



REGIONAL ACTION PLAN

Part I – General information

Project: **SCHOOL mobility CHALLENGE in regioNal poliCiEs - SCHOOL CHANCE – PGI02068**_____

Partner organisation: **Brasov Metropolitan Agency for Sustainable Development**_____

Other partner organisations involved (if relevant): _____

Country: **ROMANIA**_____

NUTS2 region: **RO122**_____

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Part II – Policy context

The Action Plan aims to impact: **Investment for Growth and Jobs programme**
 European Territorial Cooperation programme
 Other regional development policy instrument

Name of the policy instrument addressed: Programul Operațional Regional 2014-2020 / Regional Operational Programme 2014-2020_____

ACTION 1 – Supporting the “learning to cycle in an urban environment” process for children in the Brasov area

1. The background

The SCHOOLCHANCE project has been a tremendous opportunity for the city of Braşov. The learning process and the opportunities for transferring good practices from regions which are more advanced in the field of sustainable urban mobility represents a chance for Braşov to advance in its endeavor to provide its citizens with higher quality of life and specifically with more sustainable urban mobility options.

During the 1st phase of the SCHOOLCHANCE project, the focus of the implemented activities has been on collecting good practices from partners and provide a framework for the effective exchange of experience among the cities / regions involved in the project consortium.

Initially, a series of good practices (GP) have been collected from each partner. The GPs that have been selected are in line with the theme of the project (“to” and “from” school mobility) and have been presented in such a manner that it would allow for an easy understanding as well as for identifying difficulties encountered as well as the potential for the transferability of said good practice.

Afterwards, partners had the opportunity to participate in Study Visits (SV) oriented toward detailing the GP’s identified by each partner as having the highest potential for successful transferability. In the case of Brasov, such good practices have proved to be the **“Utrecht Road Safety Label and School Zones”** combined with the **“Cycling exam – Cycle training in real traffic situations”** GP’s presented by the Utrecht Municipality. During the 1st study visit attended by a team of staff and Local Stakeholder Group (LSG) members from Braşov, these GP’s have been detailed and the infrastructure and the partnerships put in place by the Utrecht Municipality have been showcased in order to ensure an effective exchange of experience and common learning process as well as to facilitate the potential transfer of these practices to partner cities.

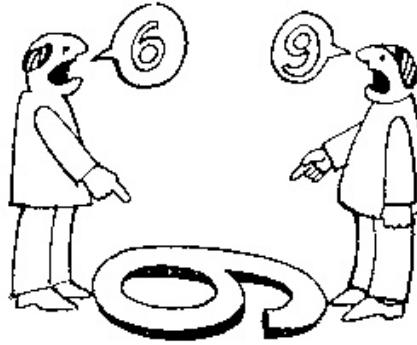
By having direct access to the details of the best practice, the Brasov delegation had the opportunity to learn about the background that led to the implementation of these good practices, the administrative and institutional prerequisites, the challenges of the implementation process, the benefits for all the stakeholders involved, etc. Most of all, the overarching argument is the involvement of relevant partners, both public and private with the common goal of ensuring all the necessary prerequisites for children to be able to cycle to and from school safely and provide the opportunity for sustainable urban mobility options for the young citizens of Utrecht.

The experience of the learning process and specifically the lessons learned during the Utrecht Study Visit have been shared with the entire Brasov local stakeholders’ group as well as with key policy makers in the Brasov local public administration

As a result of the exchange of experience and the common learning process implemented as part of the SCHOOLCHANCE project framework, the Brasov stakeholders came to the realization that:

- **Urban sustainable mobility is not a unidirectional endeavor** where the public bodies are the providers and the citizens are the client. It needs to be an effort made by both parties in order for the things to move in the right direction.
- It is crucial to **address the real challenges** for sustainable urban mobility. These challenges are

not easy to identify and there is a need for a **multi stakeholder perspective** in order to make sure that the challenges are correctly identified



- There is a **variety of stakeholders that need to be involved** in the continuous process of achieving sustainable urban mobility
- There is a clear need for **specifically adapted infrastructure** in order to achieve specific objectives

2. Action

As a result of the lessons learned during the 1st stage of the SCHOOLCHANCE project, the Brasov LSG together with the key policy makers in the Brasov Municipality worked together in order to assess the possibility of transferring the good practices identified within the framework of the project, especially those presented by the Utrecht Municipality.

