



European Union  
European Regional  
Development Fund



# **OPTITRANS TARTU PEER REVIEW 2-5 OCTOBER 2018**

# **REPORT**

Version 1  
Date: 08 Oct 2018

## 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 (4<sup>th</sup> 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><b>Gonzalo Esteban López, Granada (SPAIN)</b>  <u>OptiTrans technical project responsible. Project Partner</u></p> <p>Educational background as Physician, Astrophysics. Previous experience as private consultant, and working in the Energy Agency of Granada as Sustainable Energy Expert for the last 14 years on projects related to energy audits, renewable energy installation promotion, sustainable transport studies, sustainable urban development plans, active mobility, efficient public lighting, detection of renewable energies resources, etc.; supporting municipalities to realize the aforementioned tasks.</p>
	<p><b>María Isabel Fiestas Carpena, Granada (SPAIN)</b>  <u>Interreg OptiTrans Stakeholder. Interreg Europe TRAM Project manager on the side of Public Works Agency of the Andalusia Regional Government.</u></p> <p>Educational background as Civil Engineer. Working in the Agency since 2007, as part of the technical assistance team for the Mobility General Directorate of the Regional Government, involving a wide range of areas going from Trams to bike networks. Responsible for the managing of sustainable urban and mobility Research Projects carried out by different Andalusia Universities partially financed from European funds, during the period 2011-2015. Previous experience of 6 years in the private sector, involved in urban development plans, including both projects drafting and implementation works management.</p>
	<p><b>Ananta Ardelean, Baia Mare (ROMANIA)</b>  <u>Communication Expert in OptiTrans Project. Project Partner. Communication Specialist in the Communication and Public Relations Department of the Association.</u></p> <p>The representative's attributions include promoting the public transport system, communication with project partners, stakeholders of the project and with other members of the &lt;Baia Mare Metropolitan Area&gt; Association, and any other person of interest to the Association. Educational background: Legal adviser.</p>
	<p><b>Simona Fabian, Baia Mare (ROMANIA)</b>  <u>Interreg OptiTrans Stakeholder. Representative of Baia Mare City Hall, which is a stakeholder in the OptiTrans Project.</u></p> <p>Counsellor for Baia Mare City Hall - Projects and Strategies Department, and also Project Manager on EU funded projects implemented by the institution. Educational background: Engineer.</p>

Finally no partners from Abruzzo Region came to the peer review, so the team was made up of the Spanish and Romanian partners alone.

### 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**

As presented to the Town hall of Tartu in the last meeting of the agenda, the Peer review team has reached the following general conclusions regarding the development of public transport policies in the region of Tartu:

1. There is a clear national strategy to promote P. Transport and Green Mobility at state level, and for this we can mainly mention the PUBLIC TRANSPORT ACT, as other strategic documents, the active promotion of electro mobility, the policies implemented at county level with more budget to promote free P. Transport since July 2018, or the technical regulations to develop bike lanes.
2. As well, Tartu County is promoting better mobility through the help of the State. Nevertheless at this level there are some issues to be solved on coordination of lines/policies in some aspects, and mainly on improving frequency and commercial speed, as well as reaching low density populations.
3. Speaking about the City of Tartu, it's clearly trying to coordinate with all surrounding municipalities, as well as at county and state levels. Moreover, it has been planning in the last years the total redesign of transport infrastructures, has already identified most of the existing problems, and its already implementing most of the solutions needed at first stage. Not only that, but the city is constantly searching for innovative solutions to improve the way the citizens move, involving citizens through a participatory annual budget, and some other participation processes.

At the current stage, the main actions to improve mobility that have been recently developed, are being developed, or are in an advanced phase of development are:

- Improvement of pedestrian zones and less parking zones / redistribution of parking zones in Tartu City. Already developed a little part, more to be implemented in the coming two years.
- New bike/pedestrian lanes in coordination of state, county, and neighbouring municipalities. Already completed bike “circle”, and under construction, public procurement, deployment of rest of the planned network. As well some lanes finished connecting with neighbouring municipalities.
- New bike sharing system in Tartu city. Under public procurement process.

