



Transdanube.Pearls - Network for Sustainable Mobility along the Danube

<http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/transdanube-pearls>

Implementation Guidelines Flexible Transport Systems

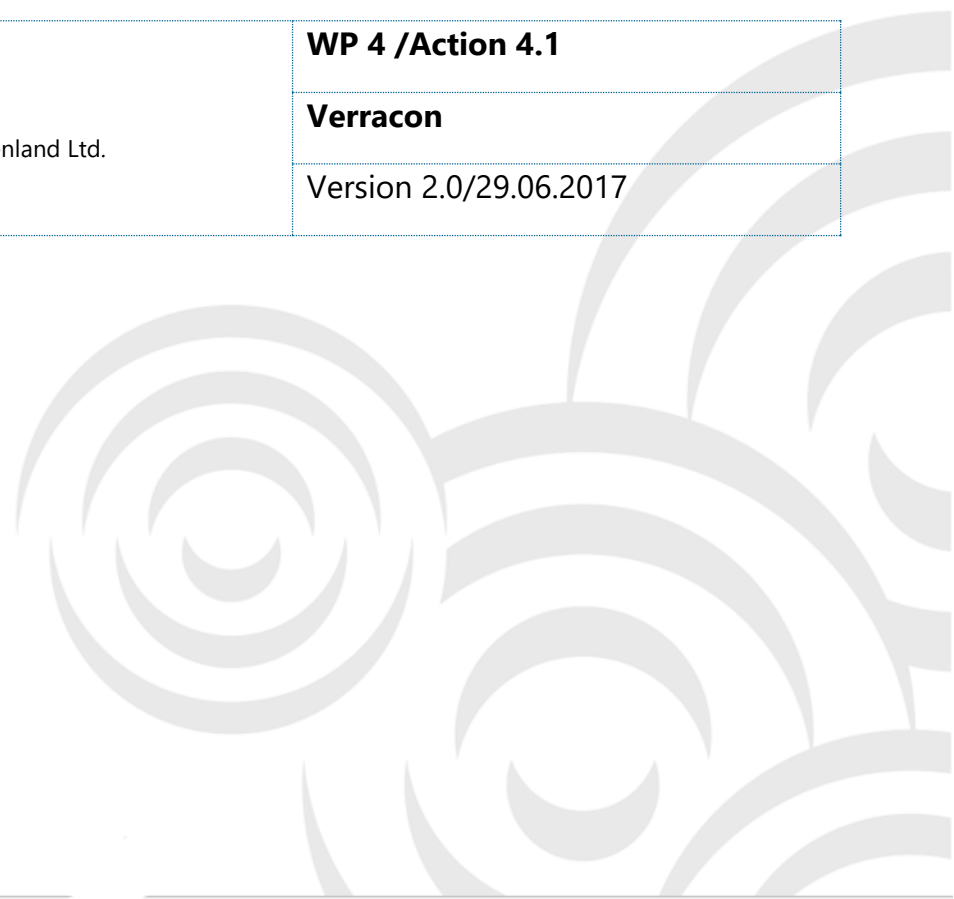


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Implementation Guidelines - Flexible Transport Systems

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More information about TRANSDANUBE.PEARLS and the project activities & results are available on: <http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/transdanube-pearls>



Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Executive Summary..... | 3 |
| 2. Introduction..... | 4 |
| 2.1. Trends and requirements in tourism mobility..... | 5 |
| 2.2. Definition and differentiation to public transport | 7 |
| 3. Implementation process | 8 |
| 3.1. Preparation phase..... | 9 |
| 3.2. Planning phase | 11 |
| 3.2.1. Operation | 11 |
| 3.2.2. Marketing and information..... | 19 |
| 3.2.3. Funding | 20 |
| 3.3. Operating phase..... | 21 |
| 4. Checklist for implementation..... | 22 |
| 5. Good Practices..... | 24 |
| 5.1. Werfenweng shuttle..... | 24 |
| 5.2. Bus alpin..... | 25 |
| 5.3. Transport on demand Castilla-León..... | 26 |
| 5.4. Narzissenjet..... | 27 |
| 5.5. Ring a Link..... | 28 |
| 6. Factors for success | 29 |
| 7. Index of Tables | 30 |
| 8. Index of Figures..... | 30 |
| 8. Project Partners..... | 31 |



1. Executive Summary

For tourism destinations, the importance of seamless sustainable travel chains is on the rise. Conventional public transport often can't fit all requirements. Especially for the "last mile" and mobility needs in the region flexible transport systems can be a solution.

Demand-driven flexible transport systems are tailor-made transport offers for the target group's specific requirements. Operational parameters as route, timetable, stops or vehicle size are more flexible compared to conventional public transport. The system serves a demand on a local or regional level, is initiated by people out of the region and developed in a cooperative way. More flexibility and lower costs can bring public transport to areas which couldn't be served financial sustainably before.