Brasov is a city which is in the early stages of developing a cycling culture. During the last few years there has been a growing demand for cycling infrastructure that would contribute to a sustainable urban mobility approach. Currently, most of the cycling done by the citizens is leisure oriented. Families use cycling together as a way to spend quality time together and to visit the beautiful surroundings of Braşov.

The Municipality of Braşov is in the process of starting a cycling path network in Brasov that would reach the most important / frequented areas of the city. At first, two major cycle paths are going to be built with support from the European Regional Development Fund through the Regional Operational Programme 2014-2020. Two applications have been prepared by the Brasov metropolitan Agency for Sustainable Development and submitted for evaluation by the Municipality of Brasov. But, as mentioned above, we learned in Utrecht during the study visit that sustainable mobility is not achieved unilaterally and there is a clear need to understand the perspectives of all stakeholders.

On the one hand, the surveys that were done within the SCHOOLCHANCE project framework determined that the safety of the child during the trip to and from school is one of the major concerns of the parents. As a result, the option for the mobility option that is the least sustainable but perceived as the safest (driving to and from school) is often used by parents. This leads to a series of other issue related to traffic congestion in the school vicinity, parents willing to break traffic rules in the school vicinity in order to get to the destination faster, a lot of lost time and last but not least, a lack of independence on the part of the child.

During the discussion in the Brasov LSG and taking into account the lessons learned in Utrecht within the SCHOOLCHANCE project framework, LSG members underlined the need that, as in Utrecht, Brasov needs infrastructure dedicated to the “learning to cycle in an urban environment” process. This would allow parents and children to use a simulated urban environment in total safety in order to learn the basics of cycling in an urban setting.

After consultation with the key policy makers, the proposed action is to transform a currently unused area of land owned by the Municipality of Braşov into a theme park dedicated to learning how to cycle in urban communities.

The park will include all the facilities needed to simulate real traffic (intersections, crosswalk, roundabouts, road markings and signals), strait lines, turns, etc. in order to allow an effective learning process for future cyclists.

The proposal has been forwarded to key policy makers in the Municipality of Brasov. After analyzing the proposal, a decision has been made at the Brasov Municipality level to convert an otherwise unused space into a theme park which would allow children to learn how to cycle in an urban environment. The future park will have a total surface of 16.194 sqm and will include a “cycling in traffic learning zone”. This will run throughout the entire site and consists of creating a grassy area in which there are arranged bicycle paths equipped with all the specific elements of traffic movement - marking of traffic, lane marking pedestrian crossings, traffic signals, roundabouts, traffic lights, which in particular allow schoolchildren to learn how to safely ride a bicycle to school.

The park will also contain the following modules / indicative areas: - the basic rules learning area for cyclists, the assisted cycling in a straight line - the serpentine learning area, the simulation of uneven areas for initiated cyclists - the learning area of the rules of conduct. in traffic, simulating a traffic light and signalized intersection, as well as a roundabout. There will be also a specially designed testing area for assessing cyclists' skills and testing the degree of learning.

Based on the details described above, an application has been prepared and submitted for financing through the Regional Operational Programme 2014 – 2020 with financial support from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). Currently the project has passed through all the evaluation stages and is in its precontracting stage, with the start of the project estimated to take place in the beginning of 2020.

After the cycle learning infrastructure will be finalized, partnerships with relevant stakeholders are to be developed in order to provide the opportunities for theoretical learning as well as for relevant testing of the cycling skills learned (theoretical and practical). The proposal of the Brasov LSG is for the cycling NGO's in Brasov (one of which is member in the LSG) to provide a framework for organized classes dedicated to learning how to cycle in an urban environment.

