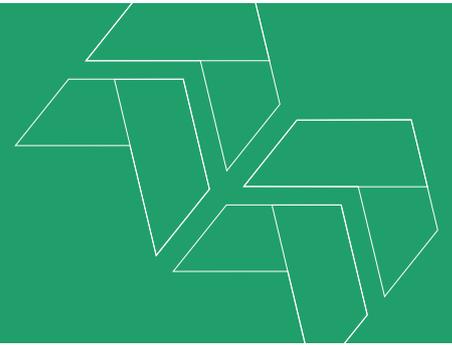


Let's travel the last mile together! 

LAST MILE

Newsletter - # 02



OVERVIEW: 2ND PROJECT SEMESTER

One year after the start of the Interreg Europe project LAST MILE the motivated partners are as busy as never before. During the 2nd semester two study visits have taken place; the first one in Catalonia (Spain) and the latest in Varna (Bulgaria). These two study visits showed the partners from 6 European countries totally different regions. The framework conditions concerning flexible transport systems are not comparable and the approaches to implement new systems have to be adjusted. This conclusion was approved by the regional analysis of framework conditions and the analysis of the technical state-of-the-art. Every partner finished these analyses for his region. A first insight was given to the partners by the responsible project partners for the evaluation and showed already that the challenge for implementing flexible transport systems in the regions is different for every partner.

THE THIRD LAST MILE PROJECT MEETING AND STUDY VISIT IN VARNA DISTRICT, BULGARIA

The 3rd project meeting of the LAST MILE project was held from 6th - 9th March 2017 in Varna, Bulgaria. The host was CSDCS, supported by the Varna District Governor and the municipalities of Varna and Byala.

After the first session on 6th March, where the project progress and some financial issues were discussed among partners, the meeting was officially opened on 7th March with a welcome speech made by the deputy Varna District Governor Mr. Ivan Ivanov. In his speech, he emphasized the importance of the project goals and on the willingness of the state government to make efforts for achieving sustainable tourism and transport in the region. The municipal representative Mr. Mladen Ivanov presented the Varna transport strategy.

During the study visits on 8th and 9th March the itinerary of the fast bus line 209 going during the summer season from the city centre to the resort area was showed.



The bus passed along several resort complexes and stopped at Golden sands, where partners and stakeholders could see seasonal transport services provided by small trains, a lift and electric cars. Furthermore, the company RENT-A-CAR demonstrated their e-cars for rent in the resort and proposed a test drive to guests. An important stop during the study visit was at Byala (see below).

The partner meeting was closed by a final session on 9th March where the forthcoming activities were discussed and the next meeting in Luxemburg was planned.

CASE STUDY: FLEXIBLE TRANSPORT SERVICES IN BYALA

During the visit to Byala municipality, situated 50 km south of Varna, the offer of flexible transport services for inhabitants and tourists was presented to project partners and stakeholders from the other regions. The representatives from the municipality offered a warm welcome to the visitors according to the ancient Bulgarian tradition with bread and salt, served by girls in traditional folklore costumes.

Byala is a small seaside town with 3,800 inhabitants and beautiful nature, sunny virgin beaches and rich cultural heritage. The shore of Byala is a rocky one, with nesting inlets and large beach strips.



The hilly slopes of the east Balkan mountains are covered with forests rich of game and rare wood plants. At the cape Sveti Atanas, an ancient settlement and a cult center containing a temple, ritual hearths and pits with interesting findings deposited have been discovered.

During the high season (June-September), many tourists spend their holidays in Byala. Some of the guests have their own summer flats in the resort area of the municipality. The distance from Byala centre to the resort area is 2-5 km. To cover this distance mostly private cars and taxis were formerly used.

In 2014, the municipality allowed private citizens to offer transportation with horse-drawn carriages and one year later an electric minibus for sight-seeing was purchased and launched during the summer season. During summer time, 4 carriages are operating. The main beneficiaries are the tourists who circulate between city centre, the antique fortress and the beach.

The number of visitors in Byala increased by 10 % since 2014. Nearly all of them use the e-minibus and carriages, thus demonstrating the importance of this local sustainable transportation. The access by cars to the antique fortress is forbidden.

FOR UPCOMING
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TRANSFERABILITY

Interview with Łukasz Dzioch

How would you describe Dziwnów Municipality?