For implementation three phases can be identified:

- **Preparation phase:** Getting knowledge of the region's situation (in the fields of tourism and sustainable transport) allows to mark out the purpose of the transport offer and the requirements. Local stakeholders must be identified and involved and the process must be specified.
- **Planning phase:** Successful flexible transport systems need appropriate planning focusing on the target group's demands. Beside operational parameters (operator, type of service, times and area of operation, staff, disposition, ...) funding and the broad field of marketing and information are key issues.
- **Operation phase:** Once started the system needs regular monitoring and evaluation to ensure a high level of quality. Ongoing efforts in marketing and information keeps the system alive.

The guidelines provide a check-list for all steps of the implementation process.

Best practice including differently designed projects from local to regional level gives a view on possible solutions.



2. Introduction

This guideline will support you in the implementation of a flexible transport system in your region. It will start with general trends in tourism mobility followed by a definition of flexible transport systems incl. a comparison with public transport.

The **description of the implementation process** is structured in the three phases: **preparation, planning and operation**. For each phase, some guiding questions are included covering the most important issues starting with the definition of the purpose, the target groups, financing options, etc.

The most important issues are summarized in a **checklist** that will guide you in direction of a successful implementation of a flexible transport system in your region.

The findings of the good practice collection are summarized in a list of key **success factors for implementation**.

This implementation guideline is based on Verracons experience in the development, implementation and evaluation of different flexible transport systems in Austria. In addition, good practices from other countries have been collected and analysed in order to provide the partners with a comprehensive overview of possible implementation options. More information on international examples can be found by visiting the websites of these projects:

Move on Green <http://www.euromontana.org/en/project/move-on-green-2/>

Last Mile <https://www.interregeurope.eu/lastmile/>

Flipper <http://www.interreg4cflipper.eu/>



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2.1. Trends and requirements in tourism mobility

Changing mobility behaviour in main origin markets brings new requirements for tourism destinations. Tourists especially from urban areas with declining motorization rates are looking for offers giving them the possibility to make their journey without their private car and in a sustainable way.

What are the consequences for tourism destinations?

Sustainable mobility and seamless travel chains are getting more important. The tourist wants a guarantee, that all its transport demands are satisfied. Therefore, solutions for following aspects are required:

- Sustainable transport connections from the source markets to the main international transport nodes in or in the surrounding of the region in good quantity as well as quality
- Sustainable transport connections from the international transport nodes to the transportation hubs in the focus area fitting requirements of tourists
- Easy and smooth transportation possibilities for the last mile (train station/bus stop to accommodation) including the possibility to move individually at the destination without a private car

For the last mile and mobility in the region especially in rural areas with low-demand and/or specific requirements of touristic user groups conventional public transport services in many cases can't be operated sustainably and/or don't meet the requirements.

Flexible transport systems can be a solution

Flexible transport for the last mile





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Flexible transport systems for regional/local mobility



Flexible transport systems can complement the mobility chain and enlarge public transport's service portfolio, filling in the gaps left by traditional mass transit in rural, decentralised areas. They can extend the catchment area of public transport, offering a great solution for first and last mile issues. They play a determinant role as partners by providing feeder services between remote areas and formal public transport routes, or by serving areas with a poor or non-existent formal service.

Not only tourists can benefit. If planned accurately flexible transport solutions can bring benefits to other groups:

- Residents (especially in rural areas)

Increased quality of mobility services by providing access to railway stations/main bus stations, access to shopping facilities and schools, etc. with benefits specially for the groups of

- older people: providing basic mobility services allows them to move independently.
- young people without driving license

- Regional economy

Improved access to local retailers and other service providers increases the catchment area and therefore the economic basis of local and regional businesses



2.2. Definition and differentiation to public transport

There are several synonyms for demand-driven transport systems. Beside the expression used in this document - flexible transport systems – in several European countries micro (public) transport and in North America micro transit or paratransport are used.

All of them have in common, that they are describing flexible transport offers, fulfilling demands where the traditional public mass transport cannot do so. Reasons can be high seasonal or areal variation in demand or a lack of passenger volume in general.

In all aspects, flexible transport systems should be perfectly adjusted to the demand of the target group(s) – therefor these systems can vary vastly in their characteristics.

