

POLICY RECOMMENDATION

REGIO-MOB
Interreg Europe



European Union
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Development Fund

Interregional exchange on regional policies for sustainable mobility to tackle the Covid-19 emergency



SESTRAN (UK)
South-East Scotland
Transport Partnership

**Niepołomice
Municipality (PL)**

PROMETNI (SL)
Institute of Traffic and
Transport Ljubljana

OLTENIA (RO)
Regional Development
Agency South-West

ANCI LAZIO (IT)
Regional Association of
Lazio Municipalities

RWM (GR)
Region of
Western Macedonia

- LAZIO REGION (IT)
- LOTHIAN REGION (UK)
- MAŁOPOLSKA REGION (PL)
- OLTENIA REGION (RO)
- REGION OF WESTERN MACEDONIA (GR)
- SLOVENIA REGIONS (SI)

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1. Introduction

During the first shutdown phase (March-April 2020) caused by Covid-19 pandemic, the global emissions from surface transport fell by –36% and made the largest contribution to the total emissions change (–43%). Covid-19 has dramatically demonstrated how sustainable mobility transition is a crucial step to fight against climate change.

In addition, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic was to re-shape urban transport, because of the necessity of social distancing. Authorities and operators had to respond quickly to find efficient solutions to ensure safe mobility, especially in conditions of crowding and/or mixed use between users. Additional activities within REGIO-MOB aimed to help policy makers adapt and integrate new and traditional mobility services into local transport policies.

Sustainable mobility has not been impacted in the same way by the Covid-19 pandemic, which is why REGIO-MOB wanted to focus on:

Topic 1) Local and Regional Public Transport system;

Topic 2) Sharing mobility;

Topic 3) Temporary infrastructures for cycling mobility realized in several European cities;

Topic 4) Temporary demand transport responsive systems implemented during COVID-19.

The further exchange of REGIO-MOB experiences was therefore aimed at supporting the improvement of local policies by finding solutions that answer the following questions:

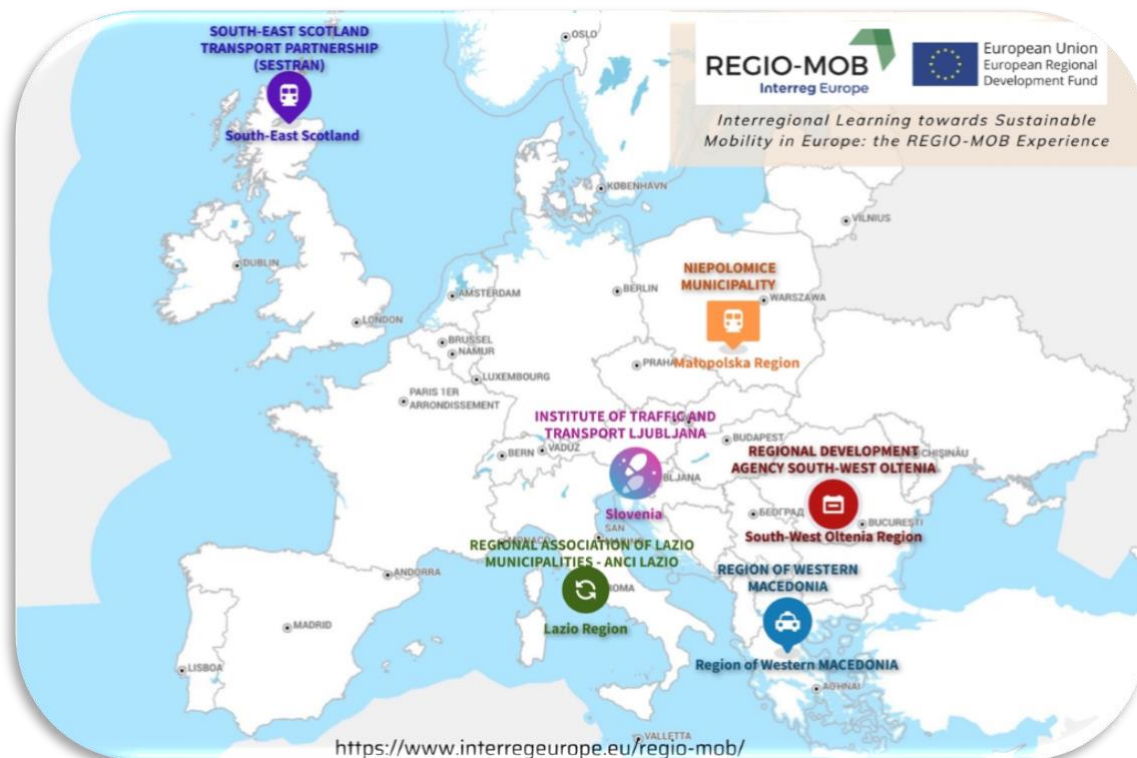
- How to ensure safety on public transport?
- How to manage restrictions on the number of passengers on board?
- How to guarantee distances between people on board?
- How to guarantee user safety (with particular attention to the free-flow shared mobility system which represents the most affected)?
- How to transform these temporary initiatives into permanent initiatives?

The REGIO-MOB partnership, made up of five partners each, from different EU regions (IT, GR, PL, RO, SI) and one partner from the UK, operated from October 2021 to September 2022. In addition to the exchange of experiences reported on the social channels and on the project web page, the common goal was to facilitate the replicability of the solutions adopted also in other EU regions.