3. Players involved)

The proposed action will involve various stakeholders at local and regional level. As it is currently foreseen, the relevant stakeholders that will be involved in this action will be:

- **Braşov Municipality** – it owns the land where the theme park will be developed. The Municipality of Braşov has applied for ERDF funding, will ensure the implementation of the project and will ensure the maintenance of the site
- **“Centru” Regional Development Agency** – this organisation is a member of the Brasov LSG and will act as intermediate body (under the supervision of the Regional Operational Programme Management Authority) to the Municipality of Braşov in the implementation of the ERDF funded project.
- **Cycling oriented NGO(s)** – most likely, a partnership will be developed between the municipality and one or more non-governmental organisations that are cycling oriented and that can provide dedicated classes to children who wish to learn how to cycle in an urban setting
- **Schools & kindergartens in the city of Braşov** – schools and kindergartens will provide, through their specific activities dedicated to teaching sustainable urban mobility a framework for children to use the proposed infrastructure in order to learn how to cycle safely.
- **Braşov Metropolitan Agency for Sustainable Development** – it will ensure the interface between the public administration and other relevant public and private stakeholders in order to ensure a

clear framework in which both theoretical and practical training are provided to children by certified professionals.

4. Timeframe

The proposed timeframe is as follows:

- January 2020 – May 2022 – Construction of the proposed infrastructure
- January 2021 – December 2021 – Development of partnerships with relevant stakeholders in order to ensure effective use of the proposed infrastructure

5. Costs (if relevant)

The construction of the proposed infrastructure will be financed by the ERDF through the Romanian REGIONAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 2014-2020. The estimated cost is 8,864,327.32 RON out of which 98% (8,687,040.77 RON) will be provided through ERDF and 2% (177,286.55 RON) will be earmarked from the Brasov city local budget.

6. Funding sources (if relevant):

For the construction of the proposed infrastructure, the funding source is the European Regional Development Fund through the Regional Operational Programme 2014 – 2020, axis 4 – “Supporting sustainable urban development”, operation 4.2 – “Reconversion and functionalization of vacant, unused or degraded land, in the municipalities”

ACTION 2 – School Mobility Managers

1. The background

During the Study Visit in Reggio Emilia the Brasov delegation had the opportunity to learn about the Mobility Managers Network as a support structure to deliver mobility related education (both theoretical and practical) to young children. The best practice showed that the mobility manager in a school acts also a resource integrator by being able to connect various available resources at local level in order to provide a wide curriculum of activities related to sustainable mobility behavior development.

During the study visit we understood how the network came into existence, what is the level of local support needed, how is the formal network set-up, what are the formal and informal interactions at network level, etc.

2. Action

Based on the lessons learned within the SCHOOLCHANCE project framework, the proposed action is to develop the role of Mobility Manager in schools that are willing to take on the role of trailblazers in setting up this best practice in the Brasov area.

As no legal / institutional framework is available, the intention is to setup this action initially at school level during the phase 2 of the SCHOOLCHANCE project and based on the expected outcome, to extend it to more schools that are willing to develop this position. In the long run, we hope that enough critical mass is being developed so the position of School Mobility Manager becomes formal and a real network with institutional support is created.

For the first stage, we intend to include the position of the Mobility Manager as one of the components needed to achieve the “Mobility Friendly School” Certification. As such, the methodology to certificate the schools which is being developed within the SchoolCHANCE phase 1 activities will include this position as a requirement. The intention is to link the existence of this position with the access to some local funding available from the Brasov Municipality’s budget

3. Players involved *(please indicate the organisations in the region who are involved in the development and implementation of the action and explain their role)*

The main stakeholders are the Brasov Metropolitan Agency for Sustainable Development as the developer and implementer of the certification methodology for mobility friendly schools, the schools that are interested in applying for the certification and their staff, the county school directorate as a support organisation that would, in the long run take over the task of supporting and developing the Mobility Manager Network