"Dziwnów is a municipality of extraordinary tourism potential. It is located in the north-western part of the Westpomerania voivodeship between the shores of the Baltic Sea, Kamieński Lagoon and the narrow of Dziwna (Strait) River. Dziwnów has 18 kilometres of coastline with some of the widest beaches on the Baltic Sea and the proximity of the Wolin National Park and access to different types of water areas creates perfect conditions for the development of various forms of tourism."

What has been paid special attention in the framework of a study visit in Varna?

"Especially we analysed solutions in Byala because of similar scale (similar population - about 2500), and similar general conditions.

An example may be a significant distance from the large urban centres. For Dziwnów is the city of Szczecin and in the case of the Byala its Varna and Burgas. We also paid attention to Golden Sands resort - the most visited beach in Bulgaria, located about 13 km from Varna."

What flexible transport systems solutions would be possible to transfer to Dziwnów?

"We should definitely pay attention to the flexible transport systems adapted to seasonal demand. Here we should highlight examples of transport system organized by the Byala municipality in the form of an electric minibus. In season, it provides toll-free connection between the town center and a distant attraction in the form of the archaeological museum. In the Golden Sands resort, complementary public transport in the form of vehicle-drawn cars (carriages) significantly shorten the route for tourists and is an additional attraction. An interesting solution was the presentation of an electric car from a local rental company, which has a range of about 80 km, so it is sufficient to visit Varna surroundings in the low-emission way. In all those cases, increasing transport accessibility has influenced the attractiveness of the tourist area. This could be an interesting inspiration for implementation of flexible transport solutions in Dziwnów."

ŁUKASZ DZIOCH
Deputy Mayor - Dziwnów Municipality,
member of local stakeholder group of project partner 7



REGIONAL ANALYSIS OF FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS AND BARRIERS – FIRST RESULTS

In the frame of the regional analysis, the main framework conditions were analysed and obstacles in establishing and operating Flexible Transport Services (FTS) were identified. Therefore, a survey was drafted to identify main issues hindering the implementation of FTS. Thus, in this study, it was necessary to think about the concrete and situation-wise hurdles and barriers for a region to implement flexible transport solutions. The survey was split into four different categories of possible barriers and related questions, namely institutional -, economic -, legal - and other barriers. In the end of February 2017, partners finalized the survey and first results could be presented.

Within a workshop at the third partner meeting in Varna/Bulgaria the most relevant results were discussed among the partners. Those results showed up the need for action that partners should consider in their further development of the regional action plans.

MAIN BARRIERS OF THE REGIONS:

REGULATORY BARRIERS

- missing national or regional legislation for implementation of flexible transport
- low decision-making power by municipalities / regions for implementing flexible transport

INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

- political barriers and decisions hinder implementation
- Lack of collaboration between local stakeholders

ECONOMIC BARRIERS

- missing financial support from national / regional level
- missing funding schemes for flexible transport systems

OTHER BARRIERS

- missing education (school, out-of school) for sustainable transport
- risks in acceptance of use of flexible transport offers

The final synopsis of all regional analysis of framework conditions will be elaborated by Regional Management East Tyrol until May. The consolidated findings of the joint analysis will finally flow into the general synthesis report at the end of phase 1 with overall conclusions and policy recommendations.



THE IMPORTANCE OF THE LAST MILE PROJECT FOR RURAL AREAS

Interview with Radovan Hužvík

How are you involved in the project?

"As a stakeholder, I'm participating in the partner meetings and especially at interregional exchange of experience in order to get familiar with the flexible transport solutions and how does it work abroad and think about the possibilities of how to implement the flexible system into our public transport system."

Why is it interesting for your region to take part in this project?

"In view of the character of the region and very different transport needs of the inhabitants and tourists the project is particularly inspiring in building of the updated transport system in our region. Inspiration from abroad can be used not only for the creation of an independent transport system, but also as an option for modification of the current public transport systems in the region."

What potential do you see for your region?

"It is necessary to create favourable economic and legislative conditions in Slovakia as an impulse for cooperation between entrepreneurs (accommodation and recreational services), local governments and transport providers. Identification of economic and legal barriers is one of the first tasks to be undertaken towards application of the FTS in the Košice region."