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2. REGIO-MOB Regions



The REGIO-MOB partnership is made up of six partners each from different European regions, including:

- 📍 **The New Regional Transport Strategy for the South East of Scotland 2022-2035 (UK)** concerns the local authorities of City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Fife, Midlothian, Scottish Borders and West Lothian.
- 📍 **The Sustainable Mobility Plan for the Krakow Metropolis (PL)** concerns the **Małopolska region** located in the Southern Poland, on the border with the Slovak Republic – between the Slaskie, Swietokrzyskie and Podkarpackie regions.
- 📍 **The Transport Development Strategy in Slovenia (SI)** concerns the entire territory of Slovenia.
- 📍 **The Regional Operational Programme (ROP) 2021-2027 South-West Oltenia**, concerns the districts of Dolj, Gorj, Mehedinți, Olt and Vâlcea in Romania.
- 📍 **The new Regional Operational Programme (ROP) ERDF Lazio 21-27 (IT)** concerns the entire Lazio region, located in central Italy overlooking the Tyrrhenian Sea, involving the 5 provinces of Frosinone, Latina, Rieti, Rome and Viterbo.
- 📍 **The Regional Operational Programme of WESTERN MACEDONIA** concerns the region of Western Macedonia, situated in the North – Western part of Greece. It borders with the Greek regions of Central Macedonia (east), Thessaly (south) and Epirus (west) and the countries of Albania and North Macedonia (north).

3. Methodology for developing policy recommendations and involving stakeholders

The COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly affected all aspects of people's lives. Transport was one of the sectors of the economy that was impacted the most. Due to numerous restrictions, such as reduced frequency of journeys or limited vehicle capacity, the transport behavior of passengers has been significantly remodeled. Additionally, considering the increased interest in remote work and the changes in work organization implemented in companies, major changes in mobility trends took place during the pandemic and immediately after its end.

In the **Lazio Region**, during the months of March and April 2020, there was a reduction of -76% of private vehicles and -51% of heavy vehicles: services were set up to enhance the offer through extraordinary services for the physical distancing of users.

In **Slovenia**, between January and September 2020, public passenger transport declined by about 50% compared to the same period of 2019. The main stakeholders in this extension phase of the project REGIO-MOB were Ministry of Infrastructure of Republic of Slovenia who is responsible for transport policy in Slovenia and Ljubljana public passenger transport who is provider of public transport in Municipality of Ljubljana and six other suburban municipalities.

In **Niepolomice** the COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly affected all aspects of people's lives. Transport was one of the sectors of the economy that was impacted the most. Due to numerous restrictions, such as reduced frequency of journeys or limited vehicle capacity, the transport behaviour of passengers has been significantly remodelled. Additionally, taking into account the increased interest in remote work and the changes in work organization implemented in companies, major changes in mobility trends took place during the pandemic and immediately after its end.

In the **SW Oltenia region**, local public transport is mainly used in big cities, but still at a rather low level. During the lockdown period, mobility solutions faced critical issues to ensure safe and healthy ways to travel. Therefore, future interventions should favour the modal shift and the use of public transport, in line with what is already foreseen in the local sustainable mobility plans.

In **Western Macedonia Region** COVID-19 had a relatively high impact on the citizens and economy of North Macedonia. The authorities acted quickly to contain the spread of the virus and have taken measures to mitigate the negative effects of the restrictions on the economy including the weakening of the tourism sector. The

pandemic hit hardest the already vulnerable groups, the poor and the unemployed, who represent a large part of the population.

The **South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran)** is the statutory Regional Transport Partnership for the South East of Scotland. SEStran encompasses eight local authorities: City of Edinburgh, Clackmannanshire, East Lothian, Falkirk, Fife, Midlothian, Scottish Borders and West Lothian. During the COVID-19 pandemic different partnership groups were created to develop and oversee a Regional Transport Transition Plan for the temporary and transitional measures throughout lockdown implemented for the pandemic. SESTTG developed shared approaches to gather information, share technical and joint procurement and assess transferability of lessons learned as projects developed.

REGIO-MOB stakeholders were involved in the prioritization of Good Practices (GPs) identified by the other partners and scored each GP. During the stakeholder's meetings all good practices were presented and discussed. Based on the scores obtained, practices were prioritized, considering the preferences of the majority. This was valuable from the perspective of the acknowledgement of the possible measures in the field of sustainable transport and capacity building, in order to involve the stakeholders in the design process of the policy instrument.

The preparation of policy recommendations was possible only thanks to well-selected key stakeholders who actively participated in the studies and during the meetings of regional stakeholder groups, and during the project workshops carried out in the 6 REGIO-MOB partner countries.

On a methodological level, during the first phase of the additional activities of REGIO-MOB project (*whose entire project period was from October 2021 to October 2022*), partners from the project's 6 regions were required to identify and analyze at least **12 best practices** (at least 2 per partner) while considering the **four themes** for regional sustainable mobility:

THEME n.1 - Local and Regional Public Transport system

THEME n.2 - Sharing mobility

THEME n.3 - Temporary infrastructures for cycling mobility

THEME n.4 - Demand transport responsive systems

The REGIO-MOB partners then had to evaluate and prioritize the Good Practices of other partners that are consistent with the needs of their region in order to ensure the process' success.

Overall, 20 good practices were collected by the partners, which were evaluated using a standard questionnaire designed for all partners, as follows:

1. *Alignment with regional strategy - local strategy.*
2. *Replicability - application in another EU region.*
3. *Region expected impact.*

Where each criterion was assigned a score of 0 (NO) - 1 (MAYBE) - 2 (YES).

The good practices identified covered the 4 key themes of the project, as shown in the table below:

THEME	N° of GPs	N° of GPs	TITLE OF GOOD PRACTICE	Partner
1) Local and Regional Public Transport system	11	App that counts the number of users on board a bus	ANCI Lazio	
		Strengthening of public transport with 14 new grand tourism lines	ANCI Lazio	
		Increasing transport capacity - Ljubljana public passenger transport	PROMETNI	
		Introduction of family weekend tickets and 75% discount on all public transport tickets	PROMETNI	
		Implementation of "personalized" Public Transportation marketing campaign	RWM	
		Recreation Bus Lines during COVID-19	NIEPOLOMICE	
		CRAIOVA Transport App	OLTENIA	
		The South East of Scotland Transport Transition Group	SEStran	
		Thistle Assistance Card and App – mask exemption sticker	SEStran	

		Bus Priority Rapid Deployment Fund	SEStran
		Transport to companies during COVID-19	Niepolomice
2) Sharing mobility	2	Automatic sanitation of cars in “Car Sharing Rome” service.	ANCI Lazio
		Car sharing and car-pooling mobile app	RWM
3) Temporary Infrastructures for cycling mobility	3	Temporary and permanent cycle routes in response to COVID-19	ANCI Lazio
		Mobility shield	Niepolomice
		Spaces for People programme	SEStran
4) Demand transport responsive systems	4	Shopping and Medication Ready - free home delivery of groceries and medicines	ANCI Lazio
		Smart Demand Responsive Transport App for public transport and taxis	RWM
		Specific actions in transport systems supportive of COVID-19 measures	OLTENIA
		Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) proposed trial	SEStran

In order to ensure the success of the learning process, REGIO-MOB partners had to assess and prioritize each other’s GPs according to their region’s interests.

