STARTER was a project of the European Commission that aimed at reducing transport energy use and greenhouse gas emissions through the creation of local networks of stakeholders in five touristic locations, which developed and implemented a travel plan and soft-mobility measures to fit their site-specific needs and ambitions.
Co-funded by the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme of the European Union

“We have to find a way to make sustainable transport a Unique Selling Point of the touristic regions.”

EDITORIAL

After almost three years the STARTER project has come to an end. Looking back to these years, I can only conclude that we have achieved a lot. We have established Local Travel Plan Networks (LTPN) in five touristic regions: Balaton (HU), Fuerteventura (ES), Kos (GR), Noordwijk (NL) and Werfenweng (AT). And most of them will continue after the project has ended. In all five regions measures have been implemented to make touristic travel more sustainable. For example by providing information on sustainable transport modes, by adapting public transport timetables, using electric mobility and changing the parking policy.

We have also learnt a lot. For example, that it is not always easy to involve local stakeholders, in particular the local touristic enterprises, such as hotels, restaurants, tourist attractions, etc. They are running their own private business and sustainable transport is not (yet) a key concern. We have to find a way to make sustainable transport a Unique Selling Point of the touristic regions. That visitors experience real fresh air and are not bothered by polluting traffic jams of tourists trying to reach the beach or touring cars polluting city centres with their diesel engines. We managed to bring attention to the topic of sustainable transport in touristic regions. Sustainability in tourism very often is synonymous to re-using your towel in a hotel and reducing energy consumption. Sustainable travel is a rather new item on the agenda.

However, when accessibility and/or livability become a problem, I expect that this attitude will change. At the end what counts for the local entrepreneurs is the economics: if sustainable transport will make their destination more attractive than other destinations, they will experience the direct benefits. This can be seen in Werfenweng, one of the forerunners in stakeholder cooperation. I hope other tourist destinations will follow this excellent example.

We were very pleased to read that Werfenweng has been recognized as fifth “greenest tourist destination in the world” (source: Quality Coast, 2014). However, when also the travel to/from the destination is included, Werfenweng would be the number 1. We are proud that we have made a (small) contribution to this achievement!

This report of the STARTER project is meant for politicians, consultants, academics and private companies in the field of transport and/or tourism. It will give you insight in the LTPNs, their objectives and the measures implemented in the five touristic destinations. It will show you a step-wise approach and finally some lessons learnt. We hope this report will be a source of inspiration for sustainable touristic travel.

Ronald Jorna
Project Manager
INTRODUCTION OF THE STARTER PROJECT

Noordwijk: a long stretch of beach, two prestigious seafront boulevards.

Werfenweng is one of the best-known Austrian destinations for tourists looking for a car-free holiday.

Balaton is the largest lake in Middle-Europe. With its surface of 592 km², it is an ideal place for sport and leisure.

Close to 1 million tourists visit Kos every year during the summer season.

Fuerteventura, a UNESCO "Biosphere Reserve", attracts 1.65 million visitors a year.

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INTRODUCTION

A mountain town, a seaside resort, an island of immense biodiversity, the largest lake in Central Europe and a historic island in the Mediterranean, all of these spots are highlights of Europe’s rich landscape attracting tourists from around the continent and around the world.

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 greater or lesser degree, concentrated during a specific season.

This concentration leads to increased demand for mobility services during the peak-season, which has a large effect on the local traffic situation. At the same time the local offer of alternatives to the car tends to be very limited and there is often a lack of effective information offered to the tourist for getting around with sustainable travel modes.

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.

There is thus great need to improve the local transport systems in order to cope with the existing problems and most importantly to put emphasis on the use of alternative sustainable transport modes. 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.

Sustainable transport is at the same time also a market opportunity for the touristic sector, since consumers are becoming more and more conscious of the need for sustainability. For this reason the STARTER project aimed to provide a collaborative solution to the challenges of seasonal traffic demand in touristic sites.

STARTER - A European project initiated by partners from five different countries wishing to make leisure traffic in touristic areas more sustainable.

STARTER (Sustainable Transport for Areas with Tourism through Energy Reduction) was a project initiated by five touristic sites (the lake Balaton region, the islands of Fuerteventura and Kos, the municipalities of Neerwijk and Werfenweng) and five expert partners that wished to take “environmentally-friendly” leisure travel to the next level.

This document summarizes the experiences from the STARTER project, including a brief description of the Local Travel Plan Network concept, the soft-mobility measures implemented in each of the (LTPN) sites and the results achieved.

We hope that this helps you to get stakeholders working together in other touristic areas, to convince them of the joint benefits of introducing alternative traffic services and to make European holiday destinations more attractive and sustainable. Hereby creating a win-win situation for authorities, the tourists sector and of course the tourists.
Touristic travel is still heavily reliant on the use of conventionally-fuelled private cars. Europe is the number one 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 percent of the EU GDP, with about 1.8 million enterprises employing around 5.2 percent of the total labor force (approximately 9.7 million jobs).

The touristic destinations in the EU are connected by one of the world’s best transport systems. Due to the nature of the touristic activities, the mobility impacts are nevertheless widespread and far-reaching. Touristic travel is still heavily reliant on the use of conventionally-fuelled private cars. Only slow progress is being made in shifting towards more sustainable transport modes. Increasingly affordable package holidays have been a major factor in the increase of air traffic. Leisure for clarity traffic accounts for about 70 percent of all world travel by volume.

For intra-European tourism, the private car is clearly the dominant transport mode, followed by air transport. The greening of touristic traffic can therefore have a truly major impact on the climate, energy and transport objectives of the Commission. Reducing the usage of car and air travel in the tourism sector, will make a real difference to emissions of carbon dioxide road congestion, accidents habitat loss from road and airport construction, damage to the atmosphere caused by airplanes, and other transport-driven environmental issues.

