

A photograph of a modern green and white electric bus on a city street. The bus is positioned on the right side of the frame, with its front facing left. Above the bus, there are overhead power lines and a street lamp. The background shows a multi-story building and some trees. A large green semi-transparent box covers the left side of the image, containing text.

ACTION PLAN

Increase
administrative
capacity to
provide
sustainable
energy
recharging
systems for
public transport
electric vehicles

2022-2023

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Introduction

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Policy context

The Regional Development Agency Centru is the intermediate body for the Regional Operational Programme 2014 – 2020 in Centru Region Romania. In this sense, we have a special concern for urban mobility and we support the local municipalities to access projects through the Priority Axis 4.1 – Promotion of carbon reduction strategies for all types of territories, in particular urban areas, including the promotion of sustainable urban mobility plans and measures to mitigate climate change.

Now the Regional Operational Programme 2014 – 2020 is almost at an end and we want to improve the new Regional Operational Programme – Centru 2021 – 2027 with lessons learnt from the previous programme, especially since we will be the managing authority. In the new ROP the electric mobility will be addressed within the Priority 4 – A region with sustainable urban mobility, Specific Objective (viii) Promote sustainable multimodal urban mobility as part of the transition to a zero-carbon economy.

The policy improvement we commit ourselves to implement is linked to the Type 2 policy instrument identified by Interreg Europe, namely change in the management of the policy instrument (improved governance).

The action to be implemented refers to improvement of the new Regional Operational Programme – Centru 2021 – 2027 with lessons learnt from the previous Regional Operational Programme – 2014–2020, by establishing a Thematic Working Group, action inspired by two good practices provided by the partners:

- Paks Transportation Ltd, from Hungary, with the good practice The Protheus Project;
- Vorarlberg University of Applied Sciences, from Austria, with the good practice vkw VLOTTE – creating charging solutions and charging infrastructure for e-mobility.

Electrification of urban public transport is a key priority for Centru Region municipalities. A significant number of e-buses and trolleybuses is scheduled to be delivered in the main cities across region before 2027. The action plan is built to support public transport authorities, transport operators and industry in designing and operating on a sustainable manner the grid of charging stations. Also, the plan should help stakeholders in integrating with renewable energy production systems and with other key consumers in the city to provide redundancy and a good balance of the grid.



Action

Thematic Working Group for using electric public transport vehicles in an optimal way and designing optimal electric grids to provide adequate electric capacity for public transport vehicles.

The action proposed was inspired by two good practices, one of them being "The Protheus project" which is an ambitious project dealing with electric transportation and energy as a unified system. The good practice was presented by Paks Transportation Ltd, from Hungary.

The Protheus project

As energy represents an important cost title during the life cycle of an electric bus, considering a policy to put together energy manufacture and usage may lead to significant deduction to the total cost of ownership of e-buses. Centre Region in Romania, or Transylvania, is an important producer of natural gas and during past years private and public investors have started to develop solar energy plants across the region. Based on the example of Paks Municipality, public authorities in Centru Region should look for technical and administrative solutions where green energy is produced with local resources and, later, is incorporated in public transport services. Cities where private companies provide public transport solutions, may build financial solutions

It was presented by Vorarlberg University of Applied Sciences, from Austria. The results of this identified second good practice come on top of The Protheus project ones. As many bigger and smaller cities across Centre Region are investing in e-buses, energy consumption level and power availability become key issues to meet a green transport scenario. Creating a strong partnership between public authorities and local/regional energy suppliers may lead to building a sustainable business model to providing the energy needed by the growing public fleets. Based on the model built by Vorarlberg, municipalities across Centre Region should look for business solutions where electric mobility special project companies turn in self-sustained companies. With the shared effort of a company (illwerke vkw) wanting to enter the market of electro mobility, policy makers who wanted to be pioneers in solving climate issues and a population that was open to new technologies it was possible to come from a public funded project to an own business branch with all its advantages: regional value creation, sustainable business mode and great confidence of the population in the new technology.

vkw VLOTTE

The second good practice "vkw VLOTTE" is a good practice for the potential of a holistic development of e-mobility solutions in regions where all stakeholders go towards a shared goal.