The designed to carry out the assessment was based on 3 main criteria:

- Alignment with the partner’s regional strategy (*value assigned to this criterion: 0,56*);
- Potential for replication in the partner’s region (*value assigned to this criterion: 0,13*);
- Expected impact in the partner’s region (*value assigned to this criterion: 0,31*).

For a total of priority value of: 1

The partners (together with their key regional stakeholders) ranked other region's GPs, validating the above criteria according to the score scale below:

Score	Meaning
0	Not met
1	Partially met
2	Fully met

As a result of the assessment, the partners decided which GPs (from the total of GPs identified) to be transferred during the "exchange of experiences" process, as follows:

- Are aligned with the largest number of the regional strategies.
- Have the highest potential for replication in the largest number of participating regions.
- Have the highest potential impact in the largest number of participating regions.



The GPs positively evaluated by the partnership, based on the aforementioned criteria, are listed below:




- **Theme 1: Increasing transport capacity - Ljubljana public passenger transport** [Score 23/30]
- **Theme 2: Car sharing and Carpooling mobile app** [Score 22/30]
- **Theme 3: Temporary and permanent cycle routes in response to COVID-19** [Score 23/30]
- **Theme 4: Smart Demand Responsive Transport App for public transport and taxis** [Score 25/30]


3. Policy recommendations

The Table below shows the regional policies instruments aligned with the project by each REGIO-MOB's partner.

REGIO-MOB - Table 1 – Policies instruments addressed by REGIOMOB's partner

<p>Lazio Region (Lead partner: ANCI Lazio)</p> 	<p>Policy Instrument 3: ROP ERDF - Lazio Region - 2021-2027. OP3 "A more connected Europe"</p> <p>The new ROP 2021-2027 for Lazio region pursues the achievement of 2 political objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - medium-long range transport connections that converge on the TEN-T corridors (OS 3.I), - regional displacements and accesses to urban nodes (OS 3.II). <p>Both objectives have characteristics of complementarity in the demand for transport services to be satisfied, integrating services at the right territorial scale, in a partnership and coordination approach at national, regional and local levels.</p>
<p>Slovenia (Partner: Prometni Institut Ljubljana – Institute of Traffic and Transport Ljubljana)</p> 	<p>National Program for the Development of Transport in Republic of Slovenia until 2030.</p> <p>Policy Instrument 2: Transport Development Strategy in the Republic of Slovenia.</p> <p>Despite the policy instrument remain the same, the COVID-19 impact on mobility and especially on public transport sector, brings the necessity of a continuous improvement to face the new public transport planning requirements and the existing lack of knowledge.</p> <p>In particular, the Public Transport topic will be addressed, including intervention measures that can support public transport service providers in planning their services in the post-shutdown phase and their respective modelling development requirements. This can support the transition from the initial ad-hoc planning practices to a more evidence-based decision making. The new strategy will be valid until 2030.</p>
<p>Małopolska region (Partner: Municipality of Niepolomice)</p>	<p>New Policy Instrument 4: The Sustainable Mobility Plan for the Krakow Metropolis (SUMP).</p> <p>The SUMP for the Krakow Metropolis organizes the approach to sustainable mobility planning in terms of the City of Krakow and the area of the Krakow Metropolis, create opportunities to apply for European funds in the 2021-27 perspective, make the</p>

	<p>Metropolitan Area a more integrated, compact territory, to increase the competitiveness of Krakow and the entire Metropolitan Area. The Municipality of Niepolomice is the main industrial area of the metropolitan area and a landmark of the Małopolska region. For that reason, the Municipality of Niepolomice represents a key actor in the design process of the new SUMP which is supposed to be approved in the 2nd quarter of 2023 (date shifted). The policy change aim is to include a COVID-19 section inside the SUMP (not planned) and it has been already agreed with the Krakow Public Transport company and the City of Krakow as part of the Association of the Krakow Metropolis.</p>
<p>Region South West Oltenia (Partner: Regional Development Agency South-West OLTENIA)</p> 	<p>Policy Instrument: RP South West Oltenia 2021-2027 ERDF – SW Oltenia Region OP3 "A more connected Europe".</p> <p>The SW Oltenia RP 2021-2027 pursues the achievement of the specific objective ERDF 2.8 <i>Promoting sustainable multimodal urban mobility as part of the transition to a zero-carbon economy, through Priority 4 – Urban Sustainable Mobility</i>. The aim of the objective is to contribute to an attractive and sustainable public transport system by adequately integrating the offer of services, based on SUMPs developed at the right territorial scale.</p>
<p>Region of Western Macedonia (Partner: Region of Western Macedonia)</p> 	<p>Policy Objective 3: ROP ERDF – Region of Western Macedonia - 2021-2027.</p> <p>OP3 "A more connected Europe" by strengthening mobility and regional interconnections. The objective concerns the development of a sustainable, safe, coherent, and interoperable transport system (road, rail, sea), the promotion of sustainable multimodal urban mobility, as well as the strengthening of digital connectivity (broadband networks, development of modern network infrastructures, optical fibers and 5G networks). Financing Funds include the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Cohesion Fund.</p> <p>In the field of the development of sustainable mobility, the basic needs include the strengthening of actions in the framework of the Sustainable Mobility Plans of urban areas and the integration of digital applications in the management of transport for a more efficient service of movements.</p> <p>Policy Objective 4: ROP ESF+ - Region of Western Macedonia – 2021-2027).</p>

