

D6.3d The future of the LTPN in West-Balaton

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Lead Author:	Botond Aba	Other Authors:	all
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ABSTRACT

STARTER (IEE) aims to promote energy efficient and sustainable mobility policies and practices in five pilot sites across Europe. The main goal is to achieve a 10% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions amongst specific target groups in the pilot sites by the end of the project (2014).

In West-Balaton Region a local travel plan network (LTPN) has been set-up. The main stakeholders in tourism and transport have identified together soft mobility measures relevant for the local situation and possible to be implemented within the lifetime of the STARTER project.

Through the implementation of these measures, STARTER will show that West-Balaton Region has more to offer: more travel options, more freedom, more fun and a healthier environment. Hereby creating a win-win situation for residents, the touristic sector and tourists.

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The STARTER Consortium:

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- Municipality of Noordwijk, The Netherlands
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Executive summary (in Hungarian)

A Nyugat-balatoni Régió Magyarországon turisztikailag a legjelentősebb a főváros után. A Balaton nyári telítettsége folyamatosan fejlődik, míg a termál völgy üdülőhelyei egész évben jelentős kihasználtsággal működnek. Ennek alapvető oka a szolgáltatások bővülése, a jobb marketing és a helyi vállalkozások és érdekeltségek bevonása a fejlesztésekbe,

Mivel az LTPN koncepció, azaz a helyi érdeken alapuló együttműködés a tervezésben Magyarországon még nem bevett gyakorlat, így a magyar demonstrációs partnernek (KTI) jelentős ellenállást kellett legyőzni az intézkedések bevezetése során. Specifikusan magyar előkészítés mellett, ahol a lehetséges intézkedések kidolgozása során figyelembe kellett venni a már futó vagy előkészítés alatt lévő projekteket is, az LTPN tagok közösen javasolták a bevezetendő közlekedésszervezési intézkedéseket.

A három intézkedés: kerékpáros útikalauz megvalósítása a zalakarosi térségben (Guide for Cyclists) és az összehangolt vasúti és buszos menetrendek ill. csatlakozások mellett szerepet kapott az energiatakarékosság szempontjából két legjelentősebb közlekedési mód, a kerékpározás és a tömegközlekedés reklámozása is. A helyi partnerek az LTPN-ben egyetértettek e három célkitűzéssel és annak folyamatos közelítésével.

A kezdeti ismerethiány után a résztvevők önkéntesen vettek részt a folyamatban. Jelentősebb szerepvállalást csak kívülről (társ)finanszírozott projektek esetében lehet feltételezni. Az LTPN koncepció elterjesztését úgy érdemes folytatni, hogy a hazai érdekeltek személyes és csekély jogi elkötelezettséggel járó részvételét a külső finanszírozás segíti.

1. Introduction

1.1 Short description of the STARTER Project

There are a vast number of touristic regions in Europe, all of them attracting many tourists from Europe and around the world. These regions include islands and seaside resorts visited during the summer, mountainous regions, lakes and lakesides, historical and religious sites as destinations of cultural or religious visits, and many others. Despite the different characteristics of these places and the different type of tourists that they attract, they all share a common feature, which is the fact that the touristic activity is, to a higher or lower degree, concentrated during a specific season.

The seasonality of tourism demand leads to a rising demand for transport and mobility services during the high season, which has a large effect on the traffic situation in the specific touristic regions. Besides a peak in transport peak during peak seasons, touristic sites are also facing a significant growth of mobility demand while local alternatives for the private car tend to be very limited and there is often a lack of effective information towards tourist for getting around with sustainable travel modes.

Side effects of this include high energy use (mainly fossil fuels), traffic noise and air pollution leading to negative health and environmental effects, increased risk of traffic accidents, low quality of transportation services and damage to the transport infrastructure.

Based on the above, it is clear that there is a great need to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of local transport systems in order to cope with the growing problems and most importantly to put emphasis on the use of alternative sustainable transport modes and/or mobility measures. On the other hand, sustainable transport is also a market opportunity for the touristic sector, since consumers are becoming more and more conscious of the need for sustainability. The problem however is that 'greening' seasonal traffic is not simply the task of the authorities: the main players of the transport sector, the environmental organisations and the economic/touristic sector should join forces with local/regional authorities to ensure sustainable seasonal traffic.

