



SPUTNIC Newsletter

Issue 1, August 2007

Strategies for Public Transport in Cities

Working groups:

Market Organisation

This group focuses on effective co-operation between public transport stakeholders, tariff optimisation and integration, innovative financing, incentive contracts and monitoring systems.

Customer Relations

Participants deal with the interrelations between public-transport providers and customers, paying attention to the image of public transport, marketing strategies and customer relations management, mobility and integration of monitoring results into operations and services.

Corporate Management

This topic covers organisational and management issues, including human-resource development and management, performance indicators and knowledge management, business re-organisation, and improvement of efficiency management.

Equipment and Operational Aspects

The focus here is on operational and technical matters, including the modernisation of rolling stock and infrastructure, safety issues, transfer of innovative technologies and operational management.

About SPUTNIC



New tram in Budapest, 2006

In today's car-based culture, the urban environment has to be managed in such a way that it mitigates the negative effects of increasing car traffic. Effective and attractive public transport systems can offer an alternative to the car. This is valid especially in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, where public transport has historically carried a significant share of urban travellers. However, due to higher standards of living and unsatisfactory or poor public transport services, passenger numbers are decreasing.

SPUTNIC (Strategies for Public Transport in Cities) is a project funded by the European Commission under the 6th Framework Programme.

SPUTNIC is dedicated to challenges faced by local and regional public transport systems. These challenges include the emergence of a competitive environment, changing institutional frameworks, increasingly scarce financial resources, the need for a more business-based and customer-oriented approach, a generally bad image of public transport, as well

as the deteriorating condition of rolling stock and infrastructure.

SPUTNIC seeks to help to make public transport systems more attractive and efficient by providing:

- support to stakeholders to anticipate and prepare for these challenges;
- an overview of state-of-the-art knowledge and research; and
- specific guidelines and practical tools.

The project activities fall into four priority areas:

- market organisation;
- customer relations;
- corporate management; and
- equipment and operational issues.

Each priority area is supported by a working group of public transport professionals.

SPUTNIC cooperates closely with them in order to identify useful recommendations and a set of good practices.

SPUTNIC Newsletter

Issue 1, August 2007

What SPUTNIC offers

SPUTNIC helps public transport stakeholders to anticipate problems and it proposes a set of specific recommendations for strengthening public transport.

The SPUTNIC outcomes are:

- state-of-the-art review;
- identification of the most important public transport sector challenges;
- good practices and recommendations; and
- policy and research recommendations for the European Union (EU).

In addition, a set of useful guidelines and specific tools will be developed.

Products will be prepared for each priority area and presented in a user-friendly format. The results will be distributed to the targeted audience, including through the project website <www.sputnicproject.eu>. Here, you can register for a mailing list of SPUTNIC news. Along with public transport news, the SPUTNIC e-mails will present summaries of project activities.

“SPUTNIC results are based on the real experience of public transport practitioners and experts.”

SPUTNIC activities to date

Since the project kicked off in October 2006, two major stakeholder meetings have been organised.

SPUTNIC Plenary Session, November 2006, Hungary

Public transport experts from Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, and the United Kingdom were invited to join the SPUTNIC plenary session.

The discussion was facilitated by the clusters' leaders and resulted in identi-

fication of public transport challenges in the experts' cities and countries. The results of this discussion gave the base line for further steps in the SPUTNIC project.

First SPUTNIC Experts Working Group, March 2007, Spain

The first SPUTNIC Expert Working Group meeting took place March 29-30 in Sitges, Spain.



Closing session of SPUTNIC meeting in Sitges, Spain

The consortium partners and about 40 public transport experts met to discuss the challenges facing public transport in four working groups in parallel sessions.

The Market Organisation working group focused on global aspects of integration: network/timetables, tariffs and services.

Customer Relations worked on basic elements of marketing and current practices.

The Corporate Management group concentrated on trends in corporate management and performance management.

The Equipment and Operations group discussed rolling stock upgrading solutions. The discussion was stimulated by the presentations of working group experts.

On March 31, a technical visit organised by Transport Metropolitans de Barcelona (TMB) took place.

Preliminary state-of-the-art review

The consortium partners have prepared a preliminary report on the State-of-the-Art Review which summarises the current situation in public transport systems in transitional economies with a focus

on project priority areas.

After further review, a final version of the report will be prepared by the end of this year and posted on the website. Cases of good practice from Western and Eastern Europe will be included there as well.

Challenges in public transport sector

A report on challenges in the public transport sector is being finalised and will also be posted on the project website. The report outlines the most important challenges in public transport and is a result of extensive literature research and discussion with public transport practitioners. This report will establish the basis for the recommendations and guidelines for public transport practitioners.

Organising public transport market: network and tariff integration

Discussions with experts confirmed that network and tariff integration reduces the entry barrier for using public transport and increases demand and revenues.



Presentation of results of discussion in Market Organisation working group, Sitges

Integrated networks for different modes of transport are used according to their individual strengths and weaknesses. Such systems rely on smooth interchanges and connections. Usually tariff integration is a second step, after the network/timetable integration.

It seems that integrating tariffs and setting up a suitable organisational and institutional framework (transportation

associations, tariff unions) are most difficult. Integration may be possible without adding costs. Integration depends on the local framework conditions and the level of competition. The main actors in public transport integration are authorities, transport operators and politicians (including transportation associations and tariff unions). The co-operation between these actors is needed for successful integration. Integration is possible with weak national regulation, but requires strong initiative at the local/regional level (policy makers, authorities, operators). A strong public transport policy support is needed as well.