- New smart cities system to prioritize light traffic in crossings in Tartu city. Under planning procedure.
- Renovation of public transport buses operator, and thus renovation of bus fleet and conditions and all buses will run on Natural Gas with the aim of Biogas if available. Public procurement already finished, new operator will take control of Tartu city buses in summer 2019.
- Redesign of city bus routes to increase its effectiveness and the time length and frequency. In the final stage of design and participatory procedure, will get into force with the change of bus operator in summer 2019.
- Implementation of some DRT demand responsive transport at county level with shuttles service, and at planning stage at city level.
- Connection of Train and Bus stations with pilot project with electrical bus for season 2018-2019.
- Urban planning at city level to develop new projects of improvements of conditions for pedestrians and bike users, as well as limit of speed/access/parking to private vehicles. Already some measures were implemented, but the works will continue at least for the coming two years.
- New parking places in the outskirts of the city and new parking policies. Already implemented or ongoing.
- 4 EV fast-chargers for public use to be installed in the city centre. Public procurement process already done, to be implemented in the following weeks.

Speaking about main barriers for PT in sparsely settled areas and innovation inclusion in Public Transport to improve it in rural areas, the main conclusions are that the main problem is the low density of course, and thus there is a need of more development of DRT services, and a need to analyze its correct dimension (with smaller buses and/or taxis if needed). Of course, the use of mobile and/or integrated cash card to pay all means of bus and to search for information about public transport is of great help. IT would be interesting to study the development of a MaaS scheme that includes buses, trains, taxis, electrical taxis, and other transport means such as the new bikesharing system or the private carsharing system already in the city.

Finally about main actors and driving forces that control mobility policies within the region are the ones stated in the Baseline study:

- State controls the national policies, legal framework, roads/bike lanes design, construction and maintenance, public procurement of trains, as well as county budget for public transport (buses). So it has a very important and active role in the region.

- County takes the money of the state, applies its policies, and operates the bus lines, but it seems its role is not as important as it should be, and has to negotiate with state and municipalities.
- Tartu City is of course a very important actor as is the main attraction pole of the region, with most of the population and with own budget and policies to promote green mobility.
- National ELRON trains company has an active role negotiating and implementing public trains service. But the use of trains is nowadays not so important.
- Other public transport operators are as well important actors, as well as citizens associations, but their role is not as important as the control of policies and regulation of services is in the hand of previous public administrations, which nevertheless take them into account.

## C Good practices

During the peer review different good practices already identified in the OptiTrans project were discussed, as well some new good practices were mentioned as useful for the local experience. To sum up those good practices, we mention here a brief description of each one:

**Pesaro bike network implementation:** The city of Pesaro in the Marche region in Italy has reached around 30% split mode of bikers through implementation of different policies that are combined in its “BICIPOLITANA” initiative. A continuous a connected network of bike lanes, well maintained and with a very good signalization combined with a metro-type map to be able to reach main points of the city by bike. As we spoke with the Cyclists association in Tartu, and with the information of the Baseline, some of the weak points of the local bike promotion are solved in this good practice.

**Pontevedra pedestrianization:** The city of Pontevedra, in the northwest of Spain has achieved to reduce its car modal split from over 80% to around 50% through implementation of a wide analysis of its car traffic, and through implementation of different strategies that combine pedestrianization, roads regulation, speed limits, free MULTIMODAL parking’s in the outskirts of the city, ring road implementation, etc. One of the main weaknesses identified in the peer review was the lack of information about traffic, and the lack of analysis and indicators of reduction of car transit with implementation of some public policies/measures. Thus, this good practice can help significantly in this area.