For the understanding of flexible transport systems, it's essential to outline the differences to traditional public transport. The table below shows the differences in main characteristics:

| Public transport | Flexible transport systems |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Schedule | Flexible or sort of schedule (approximate times) |
| Runs according to schedule | Demand-driven, needs advance booking |
| Fixed route and stops | Door-to-door, stops or combination |
| Local to (trans-)national level | Local or regional level |
| Follows general demand | Focus on specific requirements of selected target groups |
| (Often) large busses | Depending on demand mostly smaller vehicles |
| Organized by superior authority | Organized out of the region, involving stakeholders |

Table 1: Public transport vs. Flexible transport systems



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3. Implementation process

The path to a successful flexible transport solution can be broken down roughly to three phases. For each phase these implementation guidelines provides the questions that should be answered. At the end of the guidelines all steps are summarized in a check-list.



Figure 1: Scheme of implementation process



3.1. Preparation phase

Quick-Check

Starting the process, it's necessary and helpful to know about the current situation in tourism mobility. A quick-check on aspects like the following will help to get a better understanding:

1. Tourism locations
 - a. Sights and other touristic attractions (points of interest POIs) in your region/destination
 - b. Touristic services (hotels, restaurants, etc.)
2. Transport services
 - a. Existing sustainable mobility services to get into the region
 - b. Connection between existing public transport and accommodation/POIs
 - b. Existing sustainable mobility services to move in the region

Get a feeling for distances!

Preparation phase

- Quick-check tourism mobility
- Basic points
- Identification of stakeholders
- Definition of process





Basis points

In the preparation phase, basic points should be outlined by asking:

Q: Why do we want a flexible transport system?

Consider: Existing public transport not sufficient? Traditional solutions can't fit the demand? Offering a complete package?

Q: What purpose should it serve?

Consider: Touristic demand, offers for residents or combination? Last mile/connection to bus or train and/or mobility at destination?

Q: What's the financial scope?

Consider: Who would participate in financing? Is there some government aid available? Are there possibilities to gain business' sponsorship (e.g. hospitality business)

Q: What's the legal framework?

Consider: Do the regulations regarding public transport allow flexible transport systems? Do you need to contract a licensed transport operator or voluntary drivers are also an option?

Q: Which stakeholders should be involved?

Consider: How can the target groups be involved? Who are the stakeholders in local/regional politics and administration? Who are the important players on the transport sector (e.g. regional transport operators)? Which businesses can support the system?

Q: Who takes responsibility?

Consider: Who is leading the planning process? Who is responsible for the ongoing activities after the system's implementation?



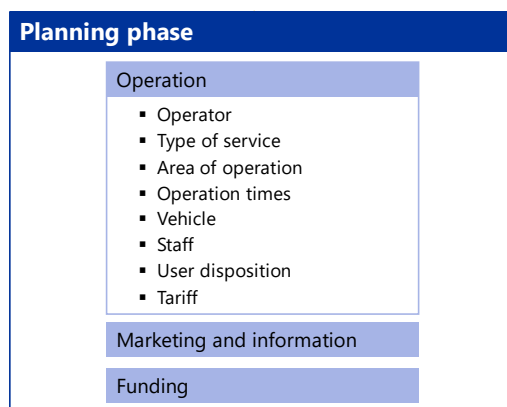
Q: How do we proceed?

Consider: What's the timeframe for the implementation process? Who can support the process?

3.2. Planning phase

Flexible transport systems are solutions for specific demands and target groups. But for them, they can provide a substantial benefit. To realize this potential benefit, well-founded planning is essential.

All activities should be based on a profound analysis of the current situation in the area where the system should be implemented. Furthermore, it is necessary to have a clear picture of the user requirements.



Therefore, it is highly recommended to involve the target group(s) in an early stage of the planning process.

The planning phase should not cover operational parameters only. Aspects as financing, marketing and cooperation are important equally.

3.2.1. Operation

Operator

Q: Who can and who should operate the system?

Consider: Are there local/regional transport operators with resources (vehicles, drivers etc.) capable operating the services? Are there municipality authorities or non-profit organisation who are willing to operate the services on their own? What are the relevant legal framework conditions (taxi regulations, public transport regulations, labor law, etc.)?



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The answer can be different forms of business models already used for flexible transport systems, each with specific strengths and weaknesses. The right model must be chosen regarding to local circumstances (resources, legal framework):

1. Stand-alone operator (profit/nonprofit/municipality)
 - The operator organizes every operational aspect on its own, responsible for 100% of the operation,
 - Easy to manage,
 - Customer directly contacts company or driver, gets answer straight away
2. Cooperation framework (a number of operators and/or authorities work together sharing resources such as travel dispatch center, staff and systems)
 - More complex to manage,
 - Need for contracts for stakeholders,
 - Distribution of revenues (define rules),
 - Managing reliability issues (complaints etc.)
3. Tendered services (operated under subsidy from authority - operated by taxis, voluntary organisation or bus operator)
 - Authority defines contract terms and conditions,
 - Operators bid to meet conditions,
 - Contract awarded based on agreed criteria, quality of vehicles, training, track record, cost etc.