Policy instrument

The policy instrument approached by Regional Development Agency Centru in the program was the Regional Operational Program 2014–2020. In its quality of Intermediate Body for ROP 2014/2020, RDA Centru has attributions delegated by the Management Authority for this program, in the monitoring and implementation of the program in Centru Region of Romania. So, RDA Centru had a strong involvement in implementing the policy instrument Regional Operation Program (ROP) 2014–2020, including Axis 4. Supporting sustainable urban development – Priority Axis 4.1 – Promotion of carbon reduction strategies for all types of territories, in particular urban areas, including the promotion of sustainable urban mobility plans and measures to mitigate climate change. Because the ROP 2014–2020 is almost at the end of its implementation and cannot be longer influenced we will transfer our efforts to shape and transfer the lessons learned into the new program, the new Regional Operational Programme – Centru 2021 – 2027.

As a result of implementing ROP 2014/2020 in Centru Region but also other financing schemes, there are in operation 78 electric buses and other 8 in testing. By the end of 2024 because of the procurement auctions, other e-buses must be delivered to the municipalities, and there will be a total of 254 e-buses and hybrids. By implementing the new Regional Operational Programme – Centru 2021 – 2027 our target for 2029 is to put in operation another 150 e-buses, 160 km of dedicated lanes, 20 charging stations and 5 digitalized mobility systems.

During the peer-review process and after debates with stakeholder group we have identified two specific needs that requires improvement in relation to the policy instrument

1

First need

The first need we identified is to improve the electric public transport vehicles. They pose a series of challenges to Public Transport Authorities and Operators in identifying the proper autonomy and modes to integrate it in the larger public transport network of the city/region and the rest of the electric fleet of vehicles owned by municipality. Paks Municipality, for example, has developed a multi-annual strategy to gradually introduce electric vehicles and charging systems: from electric bikes to electric cars and, in 2020, electric buses. As focus of ADR Centru in E-Mob project is electric public transport Paks approach can be easily shared with cities in ADR Centru area.

2

Second need

Because we had a great breakthrough in the purchase of electric buses, at municipalities level in our region, this takes us to our second need that we identified and which we neglected, the electric grid. The grid of charging stations represents a strategic challenge when it comes to providing a good loading of the main power network in one region. Voralberg State, for example has implemented a smart distribution grid strategy where electric vehicles are taken into consideration when calculating the distribution of charging points to avoid congestion. As main focus of ADR Centru in E-Mob project is electric public transport Voralberg State approach can be evaluated by municipalities in ADR Centru area, when introducing smart changing solutions.

By mixing the two good practices presented by our partners from Hungary and Austria we would like to create a technical Thematic Working Group in order to meet the needs of our municipalities and shape the actual and future policies and also to help the private investors from the electric mobility sector. The specific structure of the WG's are to be decided, together with the general topics will have to address.

Nature of the action

A Thematic Working Group of stakeholders shall be established to facilitate the exchange of information on electric public transport vehicles usage. The working group should act as a knowledge platform where good practice, new operational concepts and new technologies are shared, based on libraries and interactive workshops. Actually, the Thematic Working Group will be a technical group of the ROP Monitoring Committee. According to the regulations in force only the monitoring committee must be validated officially, the thematic working groups may be constituted by the Managing Authority. In this case, we are the Managing Authority and together with the actual regional stakeholder group, we will establish a more technical one. The Thematic Working Group will consist of the regional stakeholder group plus technical experts from the private, public and academic sectors plus potential beneficiaries.

Based on the knowledge accumulated, the group will be involved in designing the guidelines for the future calls of ROP 2021-2027 and other supporting technical documents in electric public transport. They will provide input on the selection criteria for future calls, but also other opinions regarding the eligibility criteria. They will be constantly consulted in the process of writing the guidelines, they will be able to provide opinions before the guides are launched in public consultation.