4. Timeframe

2020 – 2021 is estimated to be the first stage of the transfer and implementation of the good practice when 5-10 schools are estimated to implement this position within their staff structure. The schools will most likely be from the Brasov Metropolitan Area. Furthermore, after 2022, as more and more schools will join this initiative, the mobility managers network will start to function properly, taking on its inspiration from the Reggio Emilia’s experience and other similar initiatives

5. Costs

The cost of the transfer and implementation of this good practice is relatively low and is related strictly to the implementation of the certification methodology for the mobility friendly schools. Outside of this, each schools / mobility manager will decide the extend of the budgetary resources available for the specific activities related to developing sustainable urban mobility behaviors among children. The Brasov metropolitan Agency will also allocate resources for the initial support of the mobility managers network as more and more schools will join this initiative.

6. Funding sources

- Brasov Metropolitan Agency for sustainable Development operational budget
- Brasov Municipality local budget
- School budgets

ACTION 3 – SCHOOL ZONES)

1. The background *(please describe the lessons learnt from the project that constitute the basis for the development of the present Action Plan)*

Utrecht Municipality has presented, within the SchoolCHANCE project framework two GPs – School Safety Label and School Zones which are interconnected. During the study visit organized within the SchoolCHANCE project framework, a detailed description of these GP’s has been presented to the consortium members and LSG members present during the event. Further discussion within the Brasov LSG meetings consolidated the idea of transferring this best practice to Brasov.

The basis for this decision has been the need to identify the space adjacent to the schools as a “special needs” area in terms of urban mobility. The special needs relate to ensuring easy access to the school with various modes of locomotion, prioritizing pedestrian and bicycle access while restricting as much as possible car traffic in the vicinity of the school entrances, ensuring the visibility of the area and informing traffic (especially drivers) about the presence of children in the area, educating parents and children alike about the importance of sustainable urban mobility behavior, etc. The two GP’s are interconnected as in the case of Utrecht, getting the School Safety Label ensures the creation of a school zone in the vicinity of the school.

2. Action *(please list and describe the actions to be implemented)*

In the case of Brasov, the proposed action is related to the certification of mobility friendly schools and the existence of the mobility manager position at school level.

After the certification of mobility friendly schools and the setup of the mobility manager position (as a

requirement of the certification process), the organisations involved in the Brasov LSG will support the development of specific activities dedicated to developing sustainable urban mobility behavior. As these will evolve, a common effort from the Brasov LSG will push for the development of such an action - the creation of a school zone based on the model that Utrecht Municipality presented during the SchoolCHANCE project.

The school zone will be created with financial resources from the Brasov Municipality complemented by resources made available by the school itself, the organisations involved in the LSG and, as the case may be, parents of the students attending the respective school. The details of the actual school zone design will be definitive at the time of the implementation, based on the specific prerequisites active at that time

3. Players involved (please indicate the organisations in the region who are involved in the development and implementation of the action and explain their role)

The schools that will be certified as mobility friendly schools and subsequently have a mobility manager position active will be the main candidates to benefit from the implementation of a school zone, as this will be a multi-year endeavor. The organisations involved in the Brasov LSG, especially cycling NGO's and other organisations that promote sustainable urban mobility will have a role in developing various actions together with the schools in order to demonstrate a real interest in providing an increased level of safety for children in the vicinity of the schools. The School County Directorate will act as a support organisation whereas the Brasov Municipality will provide, based on the case that one or more school will make, the financial backing for the actual realization / development of a school zone.

It is important to mention that this proposed action is subsequent to the implementation of the methodology for school certification and the creation of a mobility manager position

4. Timeframe

The expected timeframe for the implementation of the School Zone approach is 2022 – 2024. This is due to the fact the implementation of the School Zones is predicated on the certification of schools as mobility friendly schools and the impact of the activity of the school mobility manager.

5. Costs (if relevant)

The estimated budget will depend on the extent of the school zone to be implemented. An estimation of the cost shows that a school zone may cost between 15 000 and 30 000 Euro, depending on the extend of the re-design proposal

6. Funding sources (if relevant):

- Brasov Municipality local budget

Date: 26th of November 2019

Signature:



Stamp of the organisation (if available):