Touristic travel should therefore move towards low-carbon transport, through the development of walking, cycling, public transport – and the early market introduction of vehicles powered by alternative fuels. This however calls for proactive cooperation among national, regional and local authorities, tour operators, the touristic sector and tourist destinations in order to address a wide range of challenges, whilst at the same time remaining competitive.

According to the STARTER partners, a Local Travel Plan Network is the tool to get all relevant stakeholder involved in the ‘greening’ of touristic traffic.

**THE POLICY CONTEXT**

Europe is the number one 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 percent of the EU GDP, with about 1.8 million enterprises employing around 5.2 percent of the total labor force (approximately 9.7 million jobs).

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**LTPN: A NEW AND EFFECTIVE WAY TO DEAL WITH TRANSPORT PROBLEMS**

**A LOCAL TRAVEL PLAN NETWORK 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.”

**TRAVEL PLAN IS:**

“A package of (mobility management) 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 transport and other organisational problems. Crucially, LTPNs deliver greater benefits for participating organisations whilst requiring less involvement than travel plans developed by individual organisations.

The LTPN concept was first introduced by a previous IEE-funded project called Travel Plan Plus (www.travelplanplus.eu). This project showed that LTPNs could be applied successfully at sites such as business parks, industrial estates, city centres, a cluster of schools and residential areas. Within the STARTER project, we introduced this concept in touristic sites.

**LTPN: AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH IN THE TOURISTIC SECTOR**

Touristic areas face a multitude of challenges related to mobility: congestion, noise and air quality issues, safety, quality of life and attractiveness of the region in a competitive environment. These issues are complex and cannot be solved by individual ‘transport related’ measures. They require integrated and holistic solutions, not just from a practical perspective, but also from financial, economic, environmental, social and wider policy perspectives.

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.

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.
In order to successfully implement a LTPN several steps have to be taken, each with their own purpose and milestones. These steps are presented below.

**STEP 1** analyse the needs and feasibility. The first step is to identify the need for implementing a LTPN. In particular it is important to discover the opportunities and threats to the process of implementing a LTPN. It is also necessary to bring stakeholders together to determine what their expectations are. When everybody agrees on the need and the added-value of a LTPN, there is a solid basis to go ahead. After all, if there is no support or the measures proposed are not realistic, the need for a LTPN should be reconsidered and if possible, modified to better suit the needs of the site in question.

**STEP 2** LTPN selection. Given the specific contextual circumstances of a potential LTPN, the most appropriate type of LTPN in terms of degree of formality, inter-organisational relations and funding arrangements needs to be determined. The result should be agreed upon and each stakeholder should confirm their participation and assistance with implementation.

**STEP 3** establish the LTPN. When the different stakeholders have committed to the network, start preparing to implement the LTPN. The objectives first need to be translated into measurable targets. Once this is done the measures suitable for achieving the targets need to be identified, discussed and prioritised. The result is a local travel plan.

**STEP 4** implement site-specific measures. When the LTPN has been established, the implementation of site-specific measures to address the network’s objectives starts. The travel plan measures chosen for implementation will depend on local transport issues, the resources available and the size of the target group.

**STEP 5** collect monitoring data and adjust the LTP. Monitoring is the collection of input data that is required for the examination of the impact a mobility management scheme has had. Without proper data, it is impossible to assess whether the selected measures resulted in any changes in mobility behaviour and benefits for the members of the network. The outcomes may require an adjustment of the targets and/or the measures described in the local travel plan.

**STEP 6** evaluate your LTPN. The last step is the evaluation of the LTPN implementation and effects. At this step, one can determine whether the travel plan network is effectively carrying out planned activities, and the extent to which it is achieving its stated objectives and anticipated results.

For more information please refer to the STARTER ‘Handbook for the implementation, of a Local Travel Plan Network in touristic areas available in English, Dutch, German, Hungarian and Spanish. This deliverable is available on the project website (http://www.starter-project.eu) in various languages.

It is important to recognize that an approach which has been successful in one area, may not automatically be transferable to another. The impacts are heavily influenced by a number of contextual factors. These include: the actors involved, the motivations for group formation, the perceived scope and scale of the problem and the organisational environments, along with geographic, political, economic and institutional factors. Any relatively new initiative, such as LTPNs, involves elements of uncertainty, so policy transfer makes for an attractive proposition not least since drawing lessons from other locations can clearly result in resource and time savings. Therefore exploring issues surrounding policy transfer will assist in the implementation of LTPNs across the EU.

From the evaluation of the STARTER project we concluded that the most successful policy transfers include the following aspects: have a local champion; draw on a number of sources rather than a single example; adapt the policy to the situation rather than copying directly; and incorporate it into the local institutional framework. Policy transfer should be easier between countries that are culturally similar and timing is all-important. For more on policy transfer we refer to ‘STARTER – Policy recommendations for implementation of a LTPN in touristic areas.’

The STARTER partners believe the realistic, practical recommendations provided by us us to be relevant for policymakers thinking of adopting a Local Travel Plan Network in their region. For authorities and the private sector, the starting point is a common awareness of the particular problem at hand and the need for action. If this is the case and there is common support for measures, then the actual implementation is unlikely to involve direct copying, but more likely to involve synthesis [combining various elements to a program that meets your needs] or in fact inspiration (stimulating new ideas).

