The project Access2Mountain in the SEE program
WP 4: Regional Railways: Ways to Success

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based on 2 reports, worked out by the contracted consultant
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Meeting of the WG Transport Protocol of the Carpathian Convention
26th February 2013, Vienna
Source of photos:

Most of the presented photos are copied from the 2 reports, worked out by Otfried Knoll and from the English summary, which we elaborated together. In these reports, the sources are indicated in detail.

I thank Otfried Knoll for many interesting pictures, some photos are from our project partners. Many further pictures are downloaded from the websites of the analyzed railway companies and from the STA (board of the province Südtirol/Alto Adige for public transport).
Targets of the project Access2Mountain:

• providing attractive, multimodal soft mobility offers to motivate additional guests for environmentally and socially sustainable tourism in the Alps and in the Carpathians,

• to improve the mobility situation (without car) for the native population of mountain areas,

• opening up new customer potentials for public transport, especially in the tourist traffic to improve the utilization of buses and trains and contribute to sustain and improve public transport services in mountainous, rural regions.
• **Further Targets of Access2Mountain**

• Use and further development of innovative, user-friendly technology to facilitate the use of public transport (region-specific requirements etc.) in our project or in follow-up projects,

• improving rail services for the travelling to mountainous holiday regions and back,

• providing solid recommendations for decision makers including a documentation of good solutions ("Good Practice") under consideration of economic aspects
Partner in the project Access2Mountain

- Leadpartner: Austrian Environment Agency (coordinator),
- Austrian Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology
- National Park Gesäuse
- Mostviertel Tourismus
- Miskolc Holding (HU),
- University Camerino (IT)
- European Academy Bozen/ Bolzano, Institute for regional research (IT)
- Maramures-Infotourism (RO)
- Regional Development Agency Košice (SK)
- Regional Development Agency Rzeszow (PL)
- Timok Club (Serbia)
- Carpathian Foundation
- Observer (not financing partners) from Belgium, Montenegro; Czech Republic, Slovenia and Austria, e.g. railway operator NÖVOG (Mariazeller Bahn)
Working Packages (WP), Duration and Budget

- WP 0: project preparation
- WP 1: Project – and financial management
- WP 2: dissemination, e.g. homepage [www.access2mountain.eu](http://www.access2mountain.eu)
- WP 3: transport and environment data, transport model
- WP 4: regional railways
- WP 5: multimodal passenger traffic
- WP 6: Awareness raising, training programs, building networks for implementation of measures
- WP 7: Conclusions for the implementation of the transport protocols of the Carpathian Convention and the Alpine Convention

**Duration of the project:** 3 years, May 2011 until the end of April 2014

**Project budget** total: 2,22 Mio. €, thereof 1,89 Mio. EU regional funds (South East Europe Program, ETC)
Objectives of our work package on regional railways

Based on good practice examples we want to show that regional railways can contribute to sustainable mobility in tourism.

In WP 4 the core factors of success, considering special regional conditions, should be pointed out, but also possible risks should be identified.
Overview of analysed railways

- Fully analysed railway: 1
- Tourist analysis only: 4
List of analysed railways

red = full analysis based on questionnaires  black = selective analysis

**Austria:**
1. Pinzgauer Lokalbahn
2. Stern und Hafferl
3. Zillertalbahn

**Germany:**
4. Bayerische Oberlandbahn (BOB)
5. Harzer Schmalspurbahnen (HSB)
6. Hohenzollersche Landesbahn (HzL)
7. Ilztalbahn
8. Waldbahn
9. Usedomer Bäderbahn (UBB)

**Czech Republic:**
10. JHMD narrow gauge railway

**Switzerland:**
11. Chemins de fer du Jura (CJ)
12. Rhätische Bahn (RhB)

**Italy:**
13. Vinschger Bahn
14. Ferrovia Trento-Male-Marilleva

**Slovakia:**
15. Tatranská Elektrická Železnica, (TEŽ)

**Spain:**
16. Ferrocarril de Sóller SA (FS)

**Great Britain:**
17. Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Rail

**USA / Canada:**
18. White Pass /Yukon Railway
The network is around 40 km long and contains the lines Poprad – Štrbské Pleso, (29 km) Starý Smokovec – Tatranská Lomnica (6 km) and Štrbské Pleso – Štrba (4.8 km).

Together the lines transport between 1.5 and 1.9 Mio. passengers yearly, more as 50% of them are tourists.

The tourism region Prešov counted in 2011 618 000 visitors and more than 2 Mio. over night stays.

Tatra Electric railways are operated by the Slovakian national railway company ŽSR.

Combined tickets for sports and cultural events are offered.

