**D6.1 - Policy recommendations for the implementation of a LTPN in touristic areas**

**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).

The aim of this document was to develop a number of realistic, practicable policy recommendations to help support the development of effective policy frameworks to enable the widespread adoption of LTPNs in touristic areas and so deliver significant transport sector energy savings. These recommendations focus primarily at the target group of the policymakers.

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Policy recommendations for the implementation of a LTPN in touristic areas

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1. **Introduction**

This section provides a brief summary of the STARTER project’s overall objectives and those of the task that produced this deliverable. The structure of the rest of this document is then presented.

1.1 **Overall 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. In other words, seasonality of transport demand occurs in touristic areas during high seasons and is caused by the variations observed in the demand of the touristic industry. The immediate effect of the seasonality of transport demand is the high traffic **congestion** in the main road networks. 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 is 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 mobility management measures by policy shapers, makers, implementers and users through the project website, reports, journal articles, and workshops / conferences will also be a key result of the project.

1.2 Objectives of this report

This guide is addressed to policymakers across Europe. It provides recommendations for policy at local, regional, national and European level to encourage the widespread adoption of LTPNs in touristic areas across Europe.

For practitioners another guide was presented (Handbook for the implementation of a Local Travel Plan Network in touristic area’s), which can be found at STARTER website (http://starter-project.eu/).

\[\text{Figure 1-1} \quad \text{One of the STARTER measures: the beach shuttle in Noordwijk}\]

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\(^1\) 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.”
2. Local travel plan networks: the background

2.1 What are LTPNs?

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.”

Like travel plans, LTPNs are a move away from the traditional approach of addressing transport problems via the provision of more road capacity. They offer quick, cheap and effective solutions to transportation and other organisational problems. Crucially, LTPNs deliver greater benefits for participating organisations whilst requiring less involvement than travel plans developed by individual organisations.

LTPNs are originally applied at sites such as business parks, industrial estates, city centres, a cluster of schools and residential areas but as it is shown below the LTPN system can also work in touristic regions. They are always area-specific in application and effect.

2.2 The framework

Europe is the number 1 tourist destination in the world and has an impressive density and diversity of attractions. Tourism is a key sector of the European economy. It comprises a wide variety of products and destinations and involves many different stakeholders, both public and private. The EU tourism industry generates more than 5% of the EU GDP, with about 1,8 million enterprises employing around 5,2% of the total labour force (approximately 9,7 million jobs). According to Eurostat, in 2013, the number of nights spent in tourist accommodation establishments in the EU28 reached a peak of 2.6 billion nights, an increase of 1.6% compared to 2012.

Figure 2-1 Europe is the number 1 touristic destination
Despite the different characteristics of these places and different types 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. The immediate effect of the seasonality of transport demand is the high traffic congestion in the main road networks. 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.

Every year it is estimated that more than one percent of the EU's GDP is lost as a result of congestion. According to the Green Paper on Urban Mobility, urban traffic is responsible for 40% of CO₂ emissions and for 70% of emissions of other pollutants arising from road transport. It is another issue that apparently (if we look at yearly averages) there are touristic regions that do not have critical traffic parameters (which also mean energy use and emission). But during the popular seasons the critical indexes are much higher than the optimal (and in some cases healthy) standards. It is almost impossible for people or the nature to adapt on the short term. 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.

While it is true to say that these problems occur at the local level, their impact is also felt on a wider scale: climate change/global warming, increased health problems, and bottlenecks in the logistics chain. Local authorities cannot face all these issues on their own, and there is a need for cooperation and coordination at regional and national levels as well as at the European level.

LTPNs are a people-oriented approach and hence are a move away from the traditional approach of addressing transport problems by providing further infrastructural capacity. Consequently LTPNs offer a quick, cheap and effective solution to transport and other organisational problems. LTPNs are applied at sites such as business parks, industrial estates, city centres and residential areas. They are area-specific in application and effect. In the examined touristic regions the motivations of hotels and other local stakeholders are similar and the main target of their pursuits is to be more attractive and competitive for potential guests. The experiences of the STARTER partners are a basis for successful implementation of the LTPN concept in other regions across the EU. From the implemented and considered measures a lot of consequences can be taken for any touristic region.
3. Recommendations for further uptake of the LTPN concept

3.1 Policy recommendations for local and regional decision makers

Nowadays, many mobility management projects still focus only on reducing private car use. While important to policy-shapers and discussion takers, this is not primarily what a LTPN is about. Instead, a LTPN should be promoted as a tool to achieve both environmental and economic gains: increased accessibility, improved services to tourists (like providing unique sustainable products), improved efficiency of existing sustainable transport modes, less congestion and a reduced domination of the car in public spaces. By achieving this we create an environment that is more attractive for tourists. So we can say that a LTPN is a tool to increase the attractiveness of a given city or region – resulting in clear benefits for the authorities and the private sector.