"For us it was a huge positive experience to learn from each other and to be 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, Mobility Management Centre Pongau (Austria)
Together with our colleagues from the SEEMORE project (also IEE funded) a large number of best practices were gathered, described and analysed. A complete overview of all the best practices is available on the STARTER website and ELTIS, the Urban Mobility Portal (www.eltis.org).

More than two thirds of the initiatives found focused on solving transport related problems in a specific area (e.g. access to a particular park or beach), while the rest aimed to provide sustainable mobility options in a wider geographical context for tourists and locals. Some of these initiatives were first funded by the European Commission either as a pilot or a demonstration project and maintained and/or continued by the local respective Country administrations.

The best practices found include measures at touristic destinations to influence travel behaviour through parking regulation and car-free zones (limited traffic areas and air or water ports) or increase the use of public transport through providing financial incentives and/or promotions (e.g. city cards that provide free entry and free public transport use at a combined charge) and marketing campaigns (e.g. journey planners, information leaflets and/or websites).

The DSI (Decision Support Instrument) tool has been developed by the DELTA project and aims at facilitating the development of sustainable transport. What the tool does is to propose the most appropriate mobility schemes based on the user’s input. This input is provided through a six-step procedure and it regards mostly qualitative information (although some quantitative information is also required, such as population, size of the region, number of businesses related to tourism activities, etc.). The outcome is an extended document providing, on one hand, 10 proposed measures and, on the other hand, a roadmap for implementation of each measure.

The tool can be accessed via http://www.delta-network.eu/.

ALTERNATIVE TRAVEL OPTIONS FOCUS MAINLY ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND CYCLING:
- The majority of the collective passenger transport initiatives aim to increase public transport connectivity to tourist destinations (e.g. national parks, sights of special interest, beaches/the coast, touristic towns or villages, and air or water ports) or increase the use of public transport through providing financial incentives and/or promotions (e.g. city cards that provide free entry and free public transport use at a combined charge) and marketing campaigns (e.g. journey planners, information leaflets and/or websites).
- The vast majority of the best practices related to cycling aim to promote cycling as an environmentally-friendly alternative means of transport and to demonstrate its benefits to tourists and residents. Often electrical bikes are offered to encourage cycling, especially, for those who are not fit or who are elderly. Some also aim to improve access to bikes either through public bike rentals or hotel rentals.

FACTORS FOR SUCCESS
The majority of successful implementations were achieved through consensus building and cooperation between the different stakeholders. Most sustainable mobility measures were initiated by the respective local and/or the regional authorities and supported by the relevant stakeholders.

However there are other initiatives either purely initiated or run by the public transport operators, for example, the transfer/shuttle buses; by tourist boards, for example, City Tourist Cards; and by voluntary organisations or private enterprises, for example, bicycle or walking tours and bike rental schemes. Almost all privately run initiatives are financially viable because either they have spotted the gap in the market or are subsidised (fully or partially) by the respective national, regional and/or local authorities. This is the case for almost all of the Bike Rental schemes where the operators were either given free public spaces for bike stations, or obtained advertisement contracts to run/subsidise their operation.

Almost all schemes received free publicity due to the local authorities’ green transport agenda supporting these schemes.

THE FOLLOWING POINTS ARE OFTEN MENTIONED AS THE MAIN SUCCESS FACTORS:
- Having realistic and reachable aims and targets,
- Efficient planning and assessing demand and undertaking feasibility studies,
- Successful cooperation between all parties involved,
- Use of marketing tools,
- Financial support from authorities e.g. European Commission, municipalities, etc.,
- Dialogue and enhanced communications with citizens
- Experience of the project team and
- Political support for the initiatives

EXPORTING BEST-PRACTICES TO OTHER TOURIST AREAS
It is stated before that a measure, which has been successful in one area, may not automatically be transferable to another. The impact of a measure depends on by the actors involved, the motivations for group formation, the perceived scope and scale of the problem and the organisational environments, along with geographic, political, economic and institutional factors.

There are different degrees of transfers, which have been taken into account when considering a measure from another region:
- COPYING: this involves the adoption of a programme from another locality in its entirety.
- EMULATION: this involves a rejection of copying, but also suggests that a country or a region accepts that a programme in another locality provides a standard which can be used for developing of a particular program.
- HYBRIDIZATION AND SYNTHESIS: elements of various programmes or measures are combined into a programme or measures that is better meets the needs of the adopting country or region.
- INSPIRATION: the exposure to common problems in another environment stimulates new ideas in the adopting country.
The three main modes of transport to reach Noordwijk are car, public transport and the bicycle. Since the roads are part of the heavily used road network of the western part of the Netherlands, congestion and traffic jams are a daily phenomenon. On weekdays, the roads are filled by commuters and in the weekends, if the weather is favourable, by (beach) visitors. The fact that so many people still prefer the car to come to Noordwijk can be partly explained by the limited accessibility of the area by public transport. Noordwijk has no connections to the regional or national railway network and is therefore dependent on buses for public transport. For those who wish to visit Noordwijk by bicycle an extensive network of local and regional bicycle paths is available. The beach and the nearby Keukenhof flower gardens attract many same-day and overnight visitors to the municipality. Most of them (75 percent) come in the high season, with distinct peak moments on hot days during holidays and during the weekend. It is not only tourists who visit Noordwijk in large numbers each year. Noordwijk is the second largest conference city in the Netherlands. All in all, over 2 million people visit Noordwijk on a yearly basis.

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SITE DESCRIPTION

The Island of Kos is considered as one of the most popular touristic destinations in Greece attracting visitors from Greece, Europe and all over the world. Kos has a total area of 290 square kilometres, a coastline of 112 kms and a population of about 32,000 inhabitants. Close to 1 million tourists visit Kos every year during the summer season, from May to October. Bicycle is the transport means used most by the tourists. The numerous pedestrian areas are also used extensively by tourists, while public transport isn’t a favourable transport means for either tourists or residents. The latter use widely their private car. Rental car is also a good alternative for tourists. The city centre of Kos is quite crowded during the high season and both tourists and residents experience traffic congestion, limited parking places, noise and environmental pollution.