Type of service

Q: Does the system need pre-set stops or does a door-to-door service fit the purpose of the system better? Or maybe a combination of both?

Consider: What's the main purpose of the system – last mile or mobility in the region? Should the system connect only a few destinations (train stop, hotels, sights)? What's more important – flexibility or the possibility to bundle trips?

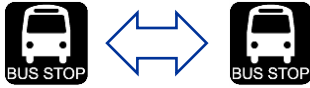




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There are several possible specifications for this parameter:

1. Stop to stop



This type of service is the closest to conventional public transport, with the difference that stops are only served if a trip is ordered. There can be a fixed sequence of stops, but doesn't have to.

- Good solution to connect for example a train station with one or more points of interest (e.g. sights)
- Easier to bundle trips (improved utilization)
- Less flexible, fits only pre-defined demands

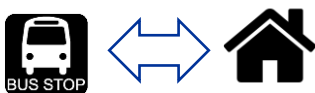
2. Door-to-door



The type of service which is providing the highest level of comfort for users. Often a good solution to provide flexible mobility in a municipality/smaller region.

- Best comfort for passenger
- Flexible, fits many needs
- Not easy to bundle trips, can result in higher costs

3. Combination address to stop or vice versa



Often a combination of both can be a good solution, for example a comfortable pickup at an address (e.g. hotel) but only a few destination points as train stops or main sights.

- Compromise between comfort and cost-efficiency
- Fits only pre-defined demands



Area of operation

Q: What's the right extent of the area of operation and which points in this area should be served?

Consider: Where are the region's most important destinations points (train stops, hotels, sights etc.)? Which distances can be served in an economically reasonable way?

The area of operation largely depends on the focus of the mobility offer. The area of operation could cover one single municipality or just a part of it (improving the accessibility on the local level and providing connections to the regional transportation system), a group of municipalities (improving regional accessibility especially on those areas which are highly interlinked) or even a whole region.

In many cases cooperation with the neighboring municipalities will generate an added value in terms of integrated planning, cost-sharing, joint promotion, etc. One should have in mind that the efforts for the coordination of different stakeholders are likely to increase if the area of operation is bigger.

Times of operation

Q: What are the required operation hours and days?

Consider: When does the target group's mobility needs occur most likely? Does the additional attractiveness of the system by expanded operation times outweigh additional costs? Fixed timetable or fully flexible after pre-booking?

Operation times highly depend on the requirements of the target group(s) and the available funds. If the target group are tourists, services are often required on weekdays and weekends, maybe seasonal restricted. Services for residents are needed the whole year, but can have other restrictions: If the service is mainly focused on the elderly the operation hours could be limited to some days of the week and specific hours, allowing them to get to the doctor/supermarket, etc. Services focused on commuters must include the early morning and the evening hours.



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A sort of timetable (possible times for ordered trips) can help to bundle trips, while a system without fixed times give the passengers more flexibility.

Vehicle

Q: What's the right vehicle used for the transport system?

Consider: Are there vehicles already available (municipality owns a bus, fleet of regional transport operator)? Do they fit the target groups requirements? Are there any special requirements (e.g. transport of luggage or bicycles, accessibility)?

Often existing vehicles (like minibuses, vans) can be used for such a service, what limits the investment costs. When buying a new bus, the operators should consider the option to select an environmentally friendly vehicle (E-bus, (natural) gas, etc.). Another decision to be made when selecting a vehicle is whether the bus will allow barrier free entrance. There are different options available on the market, starting with low cost to high end solutions like hydraulic lifting ramps. The decision once again highly depends on the available budget and the requirements of the target group.



Figure 2: Accessible low-floor minibus¹

¹ Source: www.minibus.info



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Figure 3: Natural gas powered minivan (with logos of sponsors)²

Staff/Drivers

Q: Who drives the busses?

Consider: Is an external transport operator (and its employed drivers) contracted? Can the system be organised with voluntary drivers? Does the legal framework allow voluntary drivers?

There are mainly two options to choose, highly depending on the chosen business model. If the service is operated by a contracted transport operator, employed drivers of this operator will pilot the bus. If the municipality or some non-profit organisation is operating the system itself, drivers can also be employed on a minor or even on a voluntary basis. As the staff costs normally comprise the biggest share of the operation costs, the operator has to choose a model which correlates with the available budget. To acquire and continuously motivate the voluntary drivers are the main challenges if such a solution is chosen, even more if the main target group are tourists.

² „STAXI“, Stams/Tyrol/Austria; Source: Verracon



User disposition?

Q: How are the trip-bookings handled and drivers are disposed? Who takes passenger wishes and complaints?