	<p>OP4: “A more social and inclusive Europe implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights”</p> <p>The objective concerns the sectors of employment, education and lifelong learning, health, and social protection. It includes the promotion of education, training, and lifelong learning, as well as the development of active employment policies to increase employment and combat unemployment. It also includes the promotion of equal opportunities for all (especially women, young people and the long-term unemployed), the strengthening of infrastructure and social protection actions and the inclusion of vulnerable social groups and people facing the risk of poverty or social exclusion, as well as the strengthening of health care systems. Financing funds include the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF).</p>
<p>Region of South-East Scotland (Partner: South-East Scotland Transport Partnership – SEStran)</p> 	<p>Policy Instrument: SEStran 2035 – South East of Scotland Regional Transport Strategy (RTS)</p> <p>The aim of the RTS is to contribute to an attractive and sustainable public transport system by adequately integrating and supporting development of sustainable transport options and system. Progress and completion of new draft RTS took some of the learning from the Regio Mob project which helped these develop the Regional Mobility Themes featured in the RTS.</p>

3.1. REGIO-MOB policy recommendations

Each partner prepared a policy recommendation for its region, matching the project topic and the policy instrument identified from the beginning of the project. In the following paragraphs report the synthesis produced by each of the 6 REGIO-MOB partners.

3.1.1 Policy recommendation in LAZIO REGION

Based on the scores obtained, the feedback from the main stakeholders was fundamental to select the GPs, according to the preferences of the majority. This was also valuable from the point of view of recognizing possible measures in the field of sustainable transport and capacity building in order to involve stakeholders in the design of the ROP policy tool ERDF - Lazio Region - 2021-2027, OP3 "A more connected Europe".

Below are the three main themes of GPs identified with the stakeholders, among the aforementioned 20 GPs:

Theme	Title & Short Description	Partner
Theme 1: Local and Regional Public Transport system	<p>Introduction of family weekend tickets and 75% discount on all public transport tickets</p> <p>The challenge has related mainly to shifting people back to public transport after they have got used to using private vehicles again.</p> <p>Family weekend tickets: The ticket allow families or groups of passengers up to 5 or up to 10 people, including at least one child under the age of 14, an unlimited number of trips by intercity bus or train on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays for four consecutive days. The ticket price is 15 euros for groups of up to five people and 30 euros for groups of up to 10 people.</p> <p>Weekend discount 75 % tickets: Travelers are able to travel all Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays in the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 with a 75% discount on all single tickets in intercity bus and domestic rail transport.</p> <p>The benefits, which are valid from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022, are being introduced in order to provide an additional incentive to revive public passenger transport following the COVID-19 epidemic as one of the most sustainable forms of mobility. The Ministry of Infrastructure calls on all travelers, especially families and groups mainly involved in car travel, to test the benefits of traveling by public passenger transport under particularly</p>	Prometni Institut Ljubljana

	<p>favorable conditions. By this we aim to limit the volume of personal motorized transport in Slovenia and to contribute to the goals of reducing the negative impacts of transport on the environment and climate. Between January and September 2020, public passenger transport declined by about 50% compared to the same period of 2019. People start to use private cars in the pandemic period - it was not possible to maintain social distance between people in public transport, because of that people felt threatened. The benefits, which are valid from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022, are being introduced in order to provide an additional incentive to revive public passenger transport following the COVID-19 epidemic as one of the most sustainable forms of mobility. Due to large discounts, people have started to use public transport as public transport is the most affordable form of transport. Public transport users are price sensitive and such campaign has led to greater use of public transport.</p>	
<p>Theme 1: Local and Regional Public Transport system</p>	<p>Bus Priority Rapid Deployment Fund (BPRDF) The good practice aims to encourage and incentivize bus travel as an attractive and sustainable mode of transport also following the restrictions implemented during 2021. Among the strategic interventions was the introduction of traffic light optimization systems for bus lines and the extension of bus lanes on the A90 citybound between Cramond Brig and Barnton and on the eastbound approach of the A89 at Newbridge, various signage improvements were implemented for smoother traffic flow and better bus stops at key points. The action led by Edinburgh City Council, the South East of Scotland Transport Transition Group was possible through collaboration with bus operators and SEStran on the development of the measures, for which journey times were estimated to be reduced by up to 12 minutes in some areas.</p>	<p>SEStran</p>
<p>Theme 4: Demand transport responsive systems</p>	<p>Smart Demand Responsive Transport App for public transport and taxis – SMARTA Project The project was presented to the local community and all key stakeholders through a workshop that took place in January 2020. During this event, a bottom-up co-creative process was implemented to engage all stakeholders and ensure their support and cooperation. Two other face-to-face events (one in July and one in September during the European Mobility Week) were held to promote the application to the public. Due to the restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic, it was not possible to organize multiple face-to-face events. Despite the COVID19 pandemic, significant efforts have been made to educate people about the new practice, which has led to increased interest and awareness. A free application has therefore been promoted which allows real-time information on both public transport and the availability of subsidized taxis for people with mobility difficulties.</p>	<p>Region of Western Macedonia</p>

The development of the policy recommendations was possible after the consultation of the stakeholders who actively participated in the 2 project workshops and 3 study visits (involving 5 study areas of the partners) which were held in Scotland, Poland and Slovenia.

With the aim of influencing the political instrument n.3 of the Lazio Region, it was particularly important to draw up recommendations at the regional level acting in three orientations:

- 1) towards greater integration of data at the regional level;**
- 2) favoring public mobility through traffic light intelligence;**
- 3) promoting public transport through targeted campaigns.**

Orientation no. 1 Towards a greater integration of data. Through an open data approach with regional interlocutors, it is addressed to all transport systems, such as classic collective transport, public transport, shared services such as scooters, bicycles, motorcycles and cars, carpooling, including MAAS - Mobility.