THE LOCAL TRAVEL PLAN NETWORK

The Local Travel Plan Network (LTPN) implemented in Kos took the form of an Area Based Group. The LTPN is composed of stakeholders from the local authorities, the tourism sector and the transport sector. The Municipality of Kos is the coordinator of the LTPN. The members of the LTPN (15 in total) met three times during the course of the project. The members were initially informed about STARTER and the aims of the LTPN. They discussed the current situation (before the implementation of the measures) and outlined the most important mobility problems tourists and residents face. They altogether devised an extensive list of potential solutions. More particularly, this work ended up as a long list of mobility measures classified in groups according to the types of measures (public transport, cycling, road transport, general etc.). This list was the basis for the formulation of the Local Travel Plan for Kos and the measures that were finally implemented in Kos.

THE MEASURES IMPLEMENTED

Three measures were implemented in Kos during STARTER. The first, the so-called PORTAL, is a complete tourist guide that is also the official website of the Island of Kos. The site contains - among other services - those services supporting the mobility of tourists, such as routes towards POIs, cycling paths, suggested mobility routes and personalized routing. PORTAL is also provided as an app for smart phones in all platforms (Android, iOS and Microsoft Mobile).

The second measure is three on-street informational signs that facilitate and guide tourists in approaching outstanding Points of Interest (e.g. archaeological monuments) using the extensive bicycling network and the numerous footpaths of the city centre. The signs contain maps, photos of the POI, information labels, as well as the PORTAL’s link, and have been located in major concentration areas.

The third measure is a new timetable for two municipal public transport lines (1 and 5, which connect the city of Kos with major hotels in the areas Psalidi and Aghios Focas). The schedules for these two lines were modified in order to better adjust to the mobility needs of tourists along these lines.

MAIN OUTCOMES

The LTPN members signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) expressing in this way their interest in the LTPN and their intention to continue their cooperation in the future. The long list of measures mentioned above is an appendix to the MoU, but also an important outcome of the project activities performed in Kos.

The evaluation of the three measures implemented in Kos demonstrated high user acceptance and promising impacts in terms of modal shift towards bicycle and public transport. It appears that even soft improvements in the public transport (increase of frequency and extension of the operating hours) can bring significant benefits even within a short time of application. On the other hand, information measures (PORTAL and on-street information signs) do have a positive impact in sustainable travel behaviour, but need more time to mature. For the combined package of the three measures, the evaluation task showed an average of 12.8 percent modal shift towards sustainable transport modes and 3.2 percent energy savings and CO2 emissions reduction.

THE FUTURE

Since September 2014, there is a new Municipal Authority in Kos. The new Municipal Authority was thoroughly informed about the developments in the STARTER project and expressed its strong willingness to continue the worked carried out in the project. This mainly refers to the operation of the LTPN and the sustainable measures to be implemented in the future. These measures are included in the list of prioritized measures developed by the LTPN members and they refer both to hard and soft measures, such as the expansion of the existing bicycling network along with the improvement of its signage in certain points (black spots) and the expansion of the pedestrian zones in the city centre in order to further promote walking, to facilitate the mobility of pedestrians in the city centre, and to reduce environmental and energy impacts.
SITE DESCRIPTION
The entire island of Fuerteventura was declared Biosphere Reserve in 2009. It is the most ancient of the Canary Islands, the most arid, and the closest to the African coast. It attracts 1.6 million tourists each year. A large part of the island is protected. The island has slowly been losing importance throughout the years as an area of agricultural production due to periods of drought that produced mass exoduses. Only in the last third of the 20th century did Fuerteventura begin a new economic period tied to the development of tourism.

Biosphere reserves are sites established by countries and recognized under UNESCO’s Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme to promote sustainable development based on local community efforts. Taking into account that over 30 percent of the energy consumption on the island is due to tourist beds (municipalities, transport regulator, public museums and visitors centres network). Experience has shown that the local tourism industry actors are the key drivers for the promotion of initiatives, including hoteliers and service providers.

THE LOCAL TRAVEL PLAN NETWORK
The LTPN of Fuerteventura has been called as “Foro de la movilidad sostenible” (Sustainable Mobility Forum) in order to use a more common and understandable term, stressing that the promotion of sustainable mobility in tourism must be a central objective.

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THE MEASURES IMPLEMENTED
Three measures were implemented in Fuerteventura during STARTER. The first, so-called “The Salt Route by bike.” It is based on the new bike lane between Caleta de Fuste (13,000 tourist beds) and the Salt Museum and surroundings (Fishing village, saltworks and natural), the major cultural / natural attractions at this destination in the centre of the island. The main objective was to make the most tourists traveling to this area on alternative means of transport (cycling and walking). As an added value, this offer has turned itself into a new tourist attraction.

The second measure is part of an ambitious project that foresees making the Lobos Island a 100 percent renewable energy Island. During the STARTER project a conventional vehicle used for the restoration and cleaning of the island was replaced by a solar powered electric one.

The third measure was the creation of an Online Responsive Portal for Tourists (included The Salt Route). For the first time a single information system combines several factors: discover the main attractions of the destination using the bicycle and other alternative means; help raise awareness about the natural and cultural heritage that tourists should help protect actively and understand that sustainable tourism mobility (bikes) provides a more enriching and healthy tourist experience. The portal is integrated into the advanced information system BiosphereSmart. It provides updated information of all resources and tourist attractions on GIS information available on any device.

