



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund



OPTITRANS ERFURT PEER REVIEW 18-19 MARCH 2019

REPORT

Version 2
Date: 19 April 2019

Peer reviews

Each region/country will be peer reviewed by a small group of other regions/countries




- *Who: 4-5 persons representing different partner territories (OptiTrans project managers and external stakeholders)*
- *Preparatory half-day training in Berlin (4th September 2018)*
- *Before the visit:*
 - *team members get to know each other and exchange via Skype or similar*
 - *baseline study provided by reviewed partner as starting point*
- *During the visit...*
 - *arrival day dinner with local project manager and selected stakeholders*
 - *interviews and small workshops with local stakeholders (minimum: researcher, business representative, public authority representative) and those responsible for the implementation (management) of the selected policy*
 - *review team may split up to cover more*
 - *final day: public presentation and discussion of peer review findings*
- *After the visit:*
 - *team review members elaborate a joint report summarising the review*
 - *production of recommendations for the reviewed territory/partner*
 - *side effects include better knowledge about another partner territory's good practices and challenges – and possibilities to transfer successful approaches*




*Following the peer review visit, a comprehensive written report should summarize the review's implementation, describe the learning effects of the participants and give recommendations to the policy actors of the visited and reviewed territory. The report is elaborated under the responsibility of the peer review team leader, usually a member of the OptiTrans project team, with all other peer review team members as well as the project manager of the local partner in the reviewed territory contributing. Those having participated in peer review visits will brief the local project manager and their own Stakeholder Support Group about their findings abroad to share their learning. The report is drafted in English language and **must be available at the latest four weeks following the peer review. Its length should be around 10 pages (content, without index, open page, etc.) and photos and presentations used during the visit should be added as an appendix.***

A Peer review overview

A.1 Peer review team

Brief presentation of the peer review team members:

	<p>Sotiris Serdenis, Region of Thessaly (GREECE). Member of External Expert project team</p> <p>Management Consultant of EU co-funded and national projects for various local, regional and national public authorities.</p> <p>Educational background Economist/ MSc Management Information Systems.</p> <p>Email: sotiser@gmail.com</p>
	<p>Paul PECE, Baia Mare City (ROMANIA) Project manager in OptiTrans Project, Project partner.</p> <p>Executive Director of the Baia Mare Metropolitan Area Intercommunity Development Association. His attributions include coordinating the Association's activity, coordinating the implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy of the Baia Mare Metropolitan Area as well as the implementation of the Public Transport Programme in the Baia Mare Metropolitan Area.</p> <p>Educational background: Bachelor's Degree in Economics-Accounting and Masters Degree in Administrative Sciences-Public Administration.</p> <p>E-mail: paul.pece@zmbm.ro</p>
	<p>Bogdan BREBAN, Baia Sprie Town (ROMANIA) Stakeholder in the OptiTrans Project.</p> <p>Head of the EU Projects and Strategies Department at Baia Sprie Town Hall. His attributions include coordinating and monitoring the department in order to implement the ongoing projects and ensure they are implemented according to the application forms; communication with the Managing Authority and Intermediate Bodies.</p> <p>Educational background: Bachelor's Degree in Engineering and Economics-Marketing.</p> <p>E-mail: integrare@baiasprie.ro</p>