At this purpose, a technological infrastructure must be created both from the point of view of both, data and applications, in order to allow the coexistence and maintenance of all types of services. Therefore, when talking about public transport, data should be made available with details on how public transport is implemented in every single urban area of the region, from the largest urban areas to the smallest ones. As a consequence, an integration of all public transport networks is strongly needed, involving ANAS (National Autonomous Road Company) which manages data on the network of national roads and motorways; City of Rome which controls the metropolitan area; the Police forces manage the data at province level. The need to make the data 'talk' to each other is a very important requirement: the different offices must not be jealous of their data. For this reason, the regional open data process should be strongly encouraged: the sharing of data from the diverse offices can ensure the overall integration of road information at the regional level.

In this way, it will be possible to provide the end user with an integrated, reliable service which allows the user to evaluate mobility in its entirety, from private to public transport, making sustainability and safety a reality.

An interesting example in this direction is highlighted by the project carried out in North Macedonia (see GP titled “Smart Demand Responsive Transport App for public transport and taxis – SMARTA Project”) where a bottom-up co-creative process was implemented to involve all stakeholders and ensure their support and cooperation. A free application was promoted which allows real-time information on both public transport and the availability of subsidized taxis for people with disabilities.

Recommendation no. 2 "**privileging public mobility through traffic light intelligence**" always exploits the importance of data to help to reduce the time taken by public transport to complete the service. This makes public transport as an attractive and sustainable mode of transport compared to the use of private vehicles. The traffic light optimization systems for bus routes as seen in Edinburgh (UK) combined with signage improvements allows a smoother flow of buses at the key points of the city. Such measures can lead to a significant reduction in the journey times of the buses, to the benefit of users and of the public service itself.

Recommendation n.3 "**promote public transport with targeted campaigns for the family**" acts on the promotion of public transport and on the education of young people in the use of public transport. A weekend ticket for families introduced in Slovenia, with a 75% discount on all public transport tickets nationwide, impacted dramatically on promoting public transport, while people were already getting used to returning to the private vehicle after the Covid-19 pandemic.

2 types of ticketing experienced in Slovenia are as follows:

- “Family weekend tickets” regards families or groups of passengers of up to 5 or up to 10 people, including at least one child under 14, unlimited travel by intercity bus or train on weekends and on public holidays up to four consecutive days. The ticket price has been set in Slovenia at 15 euros for groups up to 5 people and 30 euros for groups up to 10 people.
- 75% discount weekend tickets with which travelers can travel every Saturday, Sunday and public holiday in the spring-summer period, with a 75% discount on all single tickets in intercity and national rail transport.

The Slovenian Ministry of Infrastructure has invited all travelers, especially families and groups who travel mainly by car, to experience the advantages of traveling by public passenger transport at particularly favorable conditions.

This was specifically aimed at limiting the volume of individual motorized transport and contributing to the objectives of reducing the negative impacts of transport on the environment and climate.

3.1.2 Policy recommendation in Slovenia

For the policy recommendations for sustainable mobility in Slovenia, the feedback received from the main stakeholders in this extension phase of the REGIO-MOB project was taken into account, i.e. the Ministry of Infrastructure of the Republic of Slovenia, responsible for transport policy in Slovenia, and Ljubljana Public Passenger Transport, provider of public transport in the Municipality of Ljubljana and six other suburban municipalities which were also the stakeholders in the first phase of the REGIO-MOB project, implementing a logical continuation of the previous experience.

Stakeholders were involved in prioritizing the good practices identified by the other partners and evaluated each GPs. During the meetings with the stakeholders all the good practices were presented and discussed. Based on the scores obtained, the practices were prioritized considering the preferences of the majority. This was invaluable from the point of view of recognizing possible measures in the field of sustainable transport and capacity building in order to involve stakeholders in the design of the policy instrument.

The preparation of the policy recommendations was only possible thanks to well-selected stakeholders who actively participated in the studies and during the meetings of the regional stakeholder groups and during the project workshops.

The use of public transport decreased dramatically during and immediately after the lockdown, while citizens prefer(red) private vehicles such as cars and bicycles, but also walking. In Slovenia, between January and September 2020, public passenger transport declined by about 50% compared to the same period of 2019.

During the project we have learned from other partners (in the framework of the exchange of good practices and meeting and conferences) how they were faced the pandemic Covid-19. Experiences from REGIO-MOB partners (Italy, Scotland, Poland, Romania) helped us and our stakeholders with ideas and recommendations on how to organize and how to revive use of public passenger transport in situation such as pandemic Covid-19.

In summary, the good practices identified within REGIO-MOB project relate to collective transport solutions, transport on demand, car traffic reduction, cycling and pedestrian traffic. These solutions can be used as a response in the pandemic, for

example by adding bus connections to reduce congestion, which can reduce the risk of infection. However, they can also be used outside of the pandemic periods.

Next categories were identified:

- Strengthening of public transport with 14 new grand tourism lines (ANCI LAZIO),
- Mobility shield (Niepolomice Municipality)
- Transport to companies during COVID-19 (Niepolomice Municipality)

Conclusions and recommendations for Slovenia are mainly related to public transport, including on-demand transport. It is recommended to strive to build a comprehensive public transport system that would be competitive to transport by individual cars. For this purpose, it is necessary to create a reliable bus transport system.

3.1.2 Policy recommendation in Małopolska region

In summary, the good practices of the Regio-Mob project relate to collective transport solutions, transport on demand, car traffic reduction, cycling and pedestrian traffic. These solutions can be used as a response in the pandemic, for example by adding bus connections to reduce congestion, which can reduce the risk of infection. However, they can also be used outside of the pandemic periods.