In Kiosks are sold refreshments and train tickets.
Successfactor: Support on all political levels – example communities

- (financial) contributions to the construction and maintenance of railway stations
- improve the accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists
- awareness and information policy
- mobility management activities to strengthen public transport
- land–use planning targeted on short ways to the railway stops.
- presentation of regional railways and public transport on the websites of municipalities
Examples for political support:
Land-use planning to improve accessibility by rail, reconstruction and maintenance of railway stations by communities

Stations of the Vinschgerbahn

Linz Solar City: Tram station is the centre
Example: Website of the community Naturns (Südtirol/ Alto Adige)

Source: Otfried Knoll, presentation TU-Vienna 22.11.2012, based on www.naturns.it
Integrated traffic plans: buses improve the accessibility of railway stations (Alto Adige / Südtirol)

transborder cooperation creates success

Source: Otfried Knoll, presentation TU- Vienna 22.11.2012
Almost all regional railways that are also relevant for everyday mobility offer one train every hour in both directions in a fixed schedule („Taktfahrplan“),

In some cases every half an hour a train is offered (plan of RhB, partially implemented by Zillertalbahn and Vinschger Bahn (accelerated trains))

Connections with regional and local bus services and long distance trains are offered in most cases.

Timetables meeting the demand of (potential) passengers
Successfactor: Integration of regional railways in tourism strategies and close cooperation with tourism stakeholders

Example: „Dampfbahnroute Sachsen“, cooperation of regional railways with many other tourist points of interest and common marketing
Example Via Wilzschhaus:
Reconstruction of regional railways and building a short new railway line to improve market chances in tourism, studies funded by the European Commission.

Conclusion:
All successful regional railways cooperate well with touristic stakeholders, further examples are shown under “marketing”.
Successfactor infrastructure Investments

Our analysis shows that improvements of the tracks and the stations were implemented by the 9 of 18 of the analysed regional railways, based on a sufficient support by policy and in some cases also on voluntary work of citizens.
Cooperation of regional railways and tourism also in a coordinated infrastructure development

Percha: in einem Zug auf die Piste

Durchschnittlich 500 Skisportler pro Tag
über 1000 Nutzer an Spitzentagen
internationales Echo

Source: STA/ Otfried Knoll, presentation, TU-Vienna 22.11.2012
Voluntary activities of abandoned lines by citizens and railfans

- **Ilztalbahn**: Support by a club with 700 members, also Interreg Project CZ - DE
- **Ffestiniog Railway**: reconstruction between 1954 and 1982 by voluntary working people
- **Welsh Highland Railway**: also reconstructed by voluntary working members of a citizen club, 1995 - 2011 supported by EU regional funding (target 1 region)

Big honor for work on regional railways!
Successfactor rolling stock, suitable for the requirements of passengers:

- easy accessibility for all passengers, also for handicapped people with wheelchairs and for passengers with heavy luggage,
- comfortable facilities to transport luggage and sports utilities,
- carrying bicycles,
- good view on the landscape,
- enough capacities to meet peak demand

For longer trips buffets or dining cars are helpful to improve the impressions of travelling by regional railways.
Suitable Space to carry luggage, bicycles and other sport utilities

Bernina Express

Vinschger Bahn

Bicycles to rent

Vinschgerbahn

Biking Car of ÖBB

Luggage logistics in Zermatt

Photo: Ottfried Knoll

Photo: STA

Photo: STA

Photo: www.argus.at

Photo: Klaus Matzka

Source: STA
Good view on the landscape

MOB- Golden Pass line

Bernina Line: older wagons meet demand peak and have windows to open

Cabrio Wagons of “Le Train Jaune” and Harzer Schmalspurbahnen

Photo: www.goldenpass.ch

Photo: Ernst Lung

Photo: Otfried Knoll
Dining cars and buffet services

Barrel (= Fassl) wagon of the Zillertalbahn simple, but charming buffet service in the HSB
Reblaus Express Retz – Drosendorf (Niederösterreich)

Regional wines and culinary highlights were offered by farmers of the region

Source and photos: Otfried Knoll, presentation TU - Vienna 22.11.2012
Nostalgic Trains

Steamtrain HSB         Ilztalbahn
JHMD                    CJ –belle epoque
Pinzgauer Lokalbahn    Ferrocaril de Sollér
                       Stern und Hafferl
                       Zillertalbahn
                       Welsh Highland
                       White Pass –Yukon
Freight transport on regional railways

Transport of Containers in Zermatt

System “Rollbock” to carry normal gauge wagons on narrow gauge

Shift “Rollwagen” to normal gauge
Successfactors  marketing, easy access to tickets and information

Although the internet get more and more importance (75% of the Austrian households have an access to the web), personal contacts and printed information are still helpful to win people for sustainable mobility in tourism (example: brochures rail adventure in Romania)
Easy access to suitable tickets

- Conductor service in the trains. Examples: UBB, Pinzgauer Lokalbahn, Zillertalbahn
- Regional train tickets are included in existing all-inclusive packages
- Tickets are sold in hotels. Examples: Harzer Schmalspurbahnen Destination guest cards are including public transport. Example: South Tyrol / Alto Adige
- Service points in railway stations
- Cafeterias in railway stations sell tickets (Vinschger Bahn)
- Internet ticketing (RhB)
- Chip Cards with best price calculation (introduced in February 2012 in South Tyrol / Alto Adige)
Multi purpose service on the Tatra Electric Railways: Tickets and more

Source: Otfried Knoll, presentation TU- Vienna 22.11.2012
Shops and information centres of railways provide more services than selling train tickets, friendly train staff is preferred by many passengers.