Consider: Can the driver handle disposition on its own or is a separate disposition system necessary? Can the contracted transport operator handle the disposition or are there other professional providers available? Are there other municipalities to organize a common disposition centre?

In many cases the user disposition is handled by the drivers. Users are calling the driver on the official mobile phone number and arrange their trip personally with her/him. Due to safety reasons, it is necessary, that the drivers use hands-free kits. This solution has proven to be a very efficient one up to a certain number of users. If the service is getting very popular or the area of operation requires several busses it might be necessary to switch to a professional disposition system to relieve the driver.

In case the service is operated by a professional taxi company or a bus operator they might use the existing (in-house) disposition system.

Many examples have shown that a friendly, flexible and reliable user disposition is a very important factor for the success of the service. It increases customer loyalty, which is crucial for the successful and long term operation of the service.

Tariff

Q: Which tariff scheme is the best compromise between attractiveness for users and economical necessities?

Consider: Which tariff offer fits the target group's requirements best (single ticket, multiple usage, season ticket)? What ticket costs would be accepted? How can ticket sales be organized?

Even they can't cover operating costs in most cases, the revenues resulting from ticket sales contribute an important part of the overall budget available for operating the flexible transport system. The chosen tariff should reflect the local framework



Implementation Guidelines - Flexible Transport Systems

conditions as well as the prize sensitivity of the users. Tariffs should anyway be socially compatible.

Options applied in existing systems are:

- Integration in the tariff system of the regional public transport association
- Fixed tariff for each trip
- Tariff depending on the distance or time travel
- Multiple usage tickets (e.g. seasonal tickets)
- Zero-tariff for overnight guests in the regions
- Combined tickets for transport and sights

Experience has shown that drivers should not be bothered too much with selling tickets. Selling tickets costs a lot of time (which will increase travel/waiting times). Furthermore, handling cash on the bus is increasing the risk of robbery. A possible option for touristic transport offers is, to sell tickets to tourists already at their accommodation.

3.2.2. Marketing and information

Q: How can the target group learn about the transport offer? How can access barriers be reduced?

Consider: What are the best channels to reach the target group? Is the information complete and understandable? Can information be combined with other touristic marketing materials? How can information reach the guest already before starting the journey?

The more the users know about the service and the easier and user friendly the service is designed the higher are the chances that the service will be accepted and frequently used by the target group(s).

It is most important that the users have the information about the availability, tariff and the access points of the service. Easy access to the information about the service as well as to the service itself is crucial. Many well designed public transport systems fail



Implementation Guidelines - Flexible Transport Systems

in practice, because the information about the system is hard to find, the system itself is not easy to be used.

Activities which can be considered:

- Easy to understand information about the service distributed to the target groups and available also on all channels of tourism information
- Marketing partnerships with selected hotels, tourism organisations etc.
- Presence at village fairs/fêtes ideally with an active role, e.g. using the flexible transport service to bring people to the venue and back again
- Specific marketing activities focussing on special travel purposes, e.g. lower tariffs to go shopping with the flexible transport system

New forms of information technology can give a valuable support and can provide passengers with on-time information.

The costs for marketing activities should be taken into consideration as any other cost category when designing the system.

3.2.3. Funding

Q: How can transport offer be financed on a sustained basis?

Consider: What operating costs and earnings must be expected? Are there any national or regional programmes supporting sustainable transport systems? Are there possible cooperation partners?

A well-grounded financial plan is essential. You must be aware that hardly any flexible transport system can be operated profitably, so the long-term financing must be secured. A realistic estimation of usage will help to calculate earnings and the remaining funding gap.

If the organizing municipality, region or tourism organisation is not able to provide sufficient financial resources, the availability of any governmental programmes to support such systems should be checked.



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Businesses and organisations benefitting from the transport system can also be won as supporters. For example, hotels could sponsor the transport service with a yearly contribution. As incentive, they can be provided with discounted tickets for their guests.

3.3. Operating phase

Q: What must be done after the system is operational?

Consider: How can a high quality of operation be ensured? How can the awareness for the system be kept up permanently?


Operating phase

- Monitoring and evaluation
- Continuous efforts in marketing and information

After implementation of the new mobility offer the quality of operation must be monitored continuously and evaluated regularly. This allows the operator to quickly adjust services in case of problems or user complaints. Possibilities to carry out this evaluation are:

- User surveys
- Steering committee including members of the target groups and important stakeholders
- External evaluation ("mystery shopping")

Marketing activities will keep and increase the awareness of the target groups and increase the visibility of the service. More people will use the service which will decrease the necessary public co-financing. Furthermore, the identification with the service will improve. Marketing activities should not be limited to the starting phase but should be carried out continuously.