Stakeholders involved

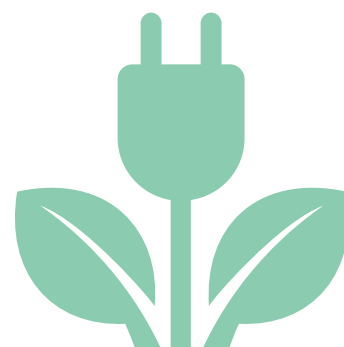
The implementation of the action will be done by RDA Centru with the strong support and commitment of the Thematic Working Group:

E-MOB stakeholder group

- ADR Centru – Intermediary Body for ROP 2014-2020 and Management Authority for ROP 2021-2027;
- Public Transport Authorities in the 6 counties from Centru Region – they are the main investment promoters;
- Public Transport Operators in the 6 counties from Centru Region – they are investment promoters and technical arms in operating the electric public transport vehicles;
- Universities from Centru Region – knowledge exchange centers;
- 6 municipalities, county sits in Centru Region;
- Alba Local Agency for Green Energy;
- Brasov Metropolitan Agency;

New entities to be added:

- Power energy infrastructure managers – developers and operators of the main power grid;
- Power suppliers from Centru Region – organizations responsible for designing and building the power grids in the city;
- Automotive parts manufacturers from Centru Region – organizations able to share good practices in the area.



Timeframe

Implementation of the Action will be a short process but will involve a considerable number of stakeholders that should be active and assume the process.

ACTIVITY NO.	DESCRIPTION	TIMING
1	Decision on the configuration of TWG Decision on the configuration of TWG will be a short process that will be decided along with the current stakeholders of the E-MOB project, based on their needs.	August – September 2022
2	Selection of the Structure / composition of the WGs A set of criteria/methodology for the structure and role of the WG will be elaborated in order to have a group of experts from organizations representative for the sector/priority areas.	October – December 2022
3	Joint meeting: E-MOB stakeholder group + TWG	January 2023
4	Draft guidelines for the future calls of ROP 2021-2027 and other supporting technical documents in electric public transport	February – May 2023

Costs

RESOURCES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY IMPROVEMENT				
Type of resource	Name of resource	Associated activity/-ies	Timeframe of use	Financial cost
Physical (e.g., facilities, buildings)	Offices	Secretariat of the working groups	Permanent	Own resources
	Meeting rooms	Stakeholder group meeting	When decided	Own resources
Human (types of personnel)	Technical and administrative staff	Organization of thematic working group meetings, elaboration of improvement proposals for ROP, management of working groups	Permanent	Own resources
	Experts	Technical experts for grids, technical experts of e-buses, moderator of working group	Permanent	Free resources
Other	Online platform for interaction	Collecting inputs from the working groups and other stakeholders	Permanent	2500 euro

RDA Centru own budget

The budget of RDA Centru has two main funding sources: the Technical assistance budget line of the Regional Operational Programme and contribution from the budget of the 6 county councils forming the Region Centru. The present and the foreseen budget have enough resources to finance the activities of the Action Plan, also considering that no investment is needed.

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e-buses & hybrid by
2030

€ 233 782 000

160 km of dedicated lanes, 20 charging stations
and 5 digitalized mobility systems.



Integrated actions towards enhanced e-mobility in European regions



Acknowledgements

E-mobility has a great potential to improve our environment. Cars, trains and planes account for a quarter of global energy consumption and approximately the same proportion of emissions. That is a heavy load – but at the same time also a unique chance to limit our impact on the climate. The 9 partners of the E-MOB project represent 8 European regions at different stages of e-mobility development, but they all share the view that e-mobility represents the future of mobility: a clean, quiet, advanced technology, combined with power, speed and lots of fun.

E-MOB project

www.projects2014-2020.interregeurope.eu/e-mob/



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