“Dampfladen “ of HSB offer a big assortment

Mobility service center “Mobilito “ (IC station Bischofshofen)
Nice designed tickets are liked by rail fans to collect them: example Usedomer Bäderbahn (Germany)

Source: Otfried Knoll presentation, TU-Wien 22.11.2012
Suitable tickets—public transport included in free guest cards

**Konus Karte** – Schwarzwald, financed by a little supplement to „Kurtaxe“ (city tax for overnight stay) http://www.schwarzwald-tourismus.info/service/konus

**GUTI (Gäste-Umweltticket)**, financed by communities in Bayrischen Wald, served by Waldbahn http://www.bayerwald-ticket.com

**Neusiedler See Card**, Burgenland, also financed by a supplement to Kurtaxe http://www.neusiedlersee.com

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**SOUTH EAST EUROPE**
Transnational Cooperation Programme
Some regional railways provide interesting tourist packages for single travellers and especially for **groups**, train trips combined with sports and culture, RhB introduced a contact point for (bus)tour operators.
More ideas to get unique selling propositions

+ Adventure tours, examples:
  train hijacking by horse riders in a wild-west style (CJ)
  Combination with sports:
  “Trottinet (scooters) riding (CJ)
  bicycle tours (some railways)
+ Visit of maintenance workshops (e.g. HSB)

+ Hobby train driver courses (e.g. Stern und Hafferl and Zillertalbahn)
+ attractive packages railway and culinary and cultural highlights
Examples for on-trip information

Information available in often needed languages

Information to touristic points of interest

near field communication for mobile phones

Photo: www.salzburg.orf.at

Photo: Otfried Knoll
Some common patterns on the way to success can be identified, even though specific regional conditions have to be considered. From the customers' point of view, the offer (train + train and additional touristic services) should:

• have a high recreational value and leisure convenience
• address a wide target group (suitable for families)
• offer the opportunity to consume in modules; e.g. being active as well as passive consumer
• address as many senses as possible in the target group
• offer a remarkable price-performance ratio.
Decision makers have to bear in mind that from the guests’ and passengers’ point of view a service chain, consisting of individual services, is offered. Promotions provoke certain expectations in the customers’ mind. In order to create repeat visitors these expectations should be exceeded during the whole trip.
Conclusions of our analysis 3

There are several potential threats that have to be considered too:

• Service portfolio and operations are designed too closely to the operator’s needs. The market’s needs are succumbed.

• The service is oriented towards rapid economic results and successes. Profitability is too much in the foreground. If the targeted profitability is not achieved within a specified time limit the goal is often abandoned.

• The willingness for investments and financial support by public authorities are only focused on infrastructure while marketing activities are not supported at all.

• The railway’s operator expects the full support by the regional actors in any means while these actors rely too heavily on the operator’s activities. As a result there is no common spirit of optimism.
Masterplan for regional railways key elements (1)

- Strengths and weaknesses / chances and risks analysis
- General vision for the regional railway
- Budget framework
- Passenger potentials (trends and forecasts)
- Embedding in regional planning, traffic- and tourism concepts
- Coordination with land use planning and regional development priorities
- Objectives and measures for infrastructure, services, rolling stock, conservation concept for vehicles, workshops,
- Time schedule ("roadmap") for the implementation, coordinated with the budget
Masterplan for regional railways, key elements (2)

- operational part (management strategy, timetable, special operations, personnel, ...)
- commercial section (supply and service levels, pricing, sales strategy, ...)
- creativity part (design quality, CI, CD, promotional policies, information systems, ..)
- cooperation strategies
- communication concept (make the market aware of USP, external and internal)
- communication strategy: partners, reporting, press contacts, information of the public.
Examples where (reopened) regional railways became a top destination for tourism

Montserrat

HSB

Wassertal

„8“ von Sargan
Evolution from nostalgic trains to modern regional public transport: Regional railway lines on Mallorca
WP 4 Regional Railways –
Work plan of the partner bmvit for the next periods

- Developing implementation measures on the Mariazeller Bahn, especially for preparing the country exhibition (Niederösterreichische Landesausstellung) in the year 2015 and creating tourist packages
- Improvements of the logistics for bicycle transport and bicycle renting
- Know how exchange and transfer between the Access2mountain partners, focused on supporting implementation measures
- Packages for long distance tourist rail traffic
Planned common activities of the Access2Mountain project partners

- Development of “soft mobility” touristic packages including travelling by train
- Common marketing for the regional railways in the Alps and in the Carpathians
- Improvement of long distance train connections to our model regions (advantageous packages with national railway companies, improved timetables, trough coaches..)
For further information please look at:
(English summary of the analysis of regional railways) and
(Interim report in German language)

Thank you for your attention!

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Photo: Otfried Knoll, cover page of the report to wp 4