Importance of corporate management in public transport companies



Discussion on corporate management issues in Sitges, Spain

When discussing corporate management problems, the project partners and experts came to the general conclusion that there is a significant interest in corporate management among public transport operators in both small and big cities in Central and Eastern Europe. Different methods and tools for corporate management are used by different companies and there is no common approach yet.

A problem faced by almost all public transport organisations is meeting the constant demand for high performance. This demand affects all aspects of the operations of a public transport company,

from assuring sustainable financial growth to satisfying the next passenger standing at the next stop. Public transport managers are left without proper models of performance and have to interpret each situation they face by themselves. In this context, it is crucial to use performance indicators, new methods and tools for performance management. Many public transport companies need to continually reorganise themselves.

Different models for restructuring and change management are used, but sometimes there is a lack of effective project management and programme management discipline, which can lead to slippages in timing and in achievement of desired outcomes.

In terms of human resources, the focus is on processes which contribute to the effective management of individuals and teams in order to achieve higher levels of organisational performance.

Public transport to be more customer oriented

Consultations with experts indicated that marketing of public transport seems to be a new concept in public transport systems in transition, although a number of different marketing and customer relation tools are currently used, besides simple advertising.

However, the differences between different countries, cities and operators are quite significant, especially when comparing big cities with smaller cities. Operators in major capital cities have marketing departments using a range of tools, while medium- and small-sized cities, often lack employees dedicated exclusively to marketing. The main problems are a lack of consistent marketing planning, differences in transport policy between cities and the countryside and financial problems.

Activities promoting a good image of public transport could include changing citizens' perception of public transport, enhancing understanding and boosting public transport's image among customers, and lobbying for public transport.

*“How the image of public transport be improved if there is no money to update the system?
Is it possible?”*

Increasing the quality of public transport services to become more customer-oriented, to keep current customers, and to attract new ones should be one of the goals. More careful handling of complaints could also improve customers' opinions about the quality of service provided.

Second-hand rolling stock — a good option for improvements?

Public transport systems in transition face many problems and have to be improved to offer a good alternative to increasing the number of private cars.



Discussion on technical details of public transport systems, Sitges, Spain

Public transport infrastructure, equipment and rolling stock must be upgraded. Public transport should be made more comfortable, but this is closely connected to the quality of roads, tracks and track beds, stops, stations, and interchanges as well as accessibility. Decreasing traveling time, providing greater urban space, creating good ticketing and passenger information systems, and addressing the needs of passengers with reduced mobility have to be given priority. Enhancement of technical safety and reliability, and better operation

SPUTNIC Newsletter

Issue 1, August 2007

quality for passengers (connections, low-floor fleet, inter-operability between different transport modes, limiting effects of congestion, harmonisation of bus and tram fleets etc.) are current challenges.

A lack of sufficient funding is an obstacle to making public transport more attractive. One of the most intensively discussed problems was the question of buying new rolling stock (expensive) vs. refurbishment or upgrading of existing or second-hand vehicles (less expensive). A decision should be taken after an economic analysis with respect to local conditions.

Next steps for SPUTNIC

The project is very close to the end of its first year. The project partners and experts will continue their work together to develop recommendations and to assist public-transport stakeholders in transforming public transport systems into attractive and modern means of transportation.

The project team has already embarked on preparations for the second SPUTNIC



Metro stop in Warsaw, Poland

Experts Working Group meeting, scheduled to take place this autumn in Croatia. There, our discussion will continue, focusing on issues such as restructuring public-transport organisations, improvement of public-transport image, the legal and organisational frameworks for public transport, and strategies for renewal of fleet and infrastructure.

The team will focus on identifying good practices in these fields and assess their transferability to other systems. Recommendations will be formulated for public transport practitioners.

The SPUTNIC team will work also on developing policy and research recommendations for the European Commission.

Special attention will be given to the preparation of a set of useful guidelines and specific tools presented in a user-friendly and easy format. Some of them will be tested at the second working groups meeting in Croatia.

All SPUTNIC products will be available on-line, as well as distributed to the targeted audience.

The SPUTNIC website will continue to be a major tool for dissemination of the project results.

The website will also be used as a tool for collecting information on problems in the public transport sector and will offer a possibility to fill in our cluster-specific questionnaires and contribute to the overall discussion on urban public transport.

If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact the SPUTNIC team.

The SPUTNIC team

An international team of public transport organisations, research centres and transport consultants leads the project.



SPUTNIC partners

UITP (BE)

REC (HU)

Rapp Trans (CH)

Socialdata (DE)

IMAGO (NL)

TÜV Rheinland Consulting (DE)

TÜV Rheinland InterTraffic (DE)

VTI (SE)

VVO (DE)

TMB (ES)

Wiener Linien (AT)

S2R Consulting (DE)

Transmart Consulting (GR)

CERTU (FR)

MPK (PL)

IFTEC (DE)

For more information please visit the project website www.sputnicproject.eu or contact REC's Wioletta Szymanska at WSzymanska@rec.org

Newsletter designed and prepared by the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC)

Printed by Typonova

SPUTNIC is funded by the EU