As a complementary measure, the Biosphere Reserve of Fuerteventura has developed, in agreement with UNESCO, a smart information window (GIS tool) to disseminate STARTER best practices and other relevant cases.

MAIN OUTCOMES
The most successful outcome of the project has been an uptake of bicycle rental as a general offering among hotels in Caleta de Fuste. The local hotel industry has recognized the benefits of implementing the supply of green mobility as a major attraction in its activities.

The measures undertaken have allowed Island of Lobos to quality as a 100 percent renewable and carbon-free destination.

As regards the measures implemented, the evaluation task showed an impressive average of 27 percent modal shift towards sustainable transport modes (walking / cycling) amongst visitors of the museum and 0.5 percent energy savings and CO2 emissions reduction. This low percentage can easily be explained by the fact that the new bike lane only covers a small trip length (2kms one-way trip) among the overall length of trips that visitors undertake on the island.

THE FUTURE
The STARTER project has laid the basis for a new vision of tourism mobility based on a sense “Carbon-Free Island” included in the “100 percent Renewable Energy” strategy of the island, where operators and the tourism industry will be the main driver. This is possible because successful pilot projects have been carried out.

This produces a multiplier effect. For example, as a result of the Initiative on the Island of Lobos, the owners of the ferries are in the process of implementing biofuels in their operations. Addressing mobility problems of residents and visitors is part of the challenge of being a Biosphere Reserve. Modes, such as bikes, public bus and e-car are now being examined as solutions that could be integrated into an action plan for sustainable mobility and carbon-free transport in touristic areas.
LAKE BALATON

SITE DESCRIPTION OF REGION WEST-BALATON

Balaton is the largest lake in Middle-Europe. With its surface of 592 km² it is an ideal place for sport and leisure. Not far from the lake there is the “thermal valley” and in its heart another lake called Heviz, Europe’s largest lake of warm water. Spa facilities in the thermal valley offer possibilities for people looking for healing with its warm thermal baths. The Wetland Natural Park Kis-Balaton is also located close to the lake. The whole region is surrounded by natural parks and the attractive wine region Badacsony.

The coastal region and the thermal valley with 3.2 million tourists per year and 10,000 beds are dominant compared to other recreational areas in Hungary. The coastal site has a very dominant summer peak while the thermal valley has year-around balanced tourist arrivals. Tourists arrive mostly by their own cars (84 percent), and 11 percent by train. Visitors go cycling and/or walking (38 percent), use car (37 percent), and public transport (21 percent) locally.

THE LOCAL TRAVEL PLAN NETWORK (LTPN)

Local Travel Plans and Local Travel Plan Networks are unknown concepts in Hungary. Transport needs are currently met on the basis of central planning. After the recent change in the national administration, local municipalities have limited rights and opportunities, but have a significant influence on local stakeholders and entrepreneurs. Local actors often operate independently and there is more opportunity for collaboration.

At first the LTPN establishment was based on cooperation between local municipalities and local entrepreneurs. This open structure and bottom-up approach led some municipalities to lose interest. Hereafter, local stakeholders (public transport operators, touristic associations, bike clubs and hotels) worked toward long-term cooperation through LTPNs. The main driver for this cooperation was the common interest among the stakeholders in sustainable transport modes and the opportunities offered by them.

THE MEASURES IMPLEMENTED

Within the STARTER project, the region of Balaton has developed the following measures:

1. A “Guide for cyclists” for the West-Balaton region, developed and based on Google Maps that informs tourists about road conditions and accidents and plans allows them to plan their bicycle routes in a sightseeing friendly way (www.kti.hu/starter).
2. An integrated periodic timetable for public transport, which harmonizes timetables between bus and rail transport (bus-to-train timetable) and also between buses (bus-to-bus timetable).
3. Promotional measures for cycling and public transport, including: brochures distributed in hotels and tourist information points; information provided beside the timetables at terminals and on buses; roll banner; and film broadcasted in hotel room TVs and city cable TV.

MAIN OUTCOMES

Initially, municipal transport operators and cycling stakeholders were sceptical. Most of the hoteliers showed disinterest. However, all agreed that development of cycling infrastructure and Public transport is generally necessary. Energy-conscious behaviour and healthy lifestyle is more and more important for the stakeholders, as long as it does not conflict with the interests of business.

The promotional measures for public transport and bicycles have a high awareness percentage among tourists (44 percent). They caused a promising modal shift amongst interviewees towards mainly public transport (10 percent). This means that perhaps more emphasis could be placed for the promotion of cycling.

Awareness of the Guide for cyclists among tourists could increased through more concrete dissemination activities. The final evaluation revealed the provided information is satisfactory in terms of ease of use and utility of information. Improvements might include additional Points of Interest and expanding the reference area for the guide.

Although the integrated periodic timetable (bus-to-train and bus-to-bus connections) was considered to be very promising, the full potential was hindered by other projects (reconstruction of the railway line in southern Balaton, construction of Keszthely’s multimodal Public transport terminal) running parallel with the timetable harmonization.

THE FUTURE

Local authorities, touristic organisations, hotel associations, associations of touristic businesses and public transport providers all depend on in the regional tourist market and share a great interest in promoting their products and services related to tourism in a sustainable manner. Therefore, there is unanimous interest in continuing the LTPN.