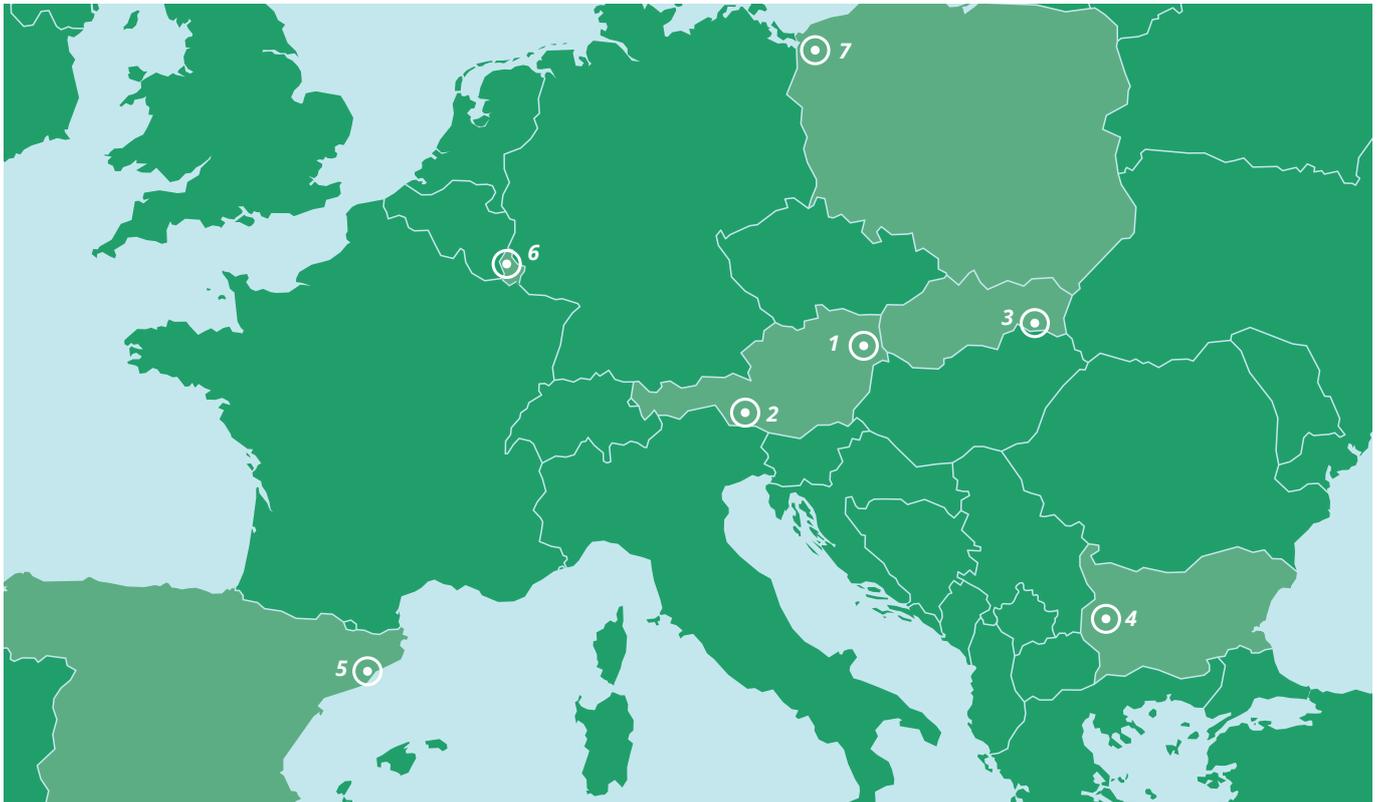
One question to the project partner (Agency for the Support of Regional Development Kosice):

How is the work with your stakeholder Mr. Hužvík?

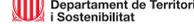
"From our point of view, involving Mr. Hužvík into the project will ensure better utilization and application of the lessons learned from the exchange of experience into the transport system in the region. Mr. Hužvík is an employee of the Transport Department of the Office of the Košice Self-governing Region that ensures ordering of regular bus services in the public interest, approval of timetables, granting of the transport licenses."

RADOVAN HUŽVÍK
Representing the Transport - Department of the Košice Self-governing region

THE PROJECT PARTNERS



- 1 Environment Agency Austria (Austria)
- 2 Regional Management East Tyrol (Austria)
- 3 Agency for the Support of Regional Development Kosice (Slovakia)
- 4 Club " Sustainable Development of Civil Society " (Bulgaria)
- 5 Mobility and Transport Direction. Ministry of Territory and Sustainability. Government of Catalonia (Spain)
- 6 Upper Sûre Nature Park (Luxembourg)
- 7 Westpomeranian Voivodeship - Regional Office for Spatial Planning of Westpomeranian Voivodeship (Poland)



ALL ABOUT LAST MILE AT:

www.interreguope.eu/lastmile

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