Traditional transport supply-side solutions involve large financial investments and political commitment over a long period of time. LTPNs offer an alternative by making existing transport systems more efficient. They do this by targeting “quick-wins” (maximum impact, short period, low costs) and by convincing the touristic sector that they – and even more important their customers - benefit from offering alternative mobility services.

Step zero is to find an enthusiastic and dedicated local coordinator who can be also a local politician in the case of a small municipality. The STARTER demonstrations show that this is certainly not an easy task in a highly competitive sector like tourism, but involving local stakeholders eventually leads to increased willingness to become involved in the process – reducing all kinds of barriers to success. That is why the STARTER partners see LTPNs as a good approach for solving (mobility) problems in touristic regions open to alternative solutions.

LTPN checklist:

- Make appropriate measures because this is how stakeholders take the LTPN seriously.
- Help finding national funds for LTPN projects.
- The concept of LTPNs should be linked to transport, economy, tourism and wider policy ambitions. Not limited to benefits for the authorities, but also to benefits for the private sector.
- Provide political leadership when starting the process, but it is strongly advised that the LTPN members be increasingly involved and empowered once the network is established.
- Find and involve the stakeholders of tourism and transport. Create a platform for them with LTPN to cooperate.
- Strengthen community and local patriotism by setting up a LTPN.
3.2 Policy recommendations for national decision makers

Without the support of the higher political level it is quite difficult to establish an LTPN. National decision makers should convince local and regional authorities that Local Travel Plan Networks and sustainable transport alternatives offer clear benefits. This can be done through meetings with relevant actors and by ensuring that relevant information, best-practices and practical recommendations on LTPNs are easily available.

Besides mentioning the theoretical benefits it is essential to find exemplary sites in the country. The most effective way to spread the LTPN approach to other cities and regions is to demonstrate the impact of the sustainable mobility solutions resulting from it (best-practices). The benefits of having a LTPN (like the better atmosphere, better traffic parameters, reduced emissions and increased number of tourists and the others mentioned above) should be highlighted and the exemplary sites should be supported by the national authorities with long-term media campaigns, given that such a shift of public attitude can only be achieved if policy measures are accompanied by educational and awareness-raising activities. This can be achieved for example by implementing a loyalty program for public transport users as well as mobility education programs for schools and companies which have the goal to establish a new mobility culture, within this component municipalities can develop playful activities for students (since they were a target group that is more keen on changing habits) or special events (thematic conferences) for the other stakeholders.

These exemplary sites could be recognised as being ‘experts’ and act as advisors or mentors in particular sectors and/or areas of the country. To sum up it is the responsibility of the national authorities to communicate the importance and potential of LTPNs to local and regional authorities, as well as other agencies such as public transport operators, hoteliers, bike rentals, touristic boards and every reachable stakeholder.

In most of the European countries tourism represents a relevant role in GDP. In these cases the governments should adapt and operate the successful approaches that are able to increase the touristic attractiveness of the specific regions thereby the attractiveness of the country. In the LTPN concept this works. And as the benefits are recognisable in both the touristic and transport sectors, LTPNs give an opportunity for better cooperation between the two sectors in the national level.

**LTPN checklist:**

- Convince local and regional authorities that LTPNs and sustainable transport alternatives offer clear benefits.
- Find exemplary sites to reach the most effective way to spread the LTPN approach.
- Facilitate better cooperation between the transport and touristic organisations.
- Support the establishment of LTPNs by promotional, financial and legal tools.
- Help finding European funds for LTPN projects.
- Support and fund educational and awareness-raising activities that convey the message of LTPN approach.
### 3.3 Policy recommendations for European decision makers

At European level the **dissemination of best practices** and lessons learnt is essential for the successful adoption of sustainable transport modes in touristic areas. This should be based on active communication as well as other available channels (not just the internet, but for example also conferences). In general the EU should **enforce the dialogues** between the transport and the touristic sector.