4. Checklist for implementation

| Preparation phase | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Quick-check | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Tourism services, sights, attractions ✓ Existing sustainable mobility offers ✓ Distances |
| Basic points | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Why and for what purpose ✓ Responsibility ✓ Financial scope ✓ Legal framework |
| Definition of process | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Identification and involvement of stakeholders ✓ Timeframe |

| Planning phase | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Operation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Business model / operator ✓ Type of service (stops or door-to-door) ✓ Area of service ✓ Times of operation ✓ Vehicle (capacity, sustainability, synergies, accessibility, special requirements) ✓ Staff/drivers (employees, voluntary drivers) ✓ User disposition and complaint management ✓ Tariff (range of tickets, pricing, combined offers) |
| Marketing and information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Information materials (complete, understandable) ✓ Integration in tourism marketing ✓ Additional marketing activities (like promotional events) |
| Funding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Realistic calculation of costs, earnings and the funding gap ✓ Identification of feasible governmental funding schemes ✓ Cooperation partners and sponsorship |



Implementation Guidelines - Flexible Transport Systems

| Operating phase | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Monitoring and evaluation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Continuous monitoring (user surveys, complaint management) ✓ Regular evaluation (external evaluation, mystery shopping, steering committee) |
| Marketing and information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Organisation of and responsibility for ongoing efforts in marketing and communication |

Table 2: Checklist for implementation



Implementation Guidelines - Flexible Transport Systems

5. Good Practices

5.1. Werfenweng shuttle

The Werfenweng shuttle is a service especially dedicated for tourists. The service overcomes the gap between the next train station (with international train stops) and the municipality of Werfenweng. As there is no adequate public bus running between these destinations, the municipality decided to provide its tourists with a flexible transport service, which picks up the tourists when they are arriving and brings them to their hotel/pension directly. The whole service is integrated in a sustainable mobility card which allows tourists coming by train or tourists which are willing to not use their private car during their stay at the destination to use all available sustainable and fun mobility offers without additional costs.

| Key facts Werfenweng shuttle (Werfenweng/Austria) | |
|---|---|
| Purpose | Last mile (Bischofshofen train station to Werfenweng) |
| Target group | Tourists and residents |
| Operator | Contracted transport operator |
| Type of service | Train stop to address |
| Times | Daily, 8 times a day in each direction |
| Vehicle | Minibus (9seater) |
| Disposition | Driver |
| Tariff scheme | Single and seasonal tickets, free of charge for overnight guests of member hotels |
| Marketing | Folders, website, integration in tourism marketing |
| Funding | Municipality, local tourism organization, regional/national funding |

Table 3: Key facts – Werfenweng shuttle



Figure 4: Werfenweng shuttle (Werfenweng/Austria)



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5.2. Bus alpin

Bus alpin is an initiative in Switzerland to provide sustainable accessibility to tourism regions, sights or attractions where no existing public transport is available. Each line of Alpine bus is specifically designed and adapted to the situation of the region and to the needs of tourists. Started in 2006 Bus alpin has today 13 partner regions. A national association supports the regional partners (mainly municipalities, tourism organizations) in the planning and implementation phase and in their marketing activities. The transport service is funded by the regional partners, in some cases with support of regional cooperation partners (hotels etc.).

Not all the provided services are demand-driven.

| Key facts Bus alpin (several regions/Switzerland) | |
|---|---|
| Purpose | Tourism mobility |
| Target group | Tourists |
| Operator | Contracted transport operators |
| Type of service | Depends on regional situation, often fixed stops |
| Times | Depends on regional situation, often seasonal restrictions and fixed timetables |
| Vehicle | Minibus or bus |
| Disposition | Depends on regional situation |
| Tariff scheme | Depends on regional situation |
| Marketing | Folder, fact-sheets, tourism information materials |
| Funding | Municipalities, tourism organizations, cooperation partners (hotels etc.) |

Table 4: Key facts – Bus alpin



Figure 5: Bus alpin (Switzerland)³

³ Source: www.busalpin.ch



Implementation Guidelines - Flexible Transport Systems

5.3. Transport on demand Castilla-León

A good example for a larger, regional solution and for the use of information technology is the transport on demand system for rural areas in 9 provinces of Castilla-León in Spain. Core of the system is the "Transport on demand virtual centre". It collects the reservations, organizes the journeys and manages communication. On-board unites informs drivers about reservations and routes. Information panels informs potential passengers about arrivals and free seats. Drivers can report incidents en route with their console and passengers are informed by text message.