The LTPN is not a legal agreement so there is some uncertainty about the terms under which it would continue. The main challenge is to continue the networking between LTPN members and other partners and to establish the LTPN as a legal entity. The best framework could be provided by an “LTPN club” with a functional association character.
WERFENWENG

SITE DESCRIPTION
Werfenweng is one of the best-known Austrian destinations for tourists looking for a car-free holiday in both summer and winter. It lies at 900 metres elevation on a high plateau in the Tennengebirge and is situated 45 kilometres south of the City of Salzburg. With more than 200,000 overnight stays per year, tourism has a significant economic importance. The peak seasons take place between January and March and from August to the middle of October. Since 1997 the Werfenweng area has been the model destination for ‘Soft Mobility’ (SAMO). Soft mobility is a forward-looking pilot project, which stands for environmental friendly travel. It involves providing advantages like free e-vehicle rental, taxi- and shuttle services and supplementary benefits offered to guests not using their car (guests arriving by public transport, train or bus).

THE LOCAL TRAVEL PLAN NETWORK
The Local Travel Plan Network (LTPN) implemented at Werfenweng is an Area Travel Plan, in which the current problems that the municipality faces and have been identified by the local stakeholders are the initial points for all running and further discussion. The base of the network is the SAMO network which exists already for about 15 Years and is still growing. At the moment The LTPN at Werfenweng consists of 49 members at all, which are all SAMO-members: 46 hotels and other holiday accommodations, 2 public authorities and 1 mobility management centre. During the Kickoff meeting to improve the communication regarding the measures belong to one of the measures defined in the LTPN.

THE MEASURES IMPLEMENTED
Three measures have been implemented in Werfenweng during STARTER. The first measure was a wish of many guests in Werfenweng articulated by them during the first guest survey of the STARTER project: Increase of the e-vehicle fleet. Between April and September 2013 in total 41 new e-vehicles (e-cars, e-scooters, e-bikes) were have been bought. Since this is an ongoing measure additional vehicles have been identified: increase of the e-vehicle fleet for the guests, development of an online booking system for the e-vehicle fleet in connection with the improvement of the communication of the SAMO-system. Therefore the Local Travel Plan was updated twice during the STARTER project time.

THE FUTURE
The promotion of sustainable mobility in Werfenweng is a mature option and sustainable measures receive a high acceptance by the local stakeholders – LTPN members. The improvement of communication for the SAMO concept was prioritized by the LTPN members, as direct benefits were recognized by the majority of the parties involved (better communication that leads to more satisfied customers and increase of guests). The economic success of the SAMO card (that enables the use of the Werfenweng mobility offer) paves the way for further implementations. The LTPN in Werfenweng is not only a living and active network. It is – with approximately 50 members – a large network, complex to manage. Furthermore, it is complex to balance different opinions and to reach consensus among the different members. This is the reason why a large network needs more time to decide on measures and finance them. Such intensive discussions on content and financing have been the reason for a rather late implementation of the new web page and the booking app. Both could not go online before the start of the summer high season.

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SAMO-offer of Werfenweng for their guest. For these SAMO-communication improvements a new communication concept has been developed by a communication agency. Two important parts of this concepts are: (1) new design and relaunch of the SAMO homepage to improve the visibility of the offered mobility options and services and to better communicate the existing mobility offers to guests who want to travel to Werfenweng without their own car; (2) development of a new rental logistic including an information and booking app. This app enables the guest to check the availability of the different e-vehicles at specific times as well as the charging status of the e-cars (is very important for the guest to be able to decide whether a planned trip is possible with the available cars or not.)
The STARTER project aimed at providing a collaborative and sustainable solution to the challenges of the seasonal transport demand in touristic areas through a threefold approach:

1. Transfer of the LTPN concept to regions suffering from the steep seasonality of transport demand.
2. Promotion of energy-efficient and sustainable mobility measures in these areas with the ultimate goal to achieve energy savings and CO2 emissions reduction.
3. Dissemination of the project’s concept and experiences to other regions that suffer from high seasonal traffic peaks.

The STARTER demonstrations provided the local context and worked together with the expert partners as a project team towards the achievement of the project’s goal.

MAIN OUTCOMES

STARTER’S THREEFOLD APPROACH

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ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF THE LTPNS

The STARTER demonstrations established successfully their LTPNs at the very beginning of the project. The establishment and the rest of the activities were performed under the coordination of the respective local partners. The kick-off meeting of each LTPN was held within the first six months after the start of the project and, in the majority of the demonstrations, at least one LTPN meeting took place every three months. In all sites, members of the LTPNs were representatives from the local authorities, tourism and transport sectors. The evolution of the LTPN membership has been positive for the sites and the LTPN members unanimously assessed the Network as an added-value for their region.

The LTPN members were actively involved in the formulation of the Local Travel Plans, in terms of identifying the local mobility problems and the possible solutions to these problems. The LTPNs acted as the local “bodies” that along with the project consortium formulated a list with potential (soft) mobility measures to be implemented in their region during the course of the project and took the decision on which measures will be finally implemented. In some cases (Fuerteventura, Noordwijk and Werfenweng), the LTPN members were actually involved in the measures’ implementation as well, but in all sites the involvement of the members in the measures’ dissemination and promotion determined a project’s success. The coordinators in all STARTER sites have expressed their willingness to continue the LTPN operation in their region after the end of the project and have already identified critical points that should be addressed for successfully doing so.

IMPLEMENTATION OF SOFT MOBILITY MEASURES

Three soft mobility measures were implemented in each site, covering a variety of types of activities, namely: on-line information; policy and promotion measures; fleet-related measures and promotion of public transport.