Conclusions and recommendations for the Niepolomice Municipality are mainly related to public transport, including on-demand transport and bicycle transport. It is recommended to strive to build a comprehensive public transport system that would be competitive to transport by individual cars. For this purpose, it is necessary to create a reliable bus transport system, which should be based on public transport in Krakow and, importantly, on feeder lines to the railway station.

In the case of Niepolomice Municipality, the railway provides a connection with Krakow that is preferred in terms of travel time. Such a system should, in particular, take into account commuting to a large traffic generator, which is the Niepolomice Investment Zone. To this end, the public transport should be adjusted in terms of routes, taking into account the workplaces existing there, and in terms of departure times synchronized with the hours of commencement and completion of work (which are given in this study).

Additionally, due to the difficult-to-service areas of the Niepolomice commune, where the operation of high-frequency public transport may be unprofitable, it is recommended to implement a transport on demand system. This system, also known

as a tele-bus, does not have fixed routes or timetables. It collects notifications from passengers and adjusts the route to their needs on an ongoing basis. This system can also be helpful in the design of regular bus lines, as its data allows determining the most frequented routes.

The last discussed aspect of the recommendation are pedestrian and cycling connections. Safe pedestrian routes should be provided to reduce the movement of pedestrians along unlit roadsides, especially in the vicinity of Wimmer Street and the Niepołomice Investment Zone, because these areas serve as access routes to work in the NIZ, also in the case of night shifts, which is currently dangerous. As regards bicycle connections, two bicycle routes listed in the Study of the Integrated Network of Bicycle Routes in the Niepołomice commune are particularly important. The first is the route along the provincial road no. 964, which is the axis of the Niepołomice commune and the communication route from Wieliczka through Niepołomice to the northeast. The second is the VeloDrwinka route, which connects the northern part of the Podłęże railway station with the Niepołomice Investment Zone. The creation of such a route was reported by respondents as a factor that would encourage them to change to a bicycle when commuting to work. At the same time, companies located in the NIZ should be encouraged to provide a safe place to park bicycles for their employees.

In summary, supporting public transport, supplemented by on-demand transport, along with the expansion of bicycle routes, led to decrease the number of car journeys and, especially, thanks to bicycle connections, facilitated transport during the pandemic.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS - THE MOBILITY PLAN FOR THE KRAKOW METROPOLIS (SUMP)

- Including in the assumptions the good practices of project partners focused on: increasing the number of bus services in order to reduce the risk caused by vehicle congestion/improving safety in public transport (Increasing Transport capacity – Slovenia BP), separation of bicycle paths from the existing road network/provision of new bicycle connections (establishment of cycle routes – Italy), introduction of DRT services in areas difficult to handle by public transport/planned improvement in servicing rural areas (Demand Responsive Transport – Scotland);
- Popularization of remote work during pandemic time as possibility of limiting the obligatory movements - especially in the morning and afternoon rush hour;
- The assumption that in urban-rural communes the nature of the movements is two-way - not only towards the Metropolitan Core, which is Kraków, but also towards communes with significant traffic generators;

- Diversification of the hours of starting work as a measure to reduce excessive congestion in the morning and afternoon communication summits;
- The assumption that after the pandemic is over, only a small part of employees still work fully remotely - now it is mainly 1 and 2 days a week;
- Popularization of the bicycle as a safe mean of transport to work during the pandemic and after the end of the pandemic with regard to the implementation of bicycle infrastructure - to encourage this type of trip. At the same time, supporting and promoting sustainable forms of travel and available commuting opportunities;
- Confirmation that time is the most important factor when choosing the means of everyday transport - especially public transport (in the first stage of SUMP consultation, this factor was also the most important, along with the comfort of travel). In the case of SUMP consultations, the price of tickets was lower - now, due to inflation, this factor is also becoming decisive;
- Confirmation of planned activities to SUMP supporting the use of collective transport: improvement of the transport offer, feed connections to / from railway transfer nodes, tariff and ticket integration;
- Conclusion that a satisfactory travel time on the Kraków-agglomeration route can be achieved to the best degree by rail - important from the point of view of including this type of detailed activities in the SUMP (the need for a profitability analysis);
- Integration of private carriers' timetables as a confirmation of the validity of the proposal to include this measure in the SUMP.

Finally, Niepołomice Municipality representatives received an assurance from the Krakow Metropolis Association about the approval of the prepared recommendations and the substantive contribution to the SUMP - the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the transport.

3.1.4 Policy recommendation in South West Oltenia Region

In SW Oltenia region, the local public transport is mainly used in large cities, but this is still at a fairly low level. In a post-lockdown period, mobility solutions must tackle critical aspects, such as ensuring safe and healthy commuting modes. Future interventions should encourage modal shift and the use of public transport, in line with what is already envisaged in local sustainable mobility plans.

Cities that already had pre-existing strategies for a more sustainable mobility are facilitated since they can react faster to the crisis and with full knowledge of the facts.

The STH group was set up from the first stage of the project, based on the partnership relation already established with RDA, either for the elaboration of strategic documents (ie RDP – Regional Development Plan or RIS – Regional Innovation Strategy) or for the implementation of projects under the Regional Operational Programme.

For the second stage, the selection process of the stakeholders in REGIO – MOB partnership group was based on several criteria:

- the existence of a functional public transport system at the level of the administrative unit;
- involvement of the stakeholders in the first stage of the project;

Regarding the identification and the involvement of relevant partners, RDA also has taken into account geographic and thematic coverage, management capacity and expertise.

All the stakeholders of the Regio-Mob Partnership Group in SW Oltenia were involved in the planning process for 2021-2027 period. At the regional level there was a continuous process of consultation with the regional actors, and the program was adapted according to the identified needs and challenges. As a Managing Authority for the Regional Programme, RDA had the opportunity to work closely with all the partners, mainly with the urban public authorities at the elaboration of the programme.