The **monitoring and assessment of long-term impacts** of LTPNs should also have the attention. For these purposes **European Tourism Indicator System** would be a great tool to use. It is specifically intended for tourism destinations and it is designed as a locally owned and led process for monitoring, managing, and enhancing the sustainability of a tourism destination.

In recent years, European initiatives addressing urban mobility often have been developed independently from each other, with a focus on energy use, congestion, emissions or other policy perspectives. LTPN and SUMP (**Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan**) approaches represent an integrated form of local transport related developments. STARTER partners recommend to integrate the network approach in the SUMP methodology and to promote the take-up of these plans by more touristic areas (thus not only cities). EU has a main role in the **promotion** of LTPNs through addressing all relevant policy fields, describing the potential of LTPNs in achieving sustainable political ambitions.

Most of the STARTER partners experienced that their LTPN and the implemented measures would not have been set up without the **funds** and the **support** of the STARTER project. So the European Union should use its guidance role in setting up common frameworks and approaches, where each European municipality may have the opportunity to select the tools and methodologies that suit best to its specific context.

**LTPN checklist:**

- **Disseminate best practises on sustainable transport modes in touristic areas on a European level (e.g. Eltis).**
- **Enforce dialogues between the transport and the touristic sector.**
- **Integrate the network approach in the SUMP methodology to promote the take-up of local networks and the implementation of sustainable transport modes in touristic areas.**
- **Establish funding streams to help touristic with the initial implementation of a LTPN.**
- **Enable opportunities for further research that addresses the long-term effectiveness of LTPNs under different circumstances.**
4. Best practises of the STARTER project

4.1 Noordwijk (Netherlands)

Noordwijk consists of two former villages, the first one known as “Noordwijk by the Sea” and the second one “Inner Noordwijk”. The area by the sea is a well-known seaside resort, offering a 12-km beach, thus attracting a large number of tourists each year.

In order to face the transport-related issues that mostly occur during summer, the Municipality of Noordwijk has considered a variety of measures that aim at repressing car traffic, stimulating sustainable transport modes and communicating with the tourists.

Based on this, the Municipality of Noordwijk has implemented 3 measures during the STARTER project.

• First they implemented a new parking policy. The old policy was very complicated and on busy days visitors kept driving in circles in search of an available and preferable less expensive parking space. With the prices the municipality tries to motivate the tourists to use the parking spaces along the beach to avoid parking in the nearby residential areas.

• The second measure that was implemented was a change in the operational structure of the Beach Shuttle service, which insured operation of the service during the duration of the STARTER project.

• The third measure was the promotion of the Beach Shuttle by combination vouchers, stewards, logos on the bus and signs located by the road.

“Stakeholders are only willing to participate in the LTPN if they really see the benefits. Preferably this should be direct financial benefits or at least indirect financial benefits (such as more promotional possibilities, leading to increased profits). In the Netherlands there are already many networks and entrepreneurs are part of several of them. It might increase the popularity of the LTPN to make it part of an existing network instead of investing in a new one. But the members liked the ideas that were written in the LTP and agreed with the improvements.” Daan Schrama
4.2 Kos (Greece)

In Kos a specific measure that was implemented in the summer of 2013 was an online portal for promoting sustainable travel alternatives to tourists (so called PORTAL).

The PORTAL provides routing information focusing on the use of bikes and of the public transport network, and aims to decrease the use of cars in order to deal with the serious traffic congestion problems encountered mainly in the city centre. Apart from the routing information, the system provides information on existing bike rentals, stations of a potential bike sharing system, information of major poles of attraction and how to visit them, ticketing services and others.

In the summer of 2014, information signs were produced and located in major concentration points indicating outstanding points of interest and suggestions to reach them using the extensive cycling network and the pathways. At the same time, the Municipality rescheduled the timetables of two bus lines with high traffic of the Municipal public transport adjusted to the needs of tourists.