For this reason STARTER (*Sustainable Transport for Areas with Tourism through Energy Reduction*) aims to promote energy efficient and sustainable mobility policies and practices across the EU through the cooperation of all local interested parties.

The main outcome of the project will be the implementation of Local Travel Plan Networks (LTPNs)¹ and innovative mobility measures in 5 regions suffering from a steep seasonality of transport demand, which will contribute to achieve a less energy consuming transport system and less car-dependant 'lifestyles'. Increased awareness of LTPNs and sustainable mobility policies by policy shapers, makers and implementers is a key result of the project.

¹ A Local Travel Plan Network (LTPN) is: "A group, or network, of organisations that have come together to share resources and ideas for developing and implementing a travel plan in their local area." Where a travel plan is: "A package of measures tailored to the needs of individual organisations and aimed at promoting greener, cleaner travel choices and reducing reliance on the car."

1.2 Scope of the report

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the main goals of the STARTER Project are to create and sustain a Local Travel Plan Network in each one of the five pilot sites, as well as to identify and implement soft mobility measures aiming to shift residents and tourists towards more environmental friendly and energy efficient modes of transport. Moreover, the specific goal of the project is to achieve a 10% decrease in greenhouse gas emissions in the

five touristic areas participating in the project.

In order to develop the Local Travel Plans, a user need analysis has been performed based on standard data collection questionnaires with qualitative/quantitative data concerning mobility and information related to tourists (including user needs, expectations, and current behaviour) and other potential stakeholders in each pilot site. Additional data has been gathered from questionnaires distributed to tourist, residents, tourist employees, local authorities and potential LTPN stakeholders for the zero-state analysis as part of the evaluation methodology (WP5).

It has to be mentioned that this deliverable is mainly written for (and by) members of the local network and therefore all kind of background information (site description, geographical-, economic- and political context etc.) is not included in this document. Detailed information about the network can be found in D4.2 – Final Implementation Report (available on the project website: www.starter-project.eu).

The demonstrators all like to see that their network continues beyond the scope of STARTER. This task therefore includes the revision of the Local Travel Plans developed at the beginning of the project (WP3), with special focus on:

- measures to be taken beyond the scope of the project,
- policy plans to be adapted, and
- plans for financial viability of the LTPN.

1.3 Structure of this report

This deliverable first starts with a short overview of the results and experiences gained during the STARTER project. Chapter three details the future beyond STARTER: objectives, network members, development plans and final issues. The deliverable ends with an action plan for the coming years.

2. OVERVIEW OF RESULTS AND EXPERIENCES DERIVED FROM IMPLEMENTATION

2.1 The initial problems

Lake Balaton, being the largest lake in Middle-Europe and hosting each year hundreds of thousands visitors, has set an important aim at promoting energy efficiency in transport and modal shift to bicycling and public transport modes. West-Balaton region and the nearby thermal valley with 3.2 million tourists per year have very specific needs. The West-Balaton region has a special two-faced character. A standard demand in the summer holiday shows a typical seasonal peak-load for two months (July – August). This is complemented by a year-round utilization of tourist facilities in the thermal valley. The resort easy to access needs extended services, especially in case of environmental friendly transport services.

The LTPN set up in the West-Balaton region has initially identified a list of potential soft mobility measures to be implemented within the lifetime of the project. The measures focused on sustainable transport modes (walking, cycling and use of public transport.)

2.2 The planned measures

The following measures were prioritized and finally implemented during the STARTER project.

Measure 1: Guide for Cyclists (GfC)

The Guide for Cyclists (GfC) is a free software system developed and owned by KTI originally based on the Google Maps application. The development of the GfC started in March 2013 with the analysis of the existing bicycle network and the Guide was released in October of the same year. The added value was KTI's opportunity to use different databases to provide a better service for bicycle users. KTI integrated in the software the database of road maintenance, traffic counting and road accidents especially filtered by transport mode cycling. Tourists can choose from many services, for example type of public roads especially bicycle lanes and bicycle paths and traffic volume. Furthermore, there are 18 different types of Point of Interests to identify like: bicycle rental and locker services, shop and repair or bus and railway stations or nature conservations, monuments etc.

