g.: 7:08, 8:08, 9:08 until 20:08 ("Taktfahrplan"). The ticket prices are low, compared to those of other touristic lines in Europe. Combined tickets for sport- and cultural events are offered. In stations and kiosks refreshments and train tickets are sold.



During both summer and winter season many passengers (tourists and locals alike) travel by the Tatra Electric Railways



The trains of the Tatra Electric Railway are particularly in summer highly frequented

Suitable infrastructure and rolling stock for the requirements of passengers/guests

Investments in regional railways are no exceptions; they are in many cases a core success factor. Investments range from small improvements in railway stations for better accessibility and higher passenger comfort to big investments in new tracks and lines. Rolling stock should be easily accessible for all passengers for families with baby carriages, also for physically disabled people with wheel chairs and for passengers with luggage (suitcases, bikes and other sports utilities, etc.).





Low floor train with multi-purpose compartment, Tatra Electric railways



A passengers wagon of the Rhaetische Bahn was converted to an easily accessible and spacious bike wagon

Promotion

Promoting a new product or a new service should be understood as both a task of awareness raising and marketing. **Awareness raising** helps your target group understand, for example, what soft mobility is and why opting for the train or the bike over the private car is commonly recognized as being more sustainable. **Marketing** of the new product or service mainly targets at selling it on the market. Here, the new technologies play an important role. Yet, conventional brochures are not antiquated; in fact, old-fashioned tickets, maps, pictures, and the like can have charming memorabilia effects.

Joint marketing strategies of operators/service providers on regional level (e. g. railways, shipping/ferry companies, cable cars and other points of interest like hotels, huts, museums, etc.) can be a success factor in many regions, based on a high awareness of the strengths of regions and knowledge about the addressed target groups. Together, the partners can achieve a unique-selling-proposition, which would not be possible when launching separate, fragmented actions.



The mobility platform www.mobilito.at offers "To provide you the best travel connection", supplying tariff information and travel organization for trips by bus and train in the Austrian Pongau area.



Online information on soft mobility offers in the Alpine Pearl village Werfenweng www.werfenweng.org

Easy access to suitable tickets

Tourists should be able to obtain tickets easily for the origin-destination journey and on-site mobility, e.g. on the internet, at the tourist office, on the bus or at the train station. One way is to include public transport in guest cards (see page 9) or to sell tickets directly at the hotel reception or in the tourist office.



Friendly train staff is still helpful for passengers of railways



Friendly staff on the Mocăniţa train (Wassertalbahn) who takes on various jobs along the way (clipping the tickets, selling drinks and postcards, serving food), Maramures

Buying from friendly-trained staff is generally a plus and raises customer satisfaction. Likewise, user-friendly internet websites or mobile phone applications provide an easy way to buy tickets if ticket-offers are well positioned and advertised on the internet. Yet, especially elderly passengers prefer personal assistance by the railway company, hotel or tourism association staff. Regions and/or hotels can offer incentives (discounts, small extras, welcome gift, etc.) to guests arriving by public transport. Offering combined tickets (e.g. railway + ski-pass or railway + bike/e-mobility rent) can attract further guests but also the local population.

Availability of information

A basic requirement is that in hotels, besides the tourism office, sufficient information material on tourist packages, timetables, and economical tickets is available. Pre-trip information is an important contribution to successful marketing of public transport and regional railways. Likewise, real-time/on-trip information is important to inform passengers about alternative connections and routes in case of delay. It is useful to offer information in commonly used languages, at least basic information in English.



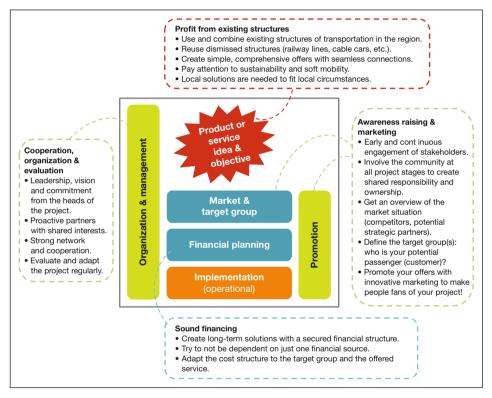
Departure list for the station Strass of the Zillertalbahn on the internet



Mobile phone app intended for expanding mobility and independence of all people: people with physical disabilities or temporarily reduced mobility, mothers with children, and elderly people

To put it in a nutshell

As said at the beginning, there is no patent procedure for a mobility project to be longlived and highly popular with guests from near and far and locals. But there are some key elements for project implementation (operational) that should ideally be part of your plan for a mobility project.



Key elements of project implementation

Overview of the ACCESS2MOUNTAIN activities underway

Ideas on how to carry out the pilot activities in the project's partner regions were drawn from the best-practice collections. However, partners also profited from the exchange within the partnership as well as from external expert consultations on regional, national and international level.

Regular updates and further information on the regional projects in the categories **Railway** and **Multimodal Transport** are available on the project website www.access2mountain.eu/en/activities.

A look into the future: strategies and project synergies

Our mobility needs are continuously increasing. Travelling for work and leisure frequently requires us to hop on some kind of vehicle – unfortunately too often the car – to get from A to B.

The ACCESS2MOUNTAIN project has shown that many outstanding, innovative and well-working combined transport solutions for a more environment-friendly door-to-door passenger transfer and on-site mobility are in place in many mountain regions. Many of these initiatives have significantly contributed to reducing the car use by offering attractive and competitive alternatives, to increase public transport use, and to foster the use of soft forms of mobility and so on.

However, great potential certainly remains for initiatives promoting passenger railway transport as alternative to the car for long-distance journeys and fostering the integration of train, bus and soft mobility connections, e.g. in sensitive areas with regard to transport. At the same time, covering the last mile remains a challenging task for regions to tackle. Also, it seems there is still a high demand for improved bike infrastructures, touristic packages, and target group specific tourism offers. International, (inter)regional, cross-border but also local approaches should further be pursued in providing solutions for said challenges to benefit from a broad range of experiences from different realities.

Theme-related initiatives and platforms:

- European Platform on Mobility Management (EPOMM) www.epomm.eu
- klima:aktiv mobil Initiative of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management for active climate protection in the transport sector to promote climate-friendly mobility management www.klimaaktiv.at/ mobilitaet
- Alpine Pearls Alpine Umbrella Brand for Soft Mobility in Tourism www.alpinepearls.com
- EUROMONTANA European Association for Mountain Areas www.euromontana.

Theme-related projects:

- Transdanube (Southeast Europe): Sustainable Transport and Tourism along the Danube www.transdanube.eu
- AlpInfoNet (Alpine Space): Sustainable Mobility Information Network for the Alpine Space www.alpinfonet.eu

European and international mobility events:

- European Mobility Week www.mobilityweek.eu
- European Conference on Mobility Management (ECOMM) www.epomm.eu

Read more about multimodal transport solutions

- European Commission (2003). Sensitive areas and transport progress towards an operational definition at the European level, Minutes of a workshop held by the Commission on 18 November 2003, http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/pdf/sat/minutes.pdf
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