Project index number and acronym | CE55 RUMOBIL
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Lead partner | Ministry for Regional Development and Transport Saxony-Anhalt
Output number and title | O. T2.1 Innovative approaches to enhance public transport linking rural areas to the national and EU transport networks
- New bus line through Slepičí hory
Responsible partner (PP name and number) | PP6 JIKORD s.r.o.
Project website | http://interreg-central.eu/rumobil
Delivery date | 31.7.2018

Summary description of the pilot action explaining its experimental nature and demonstration character

By the introduction of the new bus line was intended to improve connection between rural area and regional center by using local bus with possibility to transfer in intermodal point to long-distance and inter-regional rail transport at Tent-T network.

The demonstration character was based on the application of this new concept of transport (bus-train), which consisted of introducing regular bus connections which guaranteed transfer to train (service guaranteed by dispatching center between bus and train operator).

Concept of new line also monitored the response of passengers to a completely new connection with alternative route, which has never been operated before.

Compared with the other bus lines in the area, which are mainly intended for transport to schools and work (especially on working days), new line was in operation also on weekends and state holidays and besides ensuring transport to schools and to work, provided an attractive offer for tourist and visitors to reach by public transport very attractive nature area which is still not much known by people.
Expected impact and benefits of the pilot action for the concerned territory and target groups

For the first target group - local inhabitants, main benefit was cut the travel times from the rural areas to the regional city České Budějovice or capital Prague (especially for visiting doctors, offices, schools, work, shopping). The second important benefit was operating line also at the weekends and holidays and ensure to local people connections, ensuring their trips for shopping, entertainment or doctors.

For the second target group - tourist and visitors, benefit was possibility to visit region without car, using trains and bus. This service ensured them service like “hop-on hop-off visiting”.

Benefit for JIKORD (as a Coordinator of transport in South Bohemia) and for the Transport department of South Bohemia region was possibility to test new service, which can be operated in future. The important was answer to question: if local people who usually own car are willing to change their travelling habits and if it possible to find a new public transport passenger.

Besides the expected impact and benefit from transport point of view, JIKORD had a chance to test marketing campaign which was focused directly on the quoted stated area, to the people living in this area.

Sustainability of the pilot action results and transferability to other territories and stakeholders
Sustainability
The line helped to improve the availability of public transport in the area (including weekends and public holidays, especially in places where access was not available), but the interest of local populations did not meet the demand that would lead to the inclusion pilot line to the public transport obligation. Most residents own a passenger car and are not interested in changing this means for public transport, despite the fact that the length of travel time to the regional city of České Budějovice or the capital city of Prague was comparable with the pilot bus and following train, and public transport passengers did not have to deal with problematic parking (problematic in terms of parking zones). Also, economic efficiency of public transport (which is cheaper or comparable to the price of fuel consumed, not calculating car maintenance, insurance, etc) did not convince the residents. To change this unfavorable situation local governments should encourage and promote public transportation more. E.g. personalized travel marketing, accompanied by other hard and soft measures, and with the possibility for participants to give feedback on the existing public transport services in their region, could be an efficient way to increase awareness and encourage more people to use public transport more often in rural areas. The secondary objective - to allow tourists access to the area - has been fulfilled. Despite the short test period of the pilot project, which covered the tourist season for only 3 months, there was a considerable interest of both individual tourists and organized groups (senior clubs, tourists clubs, scouts and campsites, but also schools that used the bus for a school trips). From the results of the pilot operation evaluation, it cannot be expected that the Council of South Bohemia Region will include a bus under the public transport obligation, but the efforts will be made to establish a tourist line from the funds allocated to individual tourist transport in the South Bohemian Region.

Transferability
The application of a pilot project is suitable for a rural area that can offer touristic activities. The results of the pilot project have shown that the travel habits of the local inhabitant who own a car are very difficult to change, but there is the possibility of getting new passengers from the tourists and visitors. The main advantage of this approach is that by introducing a new line (bus service) there no reduction in the number of passengers on existing lines, and this approach leads to an overall increase in the number of passengers by public transport.

Lessons learned from the implementation of the pilot action and added value of transnational cooperation
Learnt lessons:

- The bus line showed that it is important to connect rural areas with cities by using intermodal point which offer the passenger really quick connection.
- Very important was establish the service of dispatching at least in intermodal point which ensure the passengers the connectivity between different transport mean (e.g. train and bus provided by different public transport operators).
- Very important was not aiming only inhabitants target group, but also to alternative target group (tourist and visitors).
- Also, the base for each pilot project is regular and effective communication with different groups of stakeholders.

Recommendations

- Precise planning and enough planning time (especially for tender procedures)
- Effective advertising campaign is half the project’s success
- Effective cooperation with the stakeholders will benefit all parties

Added value of transnational cooperation:
Transnational cooperation helped us for getting the valuable experiences and knowledge about examples of good practices across the Central Europe, helped us to prepare and provided the pilot project based also on good examples, good practices of partners and in perfect leadership of Lead partner and WP coordinators.

References to relevant deliverables and web-links
If applicable, pictures or images to be provided as annex

https://www.facebook.com/JikordRumobil/
http://www.jikord.cz/uredni-deska/rumobil/