	<p>Irene Sigismondi, Abruzzo Region (Italy)</p> <p>Dr.Irene Sigismondi, graduated in Law in 1995 (LUISS Univ. Rome) and obtained a Ph.D., in law and information technology in 2003 (Sapienza Univ. Rome), She combines her professional experience as attorney at law and management consultant, with research and teaching collaborations with Universities and Research Institutions, focusing on the field of innovation and law within different sectors. She has been fellow at the YCIS - Yale Center for Internet Studies, research post-doc at IRSIG-CNR Institute of the Italian National Center for Research, and since 2011 she is fellow at the NCTDR, National Center for Technology and Dispute Resolution in USA. She is currently working as external expert for Regione Abruzzo (Italy) in a EU funded Project related to transport and innovation and was delegated by the Head of Service and Project Coordinator, Avv. Paola Di Salvatore, to participate to this Baseline Study Peer Review Committee.</p> <p>Email: sigismondi.innotrans@gmail.com</p>
	<p>Tobia Monaco, Abruzzo Region (Italy)</p> <p>Manager of Transport Planning Office and interim manager of Public Transport Office in Transport Department of Regione Abruzzo. Previous experiences in the Abruzzo Region as manager in Health Planning Office, as Responsible for Studies and Planning in the Presidency and as Member of Regional Group for the Evaluation of Public Investments..</p> <p>Educational Background: Degree in Economics Master in Management of Local Development</p> <p>E-mail: tobia.monaco@regione.abruzzo.it</p>
	<p>Marija Fantela Knezevic, Liburnija d.o.o. (Croatia) Stakeholder in the OptiTrans Project.</p> <p>She is responsible for planning, analysis and development in public transport company Liburnija d.o.o. in Zadar. Her work scope also includes public procurement financed by EU funds.</p> <p>Educational background: Bachelor's Degree in Economics-Marketing</p> <p>E-mail: marija.fantela.knezevic@liburnija-zadar.hr</p>

	<p>Ivana Vrsaljko, City of Zadar, Senior associate for EU funds</p> <p>Senior asociate in Department for EU funds in City of Zadar. She has master's degree in Italian language and literature and bachelor degree in French language and literature. She also participated in various trainings regarding applying and implementing EU funds and public procuriment trainings. She works on various EU and national projects and various Programmes regarding mobility, culture etc. The main goal of the mobility projects she works on is the optimisation of local transport system and the decrease of the traffic jam in the old city during the touristic season and the decrease of emission of CO2 in the city center.</p> <p>E-mail: ivana.vrsaljko@grad-zadar.hr</p>
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A.2 Peer review implementation

Annexed to this document information about the Official Agenda and the “Feedback Form for Peers” will provide clear information and evaluation of the activities carried out during the peer review visit.

B Characteristics of Public Transport Policies for Green Mobility in rural areas

The settlement pattern, population development and economic welfare of Thuringia are the main factors of the traffic trends and mobility status. The settlement structure is characterized by urban agglomeration along the Thuringian string of cities and predominantly rural, small and medium-sized towns in the hinterland. As regards population there is a constant demographic decline in general while there is an increase in the number of inhabitants in cities with strong economic development (e.g. Erfurt, Jena). In terms of transport infrastructure, the road network is well equipped with a high level of density, while the rail network plays an important role, since Erfurt is the main hub for long-distance train services in Thuringia. There is also a tram system in five cities which is continuously expanded and improved being an important asset for the local public transportation. On the other hand the infrastructure for cycling is mainly for leisure and bike tourism and therefore commuting by bike still lacks behind. Even within the cities the conditions for everyday cycling are still rudimentary.

As regards mobility trends, the private car is the main mode of transport. As for public transport there is a strong demand between the places along the string of cities, which during peak hour operates close to the limit of its capacity. Lower transport demand arises mainly in

regions without sufficient commuter flow. School pupils' transfer is often the main transport service in the rural area.

In Germany the federal states are responsible for the public rail transport whereas the counties are responsible for the public road transport. In Thuringia the state has transferred the management of the public rail transport to NVS, which is a cooperation held with 90% by the Thuringian state and by 10% by the Association of Thuringian Counties. More particular NVS is responsible on behalf of TMIL for the management and organisation of the public railway service, the contract controlling with the transport operators, demand analysis, infrastructure planning and marketing. In terms of green mobility, 30% of the tracks are electrified.

At a regional level the counties the responsibility if the public road transport lies with the counties. The organisational structure is quite complex as there are three types of road transport associations (association of transport companies, association of transport authorities and a mix of both, companies and authorities).

In Thuringia there are nine different transport associations from which two of them are integrated associations combining road and rail transport services whereas the other seven are groups of public road transport operators usually serving as tariff and marketing associations. MDV is the transport association in the county of Altenburg which operates cross-border transportation as the mobility pattern is connected with the agglomeration of Leipzig.

