

Dear READER,

Welcome to the first electronic newsletter of the ATTAC Attractive.... Project supported under the South East Europe Programme. Through this communication, the project partners intend to disseminate the interim results and share information on project activities as well as experiences with local stakeholders from the ATTAC cities. ATTAC Newsletter will be issued regularly, but it might not give a complete picture of the project. For more information you are warmly encouraged to visit our website at www.attacproject.eu.

We hope to awake your interest in our activities.

With kind regards,
ATTAC Team

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Plotting a new course for public transportation in South East Europe

Most transport starts and ends in urban areas, thus they should provide efficient interconnections for transportation networks. ATTAC cities and regions (important nodes of the EU transportation network) are facing increasing mobility needs, intensified suburbanisation, escalating traffic flows and congestion. This led to poor accessibility of these regions and externalities that negatively affect the environment. A major reason of congestion in ATTAC areas is the ever growing use of private cars. The reduction of car use and the shift to sustainable transport modes would be crucial, but public transport (PT) is often perceived by customers as uncomfortable and rigid. That is the reason why the ATTAC consortium set the objective to introduce attractive and sustainable PT solutions and services in their regions which will significantly contribute to raising the use of PT.

Partner meetings

Kick-off meeting



Kick-off ride by the vintage bus of MVK Plc. in Miskolc, Hungary

The official kick off meeting of the project ATTAC took place in Miskolc on the 24-25 May 2011. All partners were represented, altogether there were 30 participants. During the informal (oth) Transnational Working Group (TWG) meeting partners had a first chance to meet each other personally and discuss the first tasks.

Launching conference in Miskolc



Interview with Mr Greg Soós, Project Coordinator of ATTAC at the Launching Conference in Miskolc, Hungary

Launching conference was organised by the Lead Partner in Miskolc with about 150 participants. Besides formally presenting the project's scope of work to strategic stakeholders, the aim of the conference was to compile information about current situation in sustainable public transport development, European policy and trends as well as state-of-the-art public transportation solutions initiated in European cities and beyond.

Dissemination of project results

CEI Central European Initiative took part at the TEN-T days, Antwerp, 29-30 November 2011.



The Central European Initiative was invited to participate as stakeholder at the Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T) days that took place on 29-30 November 2011 in Antwerp, Belgium. During the event the CEI distributed the ATTAC brochure and discussed with relevant stakeholders the rationale of the ATTAC project.

The event was the occasion for the European Commission to present the proposal for new TEN-T Guidelines, which was adopted by the EC on 19 October 2011. The proposal is intended to provide a policy framework where European infrastructure serves the establishment of the Single European Transport Area. The Guidelines set out a regulatory framework with standards ensuring efficiency and interoperability, and also a planning framework, composed of the Core and the Comprehensive Network, which will allow Member States, EU institutions and stakeholders, to concentrate on fostering the emergence by 2030 (core network) and 2050 (comprehensive network) of a functional network of European infrastructure.

In this context, the ATTAC project promotes the coordination in planning and operating urban/agglomeration public transport networks in order to better integrate ATTAC cities and regions into TEN-T network and to reduce bottlenecks in European transport corridors. Effective and quality urban public transport is one of the key factors of fighting congestion, and the stimulation of the use of sustainable public transport must be facilitated.

European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) and ATTAC

CEI took part in Annual EGTC Platform at Committee of the Regions

EGTC is a European legal instrument designed to facilitate and promote cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation. EGTC is a legal entity that enables regional and local authorities and other public bodies from different EU Member States to set up cooperation groupings with a legal personality.

On March 29, the Central European Initiative, in the context of ATTAC project, participated in the Inter-institutional Conference - Annual Meeting of the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) at the Committee of the Regions in Brussels. The event was attended by Members of the European Parliament, European Commission, representatives of the EU Member States in the Council, Members of the Committee of the Regions and delegates from the 26 already set up EGTCs.

The event focused on the revision of the Regulation on the EGTC for the next programming period 2014-2020, where decision-makers of the EU and other relevant stakeholders had the chance to take part in a dialogue about the EGTC reform and its possible improvements. Specific attention was paid to the possible role of the EGTC in re-activating the economy and in meeting the objectives of the Strategy Europe 2020.