**Freiburg urban planning with mobility issues:** The city of Freiburg has implemented within its urban planning policies the obligation of taking into account the public transport network before planning new urban developments. This way they prevent the urban sprawl with no basic services. This good practice was commented with some stakeholders and they already knew about it, but it was not clear why they didn’t considered it, or how was the

strategy to prevent the urban sprawl that is one of the main problems associated to mobility nowadays in the region, that is predicted to rise.

**Andalusia DRT system based on Taxis:** In Andalusia in the south of Spain, within the OptiTrans project was identified a good practice of demand responsive transport based on taxis in small rural areas where even small buses are not feasible because of such a low demand in these places. The region of Andalusia has been implementing pilot projects with agreements with taxi drivers and municipalities for the last two years, and the experience has been until now quite good and being prepared right now to be included in the new public procurements of Public Transport Consortiums. Probably this is the good practice that interested the most to local stakeholders, as they were already thinking to replicate it at local level.

Finally, speaking about the peer review team, the experience of Electrical Vehicles promotion in the country, the unification of payment methods at different levels, or others were very interesting but already known. The main good practice that was seen most useful to peer review team was the Tartu City Public transport procurement process (8 years long, total renovation of the fleet with as green as possible buses, total control of policies kept in the townhall), as well as the own resources dedicated to public transport in the city.

## **D Policy context**

The OptiTrans project addresses one specific policy instrument in each participating territory, being in Tartu region **MULTIMODAL MOBILITY**. Thus, the peer review team learnt the following things about it:

- a. The main objective is to rise the use of green means of transport with improvement of multimodality. The main multimodal policies are developed within Tartu city as main attractor centre. In the rural surrounding region, the main policies are the implementation of DRT shuttle services that take citizens to main centres of municipalities, and connection of bike lanes with Tartu city bike network. Speaking about the city, different measures are being implemented, such as free parking near the train station, connection of bus and train station, connection of bike lane network to main attraction centres and bike parking's, or bike sharing system connected to other means of transport.
- b. These policy changes are mainly anticipated by the institutions that are in decision-making power, but sometimes are placed after a suggestion from citizens (as for example the pilot project of electrical bus connecting bus and train station).
- c. Speaking about these policies, there have not been indicated specific factors as crucial to achieve a better multimodality. The measures are implemented and with the



experience after implementation can be corrected to produce better results, but not specific critical factor have been defined

- d. Mainly the actions taken now seem to be in the right direction to achieve a better multimodality. Nevertheless it would be better to think more in the needs of users to implement improved solutions of multimodality (for example better bike parking's in multimodal centres, specific services or payment methods to connect different ways of transport, MaaS services, etc.).

Extended information about this section can be found in the checklist of “Optimization of Public Transport Policies for Green Mobility” in the annex section of this document, as for example the new free public transport policy at state level for all counties.

## E Recommendations

At the end of the peer review, and considering the policy context (quite favorable as for example The Estonian's National Transport Development Plan includes promotion of MULTIMODALITY and clean means of transport), the main actors' ability and will to promote policy changes (quite favorable as well), and the knowledge about good practices (the local stakeholders seem to have seen different good practices and know already which things to adapt and replicate), team review members are impressed about the general good situation of the region, and the future actions already planned. Nevertheless, some improvements are identified, and the following recommendations are given:

- 1) Even if the situation is quite good right now, a new mobility center is going to be created in the city of Tartu, and it doesn't seem that enough **COORDINATION** with the county mobility center is planned. As well, new free public transport policy at state/county level hasn't been coordinated with municipalities, and doesn't seem to have clear **INDICATORS** on the success of this action. Indeed we learnt that in Tallinn Public Transport is free, and the mobility share of private vehicles is quite bad there. Even if a quite increase of nearly 35% of use of Public Transport has been achieved already in the first 3 months of implementation, some problems have arisen among different regional P. Transport services, as well as more resources are needed now, and no clear reduction of cars is demonstrated (the measure can increase votes and not needed use of public transport, such as leisure, but not demonstrated the ability to reduce car traffic).