On the other hand VMT operates as the major association of transport companies with integrated ticketing in central Thuringia, including most of the area of Thuringian string of cities (Gotha, Erfurt, Weimar, Jena and Gera, so called Pearl Chain) and with a trend for extension to the areas of west and south Thuringia. Through VMT integrated ticketing for intermodal connections (train, bus, tram and car-sharing) is applied by 13 transport operators. Transport information is available through VMT website, VMT app, timetable information at stops, personal customer support, phone, flyers etc. The advantage of using VMT is mainly for commuters with intermodal connections. Passengers of intra-regional transportations are not in favour of using VMT because of fare prices.

WartburgMobil is an example of the public transport authority in the Wartburg region that operates according to the EU- regulation 1370/2007. By merging two former public owned transport companies under the strategic document "PT in Wartburg Region" and analysing the transport demand through the "Local transport plan", WartburgMobil operates as the transport authority in the region. Regarding green mobility, it is foreseen the purchase of two e-buses for short-term routes within the city of Eisenach. In future, e-buses are to be operated in the selected routes in the countryside of Bad Salzungen. Moreover, in Wartburg region there are initiatives that promote e-mobility. The projects "Carla" and "Elisa" are examples of promoting the use of e-cars by offering car-sharing and car-pooling services.

At city level, EVAG is the responsible organisation for the transportation in Erfurt. EVAG is a municipal company that offered transportation services (bus and tram) to 54 Mio passengers in 2018. The fleet consists of 79 trams (76 of them PwD accessible) and 63 diesel

buses (60 of them barrier free/ PwD). E buses are not foreseen as an option since they have low autonomy level and it is not allowed to be purchased by ERDF. The Ministry of Environment of Thuringia has certified EVAG for Environmental Sustainability.

The Thuringian government under the lead of the Ministry of Environment is currently preparing a climate legislative package. The climate legislative package defines climate protection targets including greenhouse gas reduction targets for the decades ahead. The target of reducing greenhouse gases is set by 60 to 70% until 2030 compared with 1990. The legislative package is well under its way in the legislative process but has still to pass the state parliament.

As regards CO₂ reduction strategy, The Thuringian government under the lead of Ministry of Environment is currently preparing a legislative package that is accompanied by a climate action plan which defines the measure to accomplish the reduction targets. In the field of passenger transport, the Thuringian government aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and transform the conditions for public transport towards a more sustainable system by seven measures:

1. Promoting cycling to gain a greater share in modal split
2. Attractive public transport services
3. Electrification of the railway infrastructure
4. Support of a state-wide charging infrastructure for electro-mobility
5. Integrated settlement and transport development
6. Communication Strategy on Mobility and Transport
7. Sustainable Mobility Plans in the municipalities

C Good practices

VMT

VMT as transport association in central Thuringia allow for intermodal bus and rail transport with integrated ticketing.

Intermodality in PT access points

The New Central Bus Stations in Eisenach and Bad Salzungen and the train station in Erfurt.

Carla & Elisa

Car-sharing and car-pooling e-mobility initiatives in rural areas.

D Policy context

The OptiTrans project addresses one specific policy instrument in each participating territory, being in Thuringia the O.P Priority axis 3, Thematic objective 4, Investment priority 4e Investment priority 4e Promoting of low-carbon strategies for all types of territories, in particular in urban areas, including the supporting of sustainable multimodal urban mobility and adaptation of measures to mitigate the impact of climate change, Measure 2c) Investments in public transport through the promotion of demonstration projects. Thus, the peer review team learnt the following things about it:

- a. The main funding of the public rail transport service in Thuringia is exclusively provided by the resources of the Regionalisation Law.
- b. There are projects, such as “Elisa” funded by the Federal Plan “Long-term Covering of Service for Public and of Mobility in Rural Areas.
- c. Buses are not allowed to be purchased by ERDF. In case of tram, the ERDF co-finance rate is up to 40%.
- d. There is no federal law about transport, although maintenance is regulated at the central level and there are problems in permission of constructions in transport sector for big infrastructure building.
- e. There is lack of integration among the Plans at various levels (City, County, Land): the legal acts concerning planning (e.g. SUMP) have to be integrated, but implementation and integration is at the beginning.
- f. Mainly at European, National, and Regional levels there are different projects being implemented in the region at the moment. For example: Multimodal bus station in Eisenach.
- g. National strategy is in line with European strategy on greener mobility, and the policies implemented at regional level and in the city are in the same line.