The CEI is promoting the EGTC instrument in the framework of the ATTAC project, in particular the CEI will explore with the ATTAC project partners the possibility to set up an EGTC with those cities willing to develop this instrument, and will advise on the drafting of the required documents (guidelines for EGTC convention).

Spotlight on ATTAC cities

Public Transport in Maribor



Transport policy in Maribor supports improving city public transport and spreading pedestrian and payable parking zones. Since 2009 over 1400 payable parking places in the city centre have been introduced and Svetozarevska street has been closed for motorized transport to build a pedestrian area (Leon Štukelj square).

Leon Štukelj square in Maribor, Slovenia

Public transport services in Maribor have been handled by the public utility institute Marprom since August 2011 when they took over the management from Veolia. The bus fleet consists of 38 buses running on 19 lines. All buses are equipped with GPS receivers which allow vehicle tracking and voice announcement inside buses about the next station. A contactless electronic ticket is used as a payment medium which allows shorter boarding times. Passengers can choose between monthly passes and value tickets. Value tickets are transferable and allow multi-run trips charged as one in case of interchanging inside an hour period.

Thessaloniki PTA launches first SUMP in Greece through ATTAC Project

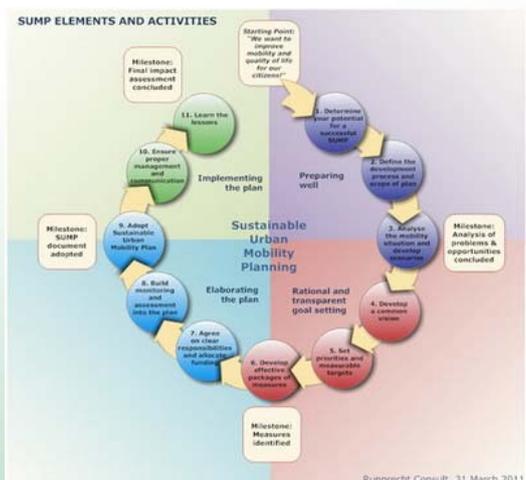
Thessaloniki Public Transport Authority (ThePTA) has launched the preparation of an innovative Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) for the Thessaloniki Metropolitan Area (MA), the first SUMP of its kind in Greece so far. This pioneering action made possible through the ATTAC SEE Project, part of the so called ATTAC 'Urban Mobility Toolbox', commenced in November 2011 with a 2 year time frame to planned completion in October 2013. The Thessaloniki SUMP follows the latest 'Guidelines for Developing and Implementing a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan' published in September 2011 by the Eltisplus project, supported by the EU Intelligent Energy Europe programme. The adopted SUMP Guidelines involve 4 phases, 11 Activities and 32 steps.

The ATTAC project team within ThePTA has set intermediate targets for completion of Phase I of 'Preparing well' till March 2012 and Phase II of 'Rational and transparent goal setting' by September 2012. ThePTA follows a hierarchical approach to SUMP, focusing on public transport development and promotion at a strategic level and subsequently supporting the new enlarged Municipalities to prepare their own local SUMPs including all modes of transport, traffic management and control, cycling and walking, within the SUMP framework.

In an unexpected and exciting development, the 2012 European Mobility Week (EMW) focal theme just announced as 'Moving in the right direction' has emphasis on SUMPs development and implementation which creates particular positive synergies with the ATTAC action of participation in the 2012 EMW. Within ATTAC Communication strategy the eight partner urban authorities are committed to participate jointly in the EMW in September 2012. The ATTAC joint approach in eight partner urban areas offers transnational dynamics for best results in SEE. ThePTA plans to publish the interim, mid-term findings of the Thessaloniki SUMP in September 2012 to coincide with the activities of EMW (22-26 September 2012).

The ATTAC Project Manager in ThePTA, Manos Vougioukas, states: 'We are proud to lead the way in Greece in terms of innovative planning for integrated transport and mobility through the SUMP for Thessaloniki Metropolitan Area, thanks to ATTAC Project. We shall be available to support SUMP preparation for the Municipalities in Thessaloniki MA as well as in other cities in Greece. The current crisis makes it even more important to plan sustainable mobility for people through SUMP, with low cost and high benefit measures, as well as prepare investments in new public transport systems for the next programming period to 2020. We envisage enhancing the SUMP approach with new elements such as on travel behaviour, integrated pricing measures, as well as planning for visitors for sustainable tourism mobility.'