The route planner connects start points and destinations with added information (incl. route plan with path length and estimated travel time, gradients' data), but user can interrupt or modify the planned route in seconds.

The Guide for Cyclists is completed for the Region Zalaegerszeg and is available on the website www.kti.hu/starter.i

Measure 2: Highly integrated periodic timetables

The initiative was the development of the PT (Public Transport) network and regular services, harmonizing the long distance bus and rail services in arrival. The regular transport between Budapest – Keszthely – Hévíz corresponds to the original focus of the measure. After train arrival in Keszthely, the long distance bus transfer has been designed 15-30 minutes for each direction (including the possible delay of train, walking time and waiting time). The demand is

defined by the number of passengers and the need of local authorities and the authority responsible for the service (Ministry).

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Relevant harmonized destinations from / to Keszthely (capital of the West-Balaton region) are:

- Budapest – Keszthely bus and train connection
- Pecs – Kaposvar – Keszthely – Heviz – Zalaegerszeg
- Nagykanizsa – Zalakaros – Keszthely – Tapolca – Gyor
- Keszthely – Balatonfured – Veszprém

What is important to highlight is that the most important destination of Hévíz – Keszthely has a number of bus trips 118 times per day and per direction offering an excellent service both for tourists and residents.

Measure 3: Promotion of public transport and bicycle

KTI prepared a leaflet containing the most important directions and journeys around Keszthely in 2013 and a new, actual version of the original timetable in early summer of 2014.

Cycling becomes more and more popular in the Region West-Balaton with many independent local transport developments.

Promotion of PT and cycling targeted 3 groups of stakeholders:

- about 20-25 of mayors were informed and/or involved in the project;
- hoteliers were calling upon promoting public transport and cycling;
- tourists were also involved in the project by using the tools and receiving the information and by answering the STARTER questionnaire.

2.3 Barriers during implementation

Three types of barriers and problems is to distinguish: constraints in resources (technical) and mental or organizational barriers

Measure 1.

- Capacity of webserver, Google application options - technical
- Competition with existing cyclist services - technical
- Support of national authorities (external problem) – organizational
- Capacity of database, number of POIs - technical

Measure 2.

- Parallel investment of higher importance (rail track reconstruction) - technical
 - Lack and problems of decision making of the authority - mental
 - Change in the national administration – introduction of districts - organizational
-

- Political sensitiveness due to 3 elections in 6 months – mental

Measure 3

- Requested and approved brochures are different for each stakeholders - mental
- Preparation of promotion materials took longer time because of administrative changes (public procurement) - organizational

2.4 Results of the measures

Initially municipalities, transport operators and cyclists' undertakings were moderately sceptic. Most of the hoteliers showed disinterest. However all partners agreed that development of cyclists' infrastructure and public transport is generally necessary. Energy conscious behaviour and healthy lifestyle is more and more important for the stakeholders, as long as it does not conflict with the interest of business.

The promotion for public transport and use of bicycle have a high awareness percentage among tourist (44%). The energy reduction amongst users amount to 10%. It shows that perhaps more emphasis could be placed for the promotion of those. Extension of the Guide for Cyclists model is a frequent requirement of stakeholders. Further result was the clear need for a mobile application.

Although the integrated periodic timetable was considered to be very promising, the full potential was hindered by other projects (reconstruction of the railway track in southern Balaton, construction of bus HUBs in Zalakaros and Keszthely) running parallel with the timetable harmonization. Because of this the energy reduction is limited to 4%.

3. POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS OF THE LTPN

3.1 Objectives of the network

The major objectives of the LTPN in West-Balaton Region are:

- To establish legally based cooperation among local stakeholders from all the sectors to identify needs, common interest and answers on mobility problems.
- To build bridges between local stakeholders and governmental authorities for strengthening synergy of both sides. Strategically based and coordinated (Local) Travel Plans are required.
- To harmonize private, governmental and LTPN development accordingly to the local needs. Support local authorities in improving local stakeholders to achieve an energetically and environmentally more conscious local transport policy

KTI is resolved to continue the cooperation and to expand the network.

3.2 Actual and potential future members of the LTPN

Three groups of stakeholders could be identified in case of West-Balaton Region:

- municipalities and other local authorities like (BFT = Development Council of Balaton)
- local representatives of central, national level authorities (new established Government Offices)
- private local stakeholders, like hoteliers, cycling clubs, etc.

The administration of the municipalities has been changed on national level during the project by introduction of new Government Offices. Probably this was the reason why number of stakeholders fluctuated. Beside 6 local authorities, 9 private participants expressed their interest in the topic. This demonstrates and reinforces the need for LTPNs. Some Municipalities expressed their interest but showed moderate presence because of the parliamentary and municipal elections in the year 2014.

The final National Workshop on STARTER on 2nd of December 2014 has shown a clear interest for development of environmental friendly transport modes. The three most important authorities (Ministry of National Development, KKK Coordination Centre for Transport Development and National Transport Authority) expressed their commitment to the project.

3.3 Development plans of the next 3 years

Development plans to be considered beyond STARTER

- Establishing “LTPN clubs” with limited legal commitment together with TDM-bureaus (touristic destination management) for refreshing databases and services (of GfC and time tables)
- Extending areal borders of STARTER in the region with larger POI database using a stronger webserver and database
- Giving real time information timetables by Automatic Vehicle Monitoring (AVM) system in the city centres and main touristic adventures (Spa, harbour, railway stations, bus HUBs)
- KTI will propose joined to local stakeholders the introduction of e-bike in the region due to the practice of Werfenweng
- Coordinating demands and advising local stakeholders for submission of application in energy saving projects’

According to the actual financial and structural circumstances long-term development plans are to harmonize with national authorities, namely Ministry of National Development, KKK Coordination Centre for Transport Development and National Transport Authority).

3.4 Financial viability of the LTPN

The actual LTPN project STARTER was financed by the EU, by KTI and by the actual host in an insignificant proportion. This situation led to some barriers of the project. For example the capacity of the web server could have led to limited access of the Guide for Cyclist software in case of a large-scale areal extension. KTI did not pursue external funding for the project taking into account the financial position of local governments.

Financial plan for the next 3 years is depending on the motivation of all stakeholders. Operating cost, preparatory works and application costs should be funded from European, national, local – all public – and private resources in a full harmony. This leads to the need to coordinate the programs and their funding on all level.

Now begins the new programming period on EU level. The preliminary operative programs include some acceptable resources like

- SEAP – Sustainable Energy Action Plan on European level
 - IKOP – Integrated Transport Development Operative Program on national level
 - TDM – Touristic Destination Management and
 - Municipal resources on local level and
 - PPP constructions and other involvement of the private sector.
 - Tax on tourism is a source continuously available for smaller projects.
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4. ACTION PLAN BEYOND STARTER

Measures foreseen for the future are based on the LTPN concept and on the local development plans. Municipalities have different intentions to reduce environmental pollution and energy consumption. These two main target must be harmonized with local interest of the tourism.

Measure	Source of funding	Time horizon
Establishing “LTPN clubs”	No fee vs. private vs. TDM ² bureaus’ resources	1-2 years
Refreshing database	Municipal, private vs. TDM bureaus’ resources	1-2 years
Development of mobile app.	Naional development resources, SEAP ³ , IKOP ⁴	1-3 years
Extending areal borders	SEAP	1-5 years
Real time information time tables by AVM system	SEAP, IKOP	2-4 years
e-bike renting systes	SEAP, IKOP and private	2-4 years
supporting local stakeholders in proposals	municipal and private	0-5 years continuously

² TDM – Touristic Destination Management

³ SEAP – Sustainable Energy Action Plan

⁴ IKOP – Integrated Transport Development Operative Program