**TO IMPROVE THIS** more **COORDINATION** amongst different administrations and private operators is needed, and even with the current legislation our partners think this is not an easy question the recommendation should be to study the good practice of **BAIA MARE** to promote coordination at state level in metropolitan areas, or the good practice of coordination of **ANDALUSIAN** 9 metropolitan consortiums. As well, the evaluation of taken measures should be improved with implementation of periodical measure of multimodal share through traffic meters and specific mobility capacity studies to be included in the Action Plan.

- 2) **LACK OF BUS DRIVERS** → We learnt that the private operators have problems to find bus drivers as local people think the salary (around 900 €) and the shifts are bad, and there is not much motivation. To improve this, the private operators implement better facilities for them, and pay free courses to people willing to work as bus driver (with the condition of working in the company for a minimum amount of time).

**TO IMPROVE THIS**, a possible new working line could be to work with European **EURES** work mobility program (<https://ec.europa.eu/eures/public/en/homepage>) to give these courses to workers of other European Countries, including basic lessons on Estonian and probably Russian. As well, the city could apply to **ERASMUS+** European funding calls to promote this kind of workers exchange. As an example, in Granada over 20.000 people applied to the positions of Metro drivers last year with similar salaries.

- 3) Some neighboring **RURAL** communities really have scattered dwellings and this leads to really **LOW DEMAND** of public transport, with the need of maintaining minimum services. This model is not profitable, and thus difficult to maintain.

**TO IMPROVE THIS** the city of Tartu and the County are already applying an on demand shuttle service to some municipalities, as well as already plan to include in their action plan the good practice of **Andalusia DRT system based on Taxis**.

- 4) At state level **MULTIMODALITY** is promoted, as well as at regional and city level. Nevertheless this promotion could be improved as it seems that at the current stage mainly multimodal facilities are being constructed, but with not real multimodal use. For example different parking policies are implemented (change of prices, policy with prioritization of EV, less parking in the center, more free parking in the outside part of the city), as well some private bike parking's are promoted in the train station and other attraction centers, APPs such as "Easypark" are being promoted. All these measures are right, but no multimodality is achieved if infrastructures/policies are not coordinated and if good communication/signals and services are not implemented as well. We speak about safe parking spaces for bikes with additional services such as maintenance companies, routes mapping, combined services with public transport, good signaling. We speak about better timetable integration that can be worked with the townhall. We speak about combined payment of public parking's and public transport, information of possible connections with other mobility modes, etc.

**TO IMPORVE THIS** to good practices to be studied and included in the Action plan could be **Pesaro bike network implementation** or **Seville bike** promotion (for bike promotion and multimodal integration) and **Pontevedra pedestrianization** (for pedestrian promotion with car traffic policies and parking policies).

- 5) One of the main problems that Tartu region has currently is the good economical situation and the fast increase of **SPRAWL** urban development in the surroundings of the City.

**TO IMPROVE THIS**, the main good practice to study and be included in the Action Plan could be the one of **Freiburg urban planning with mobility issues**. Sadly in the

other regions we have a similar problem and is really a complex one to solve. The Urban developers of the City already know about it, and have it into account, and they are already planning the urban development of the city to 2030.

## **F List of bibliography**

- Tartu Baseline Study
- OptiTrans database of Good Practices
- Presentations given within the peer review by local stakeholders
- Covenant of Mayors site and Tartu city SEAP
- Mentions to framework policy documents at Estonian level within the Baseline study (such as PUBLIC TRANSPORT ACT or others)

## **G Annex section**

- Agenda of peer review visit
- Peer Review Presentation
- Suggestions of peer review team previous to the visit.
- Lists of participants
- Photos taken during the peer review
- Multimodal trip to Elva resume
- Slides shown to the peer review team during the activity (No presentation was given by peer review team, but more a chat over the main conclusions and exchange of opinions was made)
- ANNEX 1 - Feedback of Peers\_OptiTrans
- ANNEX 2 - Checklist\_OptiTrans