Also, the stakeholders were involved in the prioritisation of the good practices identified by the other partners and scored each GP. During the first STH meeting held on February 24th, all the 18 practices proposed by the other participating regions in the REGIO-MOB were presented and discussed. Based on the scores obtained, practices were prioritised considering the preferences of the majority. This exercise was valuable from the perspective of the acknowledgement of the possible measures in the field of sustainable transport and capacity building in order to involve the stakeholders in the design of the policy instrument.

A significant amount from ERDF and State Budget, 115.929.412 EURO, was allocated to address citizens behaviours and transport measures towards a greener orientation for the interventions addressed within the **Priority 4 – Urban Sustainable Mobility** of the **SW Oltenia PR 2021-2027**.

In South West Oltenia Region (Romania) the use of public transport and shared mobility services decreased dramatically during and immediately after the lockdown, while citizens prefer(red) private vehicles such as cars and bicycles, but also walking.

During Regio-Mob project, RDA (RDA SW Oltenia) analysed both the best practices identified by the other partners relevant for the pandemic context, but also some aspects which could be transferred in the future interventions targeting a sustainable public transport system, in post-lock down phase.

So, 3 categories of interventions were identified:

- 1. Creation of dedicated bus lines (routes): according to passengers (employees or students) or according to purpose (transportation to the workplace or agreement)** (Good practice from PL – Niepolomice Municipality: *Transport to companies during COVID-19*)
- 2. Supplementing the transport capacity by increasing the frequency of buses** (Good practices from IT (ANCI LAZIO) - *Strengthening of public transport with 14 new grand tourism lines*, SL (Prometni Institut Ljubljana) - *Strengthening of public transport with 14 new grand tourism lines*)
- 3. Infrastructure interventions: dedicated lanes for public transport, creation/expansion of bicycle tracks or pedestrian spaces (temporary or permanent)** (Good practice from IT (ANCI Lazio) - *Temporary and permanent cycle routes in response to COVID-19*)

Due to the fact that, Regio-Mob project activities were implemented in the same period with the elaboration of the PR, the following aspects were considered in designing the orientative intervention of the Priority 4 – Urban sustainable Mobility:

- establishing, developing and optimizing public transport systems through investments in the purchase of clean urban transport rolling stock (tram, bus, trolleybus, etc.), supporting clean urban transport infrastructure;
- supporting the realization/modernization of infrastructures for active transport modes: creation/modernization of pedestrian routes, investments in cycling infrastructure, bicycle rental systems.

The measures/activities proposed at the regional level will aim to improve the efficiency and attractiveness of the public transport system, including transport for students, travel times, accessibility, transfer to public passenger transport (intermodal) and non-motorised modes of transport.

3.1.5 Policy recommendation in Western Macedonia Region

The Region of Western Macedonia (RWM) is situated in the North – Western part of Greece. It borders with the Greek regions of Central Macedonia (east), Thessaly (south) and Epirus (west) and the countries of Albania and North Macedonia (north). Some of the region's characteristics include cross border connection, accessibility, energy production, forest wealth and organic agriculture and broad tourism.

For RWM the Good Practices collected by the REGIMOB partnership have been positively evaluated and the most relevant among the 20 available, are listed below:

- *Theme 1 (Local and Regional Public Transport system):* App that counts the number of users on board a bus [Score 6/6]
- *Theme 1:* CRAIOVA Transport App [Score 6/6]
- *Theme 1:* The South East of Scotland Transport Transition Group [Score 6/6]
- *Theme 3 (Temporary infrastructures for cycling mobility):* Spaces for People [Score 6/6]
- *Theme 4: Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) proposed trial* [Score 6/6]

Although the Good Practice: “Thistle Assistance Card and App - mask exemption sticker” was not initially scored, a discussion among stakeholders followed its presentation, emphasized the usefulness for adoption in the Region of Western Macedonia. As a result, it was deemed necessary to find a potential funding source from existing ERDF resources under the Regional Operational Programs.

The table below summarizes the Recommendation prepared by the Region of Western Macedonia matching the topic of the project and policy instrument.

Theme	Title & Short Description	Fund and Implementation Body
Theme 1: Local and Regional Public Transport system	<p>App that counts the number of users on board a bus</p> <p>The solution consists of an automatic passenger counting sensor specially developed for the transport sector. A people-counting sensor for public transport, based on stereoscopic 3D technology, proved to be very useful for accurately counting the people who get on the vehicles, but also for planning timetables and routes on the basis of real data.</p>	<p>ROP Region of Western Macedonia – Axis 3 Improving the connectivity of the Region</p> <p><i>Implementation Body:</i> Urban and Interurban Buses of RWM</p>
Theme 1: Local and Regional Public Transport system	<p>CRAIOVA Transport App</p> <p>Craiova Transport application is a new tool through which the passengers are informed about the arrival time of the means of transport at the station, about the existing routes or through which they can buy tickets or season tickets using their mobile phone. This app is free and available in online mobile phone shops.</p>	<p>ROP Region of Western Macedonia – Axis 3 Improving the connectivity of the Region</p> <p><i>Implementation Body:</i> Urban and Interurban Buses of RWM</p>
Theme 1: Local and Regional Public Transport system	<p>The South-East of Scotland Transport Transition Group</p> <p>The Group was established specifically to develop and oversee the Regional Transport Transition Plan for the response to and transition out of emergency lockdown</p>	<p>The project will be included in the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan of RWM whose procedures are currently ongoing.</p>