"It needs a lot of time to contact and convince the stakeholders about the benefits expected from their involvement in the LTPN. It requires good preparatory work before contacting the stakeholders (e.g. material), preparation of some key statements that will encourage the stakeholders to join the LTPN, face-to-face communication and constant communication after the meetings in order to keep them updated on the developments. But as they felt that their voice was heard and took into account by the Municipality, the members show high interests and their numerous and interesting suggestions (which were included in the LTP) made the common work very fruitful." Yannis Tyrinopoulos
4.3 Fuerteventura (Spain)

The island of Fuerteventura is located in the Canary Islands of the northwest coast of Africa. With a surface area of 1,660 km², it is the second largest of the Macaronesia. It has strong regional character due to the peculiarity of its geological features and the existence of its extensive natural heritage that rises from the arid landscape, and the presence of a rich and diverse marine environment. The character of the island is defined by its proximity to the African continent, whose nearest coast is only 95 km away. This great proximity defines one of the most characteristic features, extreme climate, making the island one of the largest areas of desert and semi-desert in all of the European Union. Additionally, a majority of the west coast is still virtually unspoiled along a stretch of coastline more than 200 km long, which makes this area one of the best preserved coastal zones of Canary Islands.

During the course of the STARTER project, the region of Fuerteventura has implemented two measures.

- The partners promoted the “Salt Route by bike”, which refers to the promotion of a new bike lane that has been constructed between Caleta de Fuste (one of the most important touristic areas in Fuerteventura) and the Salt Museum.
- Secondly they realized sustainable mobility in the Lobos Islands, which refers to measures for creating a 100% sustainable mobility in one of the most touristic spot of Fuerteventura. Currently the energy supply of this small island is based entirely on renewable energies through a solar photovoltaic system, but the island’s transport was based on conventional quads with petrol engines. During the STARTER project a conventional vehicle used for the restoration and cleaning of the island was replaced by an electric one.

“The creation of a forum enabling approach to the different actors affected by mobility is the main benefit of the LPTN. But this by itself is not enough to improve the mobility. It will be possible only if we give them a more solid structure under the umbrella of the reserve of the biosphere and the Island Government because the problems that it addressed have administrative, social and economic components. We believe that the idea raised within the STARTER project is very good and timely and after putting it up we are convinced that with the compromise of the reserve of the biosphere and the Government of the island and the hoteliers and small entrepreneurs will have continuity is a guarantee.” Tony Gallardo
4.4 Werfenweng (Austria)

In order to encourage visitors to utilize public transportation for their trip to the area, the Austrian partners of the STARTER project have developed a Local Travel Plan Network (LTPN) that focuses on cooperation between accommodation enterprises. The region has been actively supporting sustainable transportation since 1997 and has been recognized for these efforts with numerous awards.

The LTPN for Werfenweng focused on soft efforts encouraging behaviour change.

In the summer of 2013 STARTER partners improved the communication of SAMO. SAMO (Soft Mobility) means environmentally friendly travel. As a "SAMO-Guest" tourists arrive there by train or leave their car parked in Werfenweng and handed over their car keys to the Tourist Office. They can then enjoy the huge range of free "soft mobility" offers such as e-cars and e-bikes.

The second specific measure that has already been undertaken is increasing the fleet of electric vehicles available for rental and redesigning the SAMO e-vehicle rental centre to make it more attractive.

“For us it was a huge positive experience to learn from each other and to be the part of the common work with the focus on a common matter. But the variety of the involved tourism enterprises was also a barrier as every kind of enterprise has its own needs and ideas of how a LTPN could work or implement measures and the target groups are also not the same.”
Stephan Maurer
4.5  West-Balaton region (Hungary)

In the West-Balaton region STARTER partners promoted the use of public transport and bikes. According to these they constructed a highly integrated periodic timetable for public transport. They aimed to reduce of transfer times and to adapt to the specific needs of hotel and restaurant employers. The promotion and development of cycling are realized mainly by an online “Guide for Cyclists to the Area of Keszthely Mountains and Kis-Balaton”. This guide contains information about transport and traffic parameters, bike related facilities (bicycle rental service, lodging w/ cycle rental, bicycle locker, bicycle shop, repair) and touristic points of view (ATM, Wifi, tour organising office, sports field, cultural establishment...).

“In our case the authorities, the municipalities and the touristic organisations were the most enthusiastic about the LTPN. The hoteliers did not show interest and if we wanted to involve them we had to use face-to-face communication to convince them. If they have enough tourists they don’t care about putting energy into the LTPN; if not they don’t want to be in one community with their rivals. The touristic organisations had very good ideas that alloy the sustainable mobility and the attraction of tourists. If we want to develop the sustainable mobility in the touristic areas of Hungary the transport sector should cooperate much more with the TDM offices as they know more precisely the local processes.” Botond Aba