The system is mainly funded by the Department of the regional government. Ticket revenues are limited because of a cheap ticket price (1-2 Euro).

| Key facts Transporte a la demanda (Castilla-León/Spain) | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Purpose | Mobility in the region |
| Target group | Mainly residents |
| Operator | Contracted transport operators |
| Type of service | Stops |
| Times | Depends on route |
| Vehicle | Minibus, bus |
| Disposition | Disposition centre |
| Tariff scheme | 1-2 Euro single ticket |
| Marketing | N/A |
| Funding | Department of transport |

Table 5: Key facts – Transporte a la demanda



Figure 6: Transporte a la demanda Burgos



Implementation Guidelines - Flexible Transport Systems

5.4. Narzissenjet

The Narzissenjet is a practical complement to existing public transport services in the region of Ausseerland-Salzkammergut. It's aim is to make holidays without private car easier and more enjoyable. After booking by phone guests can use the "Narzissenjet" for fixed prices between all stops in the region. Operating all days and till the late evening the service is very attractive for tourists in the region. Most of accommodation, train stations and touristic attractions can be reached.

The service is funded by the region's municipalities and the regional tourism association. Business partners supports the system.

| Key facts Narzissenjet (Ausseerland-Salzkammergut, Styria/Upper Austria / Austria) | |
|--|---|
| Purpose | Mobility in the region and last mile |
| Target group | Tourists and residents |
| Operator | Contracted transport operator |
| Type of service | Stops, no fixed route |
| Times | Daily from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. (0 a.m. on weekends) |
| Vehicle | Minibus |
| Disposition | Driver |
| Tariff scheme | Single fare depending on distance classes (4,50 to 13,50 €) |
| Marketing | Folder, website |
| Funding | Municipalities, tourism association, cooperation partners |

Table 6: Key facts – Narzissenjet



Figure 7: Narzissenjet (Ausseerland-Salzkammergut/Austria)



Implementation Guidelines - Flexible Transport Systems

5.5. Ring a Link

Ring a Link is a non-profit, charitable organization funded by the Department of Transport, offering transport in the Irish Counties of Carlow, Kilkenny and South Tipperary. Ring a Link has journeys for everyone whether it's for commuting, shopping, leisure and tourism or medical appointments. The services allow to travel in and between the region's villages and towns and many services link with mainline bus or train services. Ring a Link services are demand responsive and door-to-door. After booking the bus collects the passenger at home.

| Key facts Ring a Link (Carlow, Kilkenny and South Tipperary/Ireland) | |
|--|---|
| Purpose | Mobility in the region and last mile |
| Target group | Residents and tourists |
| Operator | Non-profit organization |
| Type of service | Door-to-door |
| Times | One to several trips on selected weekdays |
| Vehicle | Minibus |
| Disposition | Central disposition |
| Tariff scheme | Single and return tickets |
| Marketing | Folder, website |
| Funding | Department of transport |

Table 7: Key facts – Ring a Link



Figure 8: Ring a Link (Carlow, Kilkenny and South Tipperary/Ireland)



6. Factors for success

Flexible transport systems...

...complement and improve the local/regional public transport system. The new system supports existing public transport offers, not compete against them.

... are tailor-made for a specific demand. There are no standardized solutions. Accurate planning is essential.

... focus on target groups.

... are planned and implemented together with all stakeholders. Target groups, stakeholders from politics and administration, businesses (e.g. potential cooperation partners from tourism) and planners are involved in the whole process.

... use synergy potentials. If possible the demand of more than one target group is met. If there are existing vehicles, they are probably the best solution for the system

... are promoted continuously. Understandable information, adapted to the target group(s), clears the hurdle of the first usage of the system.

... are monitored permanently and evaluated regularly. Adaptions keep the offers up-to-date with users demand and requirements



7. Index of Tables

| | |
|--|----|
| Table 1: Public transport vs. Flexible transport systems | 7 |
| Table 2: Checklist for implementation | 23 |
| Table 3: Key facts – Werfenweng shuttle | 24 |
| Table 4: Key facts – Bus alpin | 25 |
| Table 5: Key facts – Transporte a la demanda | 26 |
| Table 6: Key facts – Narzissenjet | 27 |
| Table 7: Key facts – Ring a Link | 28 |
| Table 6: List of Project Partners | 32 |

8. Index of Figures

| | |
|--|----|
| Figure 1: Scheme of implementation process..... | 8 |
| Figure 2: Accessible low-floor minibus..... | 16 |
| Figure 3: Natural gas powered minivan (with logos of sponsors) | 17 |
| Figure 4: Werfenweng shuttle (Werfenweng/Austria)..... | 24 |
| Figure 5: Bus alpin (Switzerland) | 25 |
| Figure 6: Transporte a la demanda Burgos | 26 |
| Figure 7: Narzissenjet (Ausseerland-Salzkammergut/Austria)..... | 27 |
| Figure 8: Ring a Link (Carlow, Kilkenny and South Tipperary/Ireland) | 28 |