	measures implemented to deal with the COVID-19 crisis. The Group brings together local, regional, and national partners to jointly plan for the management of transport network and any additional measures needed during this period.	<i>Implementation Body:</i> Region of Western Macedonia
Theme 3: Temporary infrastructures for cycling mobility	Spaces for People Spaces for People is a temporary infrastructure program which offered funding and support to make it safer for people who choose to walk, cycle or wheel for essential trips and exercise during the Covid-19 pandemic.	ROP Region of Western Macedonia – Axis 3 Improving the connectivity of the Region. <i>Implementation Body:</i> Region of Western Macedonia
Theme 4: Demand transport responsive systems	Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) proposed trial DRT technology offers the potential to optimize routes and services, particularly in light of the declined patronage due to COVID-19, helping to protect and increase the financial viability of running rural bus services. Furthermore, DRT technology offers great potential to improve the user experience and reliability of services, better coordinate underutilized assets, and provide a cost effective and attractive alternative to conventional public transport, particularly in rural areas.	ROP Region of Western Macedonia – Axis 3 Improving the connectivity of the Region. <i>Implementation Body:</i> Urban and Interurban Buses of RWM
Theme 1: Local and Regional Public Transport system	Thistle Assistance Card and App mask exemption sticker The Thistle Assistance Card and App are an easy way of letting transport staff know what additional assistance a person might need. In response to COVID-19 and the face covering requirement, the Card and App now include a sticker for those that are exempt from wearing face covering.	ROP Region of Western Macedonia – Axis 4 Social Policy where there is a special category for disabled persons (ESF- European Social Fund + funding). <i>Implementation Body:</i> National Confederation of Disabled People (NCDP) (National level)

To sum up, it was of outmost importance to identify and improve the policy instrument in a simplified way, so that the lessons learned from other partners policies were clearer.

New requirements for public transport planning have been devised, but in a non-systematic way, and there is still a lack of knowledge about the solutions that deal with the pandemic. In addition, it is important to plan intervention measures that can assist public transport service providers in planning their services in the post-lock down phase and the corresponding model development requirements, supporting the transition from initial programming practices to better-informed decision-making. To

do this, it is vital to improve the policy-making process, including the advice and knowledge gained during REGIO-MOB project.

3.1.6 Policy recommendation in South-East Scotland Region

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran) is the statutory Regional Transport Partnership for the South East of Scotland. SEStran encompasses eight local authorities: City of Edinburgh, Clackmannanshire, East Lothian, Falkirk, Fife, Midlothian, Scottish Borders and West Lothian.

Following discussion and engagement several different partnership groups were created during the COVID-19 pandemic. This formed basis of the main stakeholder cooperation group, the South East of Scotland Transport Transition Group (SESTTG), which involved SEStran, Transport Scotland and all eight local authority partners. The group was established to develop and oversee a Regional Transport Transition Plan for the temporary and transitional measures throughout lockdown implemented for the pandemic. SESTTG developed shared approaches to gather information, share technical and joint procurement and assess transferability of lessons learned as projects developed.

The Bus Priority Rapid Deployment Fund (BPRDF) was set up to provide immediate relief to some of the most congested bus routes. Working in partnership with bus operators, the SESTTG developed a package of interventions. These measures aimed to encourage and incentivise bus travel as an attractive, sustainable mode of transport as lockdown restrictions were lifted over the course of 2021, and the traffic began to return to previous levels.

The Thistle Assistance Card and App are an easy way of letting transport staff know what additional assistance a person might need. In response to COVID-19 and the face covering requirement, the Card and App now include a sticker for those that are exempt from wearing face covering. Other RTP's and local authority partner are helping to promote the message.

SEStran is in the process of setting up a new Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) Trial. The trial will test how effective a MaaS solution assists DRT. The GoSEStran MaaS app is already live within the East Lothian region, so the DRT service will be integrated into the app once it is live, to assess if this helps to encourage patronage on public transport.

Spaces for People (SfP) was a Transport Scotland funded programme, that enabled statutory bodies to introduce measures focused on protecting public health,

supporting physical distancing, and reducing the risk of virus transmission. Stakeholders worked together to initiate several measures, which included 11 widened footpaths in city centre and town centre locations to create more safe space for pedestrians and 29 road closures or vehicle prohibitions near school gates.

The use of public transport and shared mobility services decreased dramatically during and immediately after the lockdown, while citizens prefer(red) private vehicles such as cars and bicycles, but also walking.

During the Regio-Mob project, SEStran analysed both the best practices identified by the other partners relevant for the pandemic context, but also some aspects which could be transferred in the future interventions targeting a sustainable public transport system, in post-lock down phase. Due to the fact that, Regio-Mob project activities were implemented in the same period as the development of the new RTS, the policies reflect the realization and modernization of infrastructures for active transport modes. New infrastructure structures will be designed, which will include dedicated lanes for public transport as well as the creation and expansion of bike lanes or pedestrian spaces (temporary or permanent) in response to COVID-19.

Spaces for People (SfP) was a Transport Scotland funded programme, that enabled statutory bodies to introduce measures focused on protecting public health, supporting physical distancing, and reducing the risk of virus transmission. Stakeholders worked together to initiate several measures, which included 11 widened footpaths in city centre and town centre locations to create more safe space for pedestrians and 29 road closures or vehicle prohibitions near school gates.

As a conclusion to the recommendations, it is underlined that the measures and activities proposed at the regional level will aim to improve the efficiency and attractiveness of the public transport system, including transport for students, travel times, accessibility, transfer to public passenger transport (intermodal) and non-motorised modes of transport. SEStran will aim towards creating transport networks that promote and encourage a modal shift to more sustainable travel and support partners to deliver long-term transport goals.

4. CONCLUSIONS

It can be stated that the regional and national measures (as for Slovenia) and the activities proposed by the partners are tools aimed to improve the efficiency and attractiveness of the public transport system, travel times, accessibility, public passenger transport (multimodal) and non-motorised modes of transport. These initiatives, to be replicated in other EU regions, encourage a modal shift towards more sustainable travel and support the achievement of long-term transport objectives, as a consequence of the greater awareness that occurred as a result of the pandemic period in which an improvement in the environment took place unequivocally, thanks to safety and social distancing measures.

New requirements for public transport planning were thus selected by the REGIO-MOB partnership as a result of the pandemic experience, with the common goal of building a public transport system that is more competitive than individual car transport. The 20 GPs collected, as well as the 4 GPs most exploited by the partnership, may induce many EU regions, and their public transport service providers, to offer insights to proceed towards the mobility transition through innovative decision-making processes.