The Chairman of ThePTA, Prof. Panos Papaioannou, concludes: 'The ThePTA SUMP is expected to be an important legacy of the ATTAC project for Thessaloniki MA, as well as for Greece, following this pioneering action of the first SUMP in Greece. We at ThePTA are committed to sustainable mobility policies and measures which can be implemented over the next decade or so, starting with immediate effect but also with a strategic vision for the longer-term. The synergies of SUMP and EMW this year, both important actions within ATTAC project, will enable ThePTA to be in the forefront of developments in sustainable mobility for the benefit of the citizens and visitors in Thessaloniki MA, by promoting integrated public transport for people'.



Burgas the bicycle city



Dimitar Nikolov, Mayor of Burgas and 50 other cyclists in Burgas, Bulgaria

Municipality of Burgas started a new initiative "Burgas-the bicycle city" which is a campaign organized together with the active participation of the citizens of Burgas. The campaign is to be held each year and has the purpose to promote the cycling mode of transportation, making it a popular and preferred way of mobility among the citizens. Giving the start and participating himself along with 50 other cyclists the mayor of Burgas Municipality opened the bicycle tour which went through the newly built bicycle lanes and facilities. The new bicycle lanes along with parking facilities span over an area of 8 km with 20km of bicycle lanes, connecting the residential areas with the city center and most important city locations, planned to be built by the end of 2013 making the city more accessible and green.

"In addition to providing suitable conditions for cycling - special lanes and parking facilities, it is also equally important to fire with enthusiasm and motivate the citizens of Burgas on the idea to choose the bicycle mode of transport to the other. This will happen when people realize its benefits, which are obvious - this transport is environmentally friendly, economical, healthy, and pleasant" Dimitar Nikolov, Mayor of Burgas.

In a special box, the citizens placed their written suggestions and recommendations in regard to the cycling mode of transport, the new bicycle facilities etc. At the event were distributed maps of the city of Burgas designating the bicycle.

Urban Transport expert's opinion



Interview with Csaba Braun, Head of Marketing Department, MVK Miskolc City Transportation Company

Csaba Braun, Head of Marketing Department, MVK Plc giving presentation at the 1st Mobility Forum in Miskolc, Hungary

What are the most important European and national guidelines which need to be followed while developing public transport systems?

As regards Public Transport, currently the Transport White Paper 2011 is the most essential policy document. Among the strategic goals set in this Paper, MVK's actual and envisioned aims are the followings:

- Reducing congestion and the use of private vehicles
- Greener (environmentally friendly) city
- More intelligent and flexible urban transport
- Access to urban transport for disabled people
- Improving safety and security of passengers

What kind of developments does MVK Plc plan to implement in the near future?

There are several running projects co-funded by the European Union, among which the most important one is the so-called Green Arrow project supported by the Transport Operational Programme.

In the frame of the Green Arrow Project, existing tramway has been already reconstructed and extension of the track has been also finished. Contract with Ganz-Skoda Company including the purchase of 31 trams has been concluded, trams will be delivered by 2015. Furthermore, modernisation of the depot as well as the establishment of handicapped tram stops providing advanced passenger information are in progress.

Within the framework of the so-called Smart Point Project, state of the art passenger information system will be developed in main bus stops in heavy traffic areas. Moreover, Traffic Management System will be installed in buses of the MVK.

As you know, under the support of ATTAC Project a Flexible Transport System will be tested for one year and the development of the city's Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan has began.

Major development projects envisioned by MVK are the procurement of comfortable, environment and handicap friendly buses and the introduction of electronic ticketing system.

Do you have the financial resources necessary for the implementation of the above mentioned envisioned projects?

For MVK Plc as for almost all public transportation companies in Hungary, the only chance for financing transport development projects is to apply for European Funds. Are there already any quantifiable results of the running projects you have mentioned before?

Yes, there are some existing quantifiable results as follows:

Green Arrow Project:

- Reconstruction of 9,6 km tramway
- Extension of the tram line by 1,4 km

Smart Point Project:

- Infrastructural development of the 'Újgyöri Főtér' Terminal

Further results that will be quantifiable in the near future:

Green Arrow Project:

- Reconstruction of 48 tram stops including accessibility development and the installation of passenger information system
- Acquisition of 31 new trams

Smart Point Project:

- Equipment of 170 buses with GPS devices
- Introduction of Passenger Information System in 54 bus stops, 4 nodes and 2 terminals

ATTAC Project:

- Development of an integrated Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan focusing on Miskolc.
- Test of a Flexible Transport System involving some bus lines in low population areas for a one-year period.