Implementation Guidelines - Flexible Transport Systems

8. Project Partners

| | | | |
|---|---|---------------|-----------------|
|  | <p>LP Environment Agency Austria</p> | <p>EAA</p> | <p>AUSTRIA</p> |
|  | <p>ERDF PP1 Danube Office Ulm/Neu-Ulm</p> | <p>DOULM</p> | <p>GERMANY</p> |
|  | <p>ERDF PP2 WGD Danube Upper Austria Tourism Ltd.</p> | <p>WGDOOE</p> | <p>AUSTRIA</p> |
|  | <p>ERDF PP3 Regionalmanagement Burgenland Ltd.</p> | <p>RMB</p> | <p>AUSTRIA</p> |
|  | <p>ERDF PP4 Bratislava Self-Governing Region</p> | <p>BSGR</p> | <p>SLOVAKIA</p> |
|  | <p>ERDF PP5 West Pannon Regional and Economic Development Public Nonprofit Ltd</p> | <p>WESTPA</p> | <p>HUNGARY</p> |
|  | <p>ERDF PP7 City of Vukovar</p> | <p>CIVUK</p> | <p>CROATIA</p> |
|  | <p>ERDF PP8 Development agency Sinergija</p> | <p>RASIN</p> | <p>SLOVENIA</p> |
|  | <p>ERDF PP9 Regional Administration of Vidin Region</p> | <p>VIDIN</p> | <p>BULGARIA</p> |
|  | <p>ERDF PP10 Club "Sustainable Development of Civil Society"</p> | <p>CSDCS</p> | <p>BULGARIA</p> |
|  | <p>ERDF PP11 National Institute for Research and Development in Tourism</p> | <p>NIRDT</p> | <p>ROMANIA</p> |



Implementation Guidelines - Flexible Transport Systems

| | | | |
|---|---|--------------|----------------|
|  | <p>ERDF PP12 The South-East Regional Development Agency</p> | <p>SERDA</p> | <p>ROMANIA</p> |
|  | <p>ERDF PP13 Government of Baranya County</p> | | <p>HUNGARY</p> |
|  | <p>IPA PP1 Danube Competence Center</p> | <p>DCC</p> | <p>SERBIA</p> |
|  | <p>IPA PP2 Regional Development Agency Eastern Serbia</p> | <p>RARIS</p> | <p>SERBIA</p> |

Table 8: List of Project Partners



Implementation Guidelines - Flexible Transport Systems

Furthermore, Transdanube.Pearls is supported by the following Associated Strategic Partners (ASP).

| | | | |
|--------------|--|--------|----------|
| ASP1 | Austrian Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management | BMLFUW | AUSTRIA |
| ASP2 | Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology | BMVIT | AUSTRIA |
| ASP3 | Neusiedler See Tourism Ltd. | NTG | AUSTRIA |
| ASP4 | Regional Government of Burgenland | BGLD | AUSTRIA |
| ASP5 | Rail Tours Touristik Ltd. | RTA | AUSTRIA |
| ASP6 | Destination Marketing Association German Danube | DMAGD | GERMANY |
| ASP7 | Supreme Building Authority – Part of the Bavarian State Ministry of the Interior, for Building and Transport | STMI | GERMANY |
| ASP8 | Panonsko more d.o.o. / Panonian sea Ltd. | PANON | CROATIA |
| ASP9 | Győr-Sopron-Ebenfurt Railway Corp. | GYSEV | HUNGARY |
| ASP10 | Government of Baranya County | BARCO | HUNGARY |
| ASP11 | Association of Szigetköz Tourism | SZTDM | HUNGARY |
| ASP12 | Association of Tourism Development in Moldova | ADTM | MOLDOVA |
| ASP13 | National Authority for Tourism | NAT | ROMANIA |
| ASP14 | Administrative Territorial Unit Tulcea County | TULC | ROMANIA |
| ASP15 | Railways of the Slovak republic | ZSR | SLOVAKIA |
| ASP16 | Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development of the Slovak Republic | MINDOP | SLOVAKIA |
| ASP17 | Bratislava City - Capital of Slovak Republic | BA | SLOVAKIA |
| ASP18 | Pomurje Tourist Association | PTA | SLOVENIA |
| ASP19 | Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection | MAEP | SERBIA |
| ASP20 | Development Agency of Serbia | DAS | SERBIA |
| ASP21 | Municipality of Kladovo | MKLAD | SERBIA |
| ASP22 | Ministry of Tourism | BMT | BULGARIA |
| ASP23 | Association of Danube River Municipalities "Danube" | ADRM | BULGARIA |
| ASP24 | Municipality of Ruse | RUSE | BULGARIA |