All the measures have a clear target towards the modal shift to sustainable modes of transport (bicycles, e-vehicles, public transport and walking), thus towards the reduction of car pollutant emissions and the gaining of energy savings. The STARTER evaluation that took place in the pilot sites showed that soft measures could influence significantly the tourists’ travel behaviour towards sustainable transport modes. Energy savings and CO2 emissions reduction, as a product of this modal shift, are significant for modal shifts towards public transport (especially in large regions where the tourists’ vehicle kilometres sum up to large figures) and less significant, but equally important, for bicycling and walking (as, by default, bicycling and walking cannot cover great distances). Dissemination actions and promotional measures could make the difference, but require concrete dissemination plans in order to successfully reach the target groups with the less amount of time and money.

The tourists in all pilot sites that were influenced by the implemented measures as per their decision to use sustainable transport modes have saved approximately 0.4 tons of energy [fossil fuel savings] and have reduced CO2 emissions by 1.1 tons CO2e. In percentages of savings - among the sample of tourists - this is interpreted in 11 percent for Kos, 8 percent for Noordwijk, 16 percent for Balaton, 0.5 percent for Fuerteventura and 1.2 percent for Werfenweng.

These differences are the result of the measures chosen in each of the sites and the local context.

Increased awareness of the site-specific measures was not achieved for all sites, but the first impression implies that the situation would have been different if more time was available in order for the tourists to get acquainted with the local sustainable mobility offers.

The STARTER pilot sites’ leaders have gained insight in how to explore and achieve cooperation with the local stakeholders for the implementation and promotion of soft mobility measures, which they intend to use in their plans for future developments. The measures’ evaluation was recognized as an important tool for supporting the local decisions and for justifying future sustainable interventions, and all STARTER pilot coordinators are willing to continue it one way or another in the future.

DISSEMINATION AND SHARING

The STARTER partners have actively promoted the LTPN concept and sustainable mobility of tourists through joint newsletters (sent to over 3,000 persons) and social-media activities [Facebook, LinkedIn] with our twin-project SEEMORE [http://www.seemore-project.eu].

In the first phase of the project 88 best practices from 28 European countries were collected and analysed by both projects. Of these, 35 have been added to the ELTIS database [http://www.eltis.org] – for this a new keyword was added: ‘MM for touristic areas’.

National tourist boards have been contacted to further disseminate the project’s concept and experiences to other regions. In each of the STARTER countries a workshop has also been held for dissemination as well as evaluation purposes. Presentations at national and international conferences also helped to spread the word.

Finally, Biosphere Smart [http://www.biospheresmart.org] is a global observatory created to share ideas, knowledge, best practices and experiences among Biosphere Reserves on issues related to climate change, green economies, and sustainable development. It includes good practice examples for Soft Mobility in Tourism. We are very pleased that the STARTER pilot sites have been added as best practices.
EXPERIENCES FROM THE LTPN OPERATION.

The LTPN establishment and operation in the pilot sites provided a discussion platform for local stakeholders and enabled their participation in the decision-making and action-taking process. Nonetheless, it was not “problem-free.” Competition between and lack of ambition of the network members, lack of personal commitment to attend the meetings (due to limited time – especially during the peak seasons) and hesitation/refusal when investments are concerned were some of the issues that arose from the STARTER experience.

It was also clear that sometimes it is difficult to persuade local stakeholders to initially join the Network (as in the case of Noordwijk and the transport operators in Fuerteventura). Local stakeholders require the identification of a concrete need in order to create cooperation; if problem(s) need to be experienced, or if the entrepreneurs must feel threatened by external developments, or ill the entrepreneurs need to be curious or attach value to the status that the network gives.

The basic impression of the LTPN coordinators is that not all issues can be solved and not all solutions will work in different sites with the same issue.

Nonetheless, levers do exist, and all sites have recognized that the following are needed for a successful LTPN operation:

➠ A prominent and experienced local stakeholder who has an active role in the local economic sector and motivates others needs to be part of the network and/or coordinate it. This leader should be able to “smooth” conflicts of interests and control “for-profit” behaviour even if that means different guidance for each partner.

➠ Strong and personal communication is required.

➠ Possibilities for external co-investments for implementing measures should be always investigated in order to overcome the possible unwillingness or inability of the LTPN members to invest.

➠ LTPN meetings should have a clear goal and a clear agenda, and be as effective as possible within the minimum required time. Crucial meetings should, preferable, not take place during peak seasons, in order to enable the local stakeholders to actively participate.

CONSIDERATIONS WHEN IMPLEMENTING SOFT MOBILITY MEASURES.

Touristic areas have the main characteristic of seasonal traffic peaks and this characteristic should be the main issue to be considered when planning and implementing mobility measures that address tourists.

Planning and implementation should be set within a well-defined timeplan, which:

➠ includes time for decision making, especially when many local stakeholders and long discussions are involved (as in the case of Werfenweng);

➠ ends up before the high tourist season in order to have the services ready to use;

➠ predicts time for problems to be identified and mitigation plans to be developed and applied; and

➠ includes enough time for testing of the services.

The STARTER experience showed that it is not always easy to satisfy all the above requirements (at least within the project’s timeplan), but it is crucial to do so in order to deliver sustainable products of high quality.

Identifying possible barriers and problems in implementation could become quicker and easier with the active involvement of the LTPN members and local stakeholders. The involvement and support of local authorities, governmental and regulatory bodies is of high importance for ensuring harmonization of all mobility actions running within a region and overcoming any regulatory issues that might come up.

Despite the significance of the LTPN participation in the measures’ implementation, this is not always something that should be taken for granted, since the local stakeholders are not always willing to participate and/or invest. Identifying and highlighting the win-win situation, though, could lead to excellent examples of cooperation – creating benefits for the private sector, the authorities and the tourists.

EVALUATING A SOFT MOBILITY MEASURE.