E Interviews field trip

On the first day, the participants discussed issues related to the organization of the regional transport in Thuringia with members of TMIL and NVS. Following, the members of the peer review team had a meeting with the CEO of VMT who presented the strategy and the challenges of the organization. Later, the participants visited EVAG where the organization of the transport in Erfurt was presented along with an exchange of good practices and ideas on modern and sustainable mobility with the General Director and the Technical Director. After the discussions, the participants were taken to the EVAG depot for a guided tour. In 2018 the Ministry of Environment awarded EVAG a certificate for CO₂ sustainability: e.g. lighting in the maintenance working station hits the target of sustainable energy and shows the effort to change employing environment and relationship with employees. The first day of

the peer review meeting ended at the Erfurt train station where the representative of Deutsche Bahn informed the team about the operation of Germany's main train transport hub.

The second day of the meeting included field trip to Wartburg. The participants started the morning with a visit to Eisenach new Central Bus Station where the representatives from the municipality gave insights of the construction and the operation of the station. Following, participants were transferred to Bad Salzungen where they visited the new Central Bus Station. Later, the new orientation of public transport in Wartburg County was presented in the premises of Wartburg Mobil which is a public transport authority. The peer review team had the opportunity to discuss with the Vice Governor of the county and the CEO of Wartburg Mobil issues regarding the strategy of the organization, operational issues, funding challenges and future plans by exchanging experiences from the participating countries. The final meeting took part in where innovative actions of e-mobility initiatives presented to the participants and particularly car-pooling and car-sharing projects by introducing e-cars in the rural area of Bad Liebenstein and Bad Salzungen.

During the peer review meeting Erfurt the members of the team had the opportunity to experience as users various means of transportation (tram, bus and train).

F Recommendations

At the end of the peer review, and considering the policy context, the main actors' ability and will to promote policy changes, and the knowledge about good practices and the knowledge about the real world situation in Thuringia, team review members are impressed about the general situation especially concerning the future actions already planned. Nevertheless, some improvements are identified, and the following recommendations are given:

- A concentration of the responsibilities of the transport authorities in order to gain economy of scale for transport services
- Expansion of VMT in order to become the major transport association on central Thuringia.
- Radical restrictions towards private car in order to facilitate the modal shift towards cycling or public transport.
- Transport demand analysis in rural areas and targeted services for intra-regional passengers.
- Commuters should be addressed as a target group with personalized services.
- Surveys to passengers in regular basis to evaluate the transport services and define additional needs (age or geographically-related needs: school, work, university, elderly community)
- Harmonisation of tariffs (Gotha- Gera area) and reduce complexity in tariff's structure.
- Increase the electrification rate of the railway tracks.

- Improve the overall infrastructure for cycling, in order for it to become an alternative to the use of private cars.

G General remarks

Finally the peer review team members also have collected remarks about the general situation and their impressions:

- Public transportation infrastructure and offer is quite valuable and capillar, and firmly oriented in the direction of green and sustainable mobility. It could be complemented by a survey and monitoring action on geographic and age-related needs, in terms of transport demand, in order to encourage also offer of differentiated services by private companies.
- The public transport system in Erfurt is well organized, and aims both at constantly improving the comfort and safety of the passengers as well as moving towards an eco-friendly transport. Two examples of passenger comfort in the use of the public transport system are the e-ticketing system and the mobile app.
- Although the road transport system is well organized, there are still improvements to be made in order for citizens to change from private car to public means of transport.

H List of bibliography/ references

- Baseline Study Thuringia
- OptiTrans database of Good Practices
- Presentations given within the peer review by local stakeholders

I Annex section

- Agenda of peer review visit
 - Peer Review Presentation
 - Lists of participants
 - Photos taken during the peer review
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- ANNEX 1 - Feedback of Peers_OptiTrans
 - ANNEX 2 - Checklist_OptiTrans