Could you tell us more about the concept of the pilot project to be implemented in the frame of the ATTAC project? What are your expectations towards this investment?

DRT (Demand Responsive Transport) systems have become very popular in last decades. In Hungary, DRT has been operating in only two cities, namely Budapest and Nyíregyháza. Furthermore, beginning of this year flexible transport services have been partly introduced in Debrecen.

It is worth mentioning that at first in Nyíregyháza 2 kinds of DRT services were provided. One was developed for persons with limited transport capacity. This door-to-door service including the total area of Nyíregyháza was operating on weekdays during the working hours and the tariff was calculated on km based proportional rates.

The other service were focusing on surrounding settlements of Nyíregyháza in order to complement public transportation system as well as to replace some bus services on work days without extra charge. So that some lines were only operating in case of reported demands (phone calls). On public holidays this opportunity was provided as premium service for relatively high price.

Unfortunately, those DRT systems have not been successful. The reason for it was that there was solvent demand from disabled persons and for inhabitants of the surrounding settlements premium price was not enough attractive. As a result, today's DRT systems operate only after 8 p.m. and bus lines carrying less 10 passengers run only on demand.

DRT system of Budapest currently provides 2 types of services. One is targeted at handicapped persons, while the other one is focusing on passengers using night buses and based on a conditional schedule.

In Debrecen, similar to Budapest, early morning and late evening buses run only by prior arrangements. Advance notification can be made via Internet based on prior registration, or by dialling a toll-free phone number, but in any case at least 60 minutes before the planned departure time.

In Miskolc we plan to implement a demand-driven and flexible public transport pilot project which will focus on pre-determined bus lines and bus stops.

Based on the communication channels necessary for advance notification (Internet platform, telephone, SMS) we will ensure the registration of travel requirements as well as potential cancellations (at least half an hour before departure up to one month). After sending confirmation to the passengers, the system will get in contact with the dispatch centre so that we can provide actual requests for bus drivers of running vehicles.

Main expectation being placed on the initiative is to measure and evaluate passenger's attitude towards the system and test economic viability of the DRT service within the operating public transportation system. Based on the results of the test project, we can take a reasonable decision about the integration of DRT services into our portfolio.

Project Partners:

Lead Partner: Miskolc Holding Plc, HU

P1: Modena Mobility and Local Public Transport Agency S.p.a., IT

P2: Marche Regional Government, IT

P3: Oradea Local Transport Company Ltd., RO

P4: Municipality of Burgas, BG

P5: City of Kosice, SK

P6: University of Maribor, SI

P7: Thessaloniki Public Transport Authority, GR

P8: Central European Initiative –Executive Secretariat, IT

EU ASP1: Municipality of Maribor, SI

EU ASP2: The Romanian Union of Public Transport, RO

EU ASP3: Public Transport Company Kosice, SK

OP1: ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability, European Secretariat Ltd., DE

OP2: EPIVATIS – Greek Public Transport Users Association, GR

OP3: Burgasbus Ltd., BG

OP4: Federmobilitá, IT

OP5: Municipality of Miskolc (dept. of Building Environment and City operation), HU

OP6: Municipality of Ancona, IT

The ATTAC Newsletter is produced by the ATTAC project partners, co-funded by the European Commission through the SEE Programme. The sole responsibility of this publication lies with the author. Miskolc Holding Plc. The European Union is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

Upcoming events:

- 3rd TWG meeting in Modena, Italy (May/June 2012)
- Annual conference of the South East Europe Programme (Bologna, Italy, 29 June 2012)
- 2nd local Mobility Forums in almost all partner locations
- EU Mobility Week in almost all partner locations (16-22 September 2012)

Contact:

The ATTAC international team is eager to exchange experiences with other projects/organisations focusing on the sustainable development of Urban Public Transportation in South East Europe and beyond. Should you have any enquiries regarding our project, please do not hesitate to contact the Lead Partner as below. Your feedback will be highly valued.

Lead Partner

Miskolc Holding Plc

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