Evaluating any mobility measure is of high importance in order to support decision making and justify future investments. A robust evaluation plan is necessary that would specify concrete evaluation steps and clearly define the target groups and the ways to reach them. What the STARTER experience has clearly showed is that measures need to be mature enough before being evaluated. This means that an adequate time of operation should pass before the target groups are reached through the evaluation process.

The importance of applying an evaluation process after the application/implementation of a measure, in order to investigate the measure’s impacts and examine whether predefined goals are reached, was a common understanding among all project partners. Dissemination of the evaluation results to a wider audience is very important in order for the local community to be informed about the measures’ added value, but also in order for the measure itself to become a “best-practice”, potentially adopted by other region(s) as well.
LEAVING THE TRADITIONAL APPROACH
As mentioned before, LTPNs are a move away from the traditional approach of addressing transport problems via the provision of more road capacity. For decision makers it is often not easy to leave the traditional approach: this is why they should see the advantages of a LTPN concept.

Consequently, LTPNs offer a quick, cheap and effective solution to transport and other organisational problems. LTPNs 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.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NATIONAL DECISION MAKERS
National authorities should convince local and regional authorities that LTPNs and sustainable transport alternatives offer clear benefits to their region. This can be done by finding exemplary sites to reach the most effective way to spread the LTPN approach. Facilitating a better cooperation between the transport and touristic organisations might be very fruitful and not just because of LTPNs.

FOR EUROPEAN DECISION MAKERS
The dissemination of best practices on sustainable transport modes in touristic areas (e.g. Eltis) is a task on European level to enforce dialogues between the transport and the touristic sector. European decision makers should 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. Finally it is also a European responsibility to establish funding streams to help tourism with the initial implementation of a LTPN and enable opportunities for further research that addresses the long-term effectiveness of LTPN under different circumstances.

The STARTER partners have written a ‘handbook for the implementation of a Local Travel Plan Network in touristic area’s’. This handbook is available in various languages on the project website. It offers guidance to policy-makers, policy shapers (consultants and academics) and the private sector to plan and implement a LTPN in a touristic area. The most practical tips are listed below:

DO
- It is important to know where your region stands. Defining the current situation (problems, ambitions, …) is always the first step in coming to sound policies / measures for the future.
- Include a wide spectrum of stakeholders in the LTPN (tourism, transport, authorities, …), such that all parties feel represented and thus a support base is created.
- Finding the right LTPN structure is a crucial to a successful cooperation. A document should be made for summarising the planned actions, this should be signed by all stakeholders to demonstrate ongoing commitment to the work.
- LTPNs are all about the bottom-up process – in other words, the network decides which measures could suit their needs. The joint-effort and mutual benefits should be always highlighted.
- Use the LTPN-members to come up with fresh ideas. The LTPN can prioritize measures, which will largely increase the support of the stakeholders (and possibly even financial support) for the measures.
- Spend sufficient effort on communicating the new measures. Since the measures are mainly oriented to tourists who only visit the place once (or few times), carefully select the right medium to reach the target group.

DON’T
- Several tourist stakeholders will have opposing or competing needs and wishes. Don’t focus on one target like congestion or emissions. As long as balance and fairness are guaranteed, this should not have to be an issue for the creation and operation of the LTPN.
- Don’t use the LTPN to put direct pressure on the local policy agenda. This will quickly lead to the end of the LTPN.
- Don’t establish a new LTPN in parallel to already existing platforms. Stakeholders will see this as an additional ‘burden’ to their already full agenda. If already suitable platforms exist (e.g. shopkeeper’s association), better make use of it.
- It is essential to have the support of the majority of LTPN about the created order and the content of the preferred measures. Don’t press to hard on measures that you want, planning etc. otherwise the members might lose their enthusiasm.
- Don’t think that communicating the measures once is sufficient. In contrast to e.g. commuters, tourists are [in most cases] new visitors, and thus the message needs to be repeated over and over again.
- Changing attitudes and human behavior takes time; results are often not achieved in a short period of time. Don’t expect results to came straight away after implementation.
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FOR MORE INFORMATION WE REFER TO THE FOLLOWING STARTER DELIVERABLES:
D2.1 - Inventory of Best Practices
D4.2 - Final Implementation Report
D5.3 - Final Evaluation Report
D6.1 - Policy recommendations for the implementation of a LTPN in touristic areas
D6.2 - Handbook for the implementation of a Local Travel Plan Network in touristic area’s [available in English, Dutch, German, Hungarian and Spanish]
D6.3 - The future of the LTPN in each of the pilot sites.
These deliverables -and more information - are available on the project website: http://www.starter-project.eu

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT IN TOURISM CAN BE FOUND ON THE FOLLOWING WEBSITES:
The SEEMORE project ([http://www.seemore-project.eu](http://www.seemore-project.eu)) provides a platform for exchange between European regions on the topic of sustainable mobility of tourists. The message of SEEMORE to tourists is: Travel Smart. See More! When you travel in public transport, on a bicycle or on foot you will have better possibilities to enjoy the landscape!

Measures are grouped into three different action fields:
a) sustainable mobility information, marketing and awareness,
b) incentives for enhancing usage, and c) sustainable mobility options.

Eltis - The urban mobility observatory ([http://www.eltis.org](http://www.eltis.org)) facilitates the exchange of information, knowledge and experiences in the field of sustainable urban mobility in Europe. It includes best practices in the field of mobility management in tourist areas.

Biosphere Smart ([http://www.biospheresmart.org/](http://www.biospheresmart.org/)) is a global observatory created to share ideas, knowledge, best practices and experiences among Biosphere Reserves on issues related to climate change, green economies, and sustainable development. It includes best practice examples for Soft Mobility in Tourism.

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