Interregional Learning towards Sustainable Mobility in Europe: the REGIO-MOB Experience

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• Project summary

European regions are facing an **increasing mobility demand** while coping with higher **congestion levels**. Undoubtedly, there is a strong need to increase the use of sustainable transport modes meaning, above all, promoting intermodality, technical innovation and the use of cleaner and more efficient systems. Hence, European regions need to undertake the transition towards low-carbon and resource efficient transport systems in order to increase mobility, remove major barriers and fuel growth and employment.

In this challenging context, where an effective action requires strong interregional cooperation, arises **REGIO-MOB**, whose overall objective is to *secure Europe's sustainable growth by promoting sustainable mobility*. Therefore, influencing the related instruments in each concerned territory and contributing to their improvement and more efficient performance, as a result of mutual **interregional learning**.

REGIO-MOB partners expect to contribute to the consolidation of sustainable mobility in their regions by improving their policies performance as a result of a shared learning process. This improvement will be

materialised through the development of regional mobility strategies with an holistic approach (environmental, economic & social factors). To this end, every partner will carry out a regional analysis on their needs and best practices, which will be further transferred through the 7 regional workshops.

In addition, each one of them will set up a **Regional Stakeholders Group** that will enrich the process & will also ensure the key stakeholders engagement. This process' results will be gathered in a Guide on Recommendations for more efficient & cleaner mobility prior to undertake the development of the 7 Regional Mobility Plans. The outputs will directly benefit the partners, our stakeholders and clearly our regions. Eventually, we aspire to influence as well other regions not originally involved in the project. Then we will be able to say that we have fully succeeded.

• Interview with our partner Sestran: Implementation of A90 Queue System and the Park&Ride

SEStran is one of 7 Scottish Regional Transport Partnerships, established in 2005 and involving the 8 constituent local councils, to produce a Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) for South East Scotland. Our policy instrument, within the Regiomob project, is the RTS and we are keen to learn from the other participants in the project through trialling and adopting appropriate best practice during the life of Regiomob. Our workshop highlighted 2 best practices, identified by our stakeholders and selected by the Regiomob partnership; Park & Ride facilities and the A90 Queue management System. Presentations were given on each by experienced practitioners in the respective fields and by myself. Question and answer sessions followed and site visits were included in the event. My name is Jim Grieve and I am SEStran's Head of Programmes. I am a Chartered Civil Engineer with substantial local government experience and was formerly Head of Transport in Edinburgh Council.

- Regio-Mob: Could you highlight the main difficulties/problems that you found implementating A90 Queue System and the Park&Ride?

Jim Grieve: *Taking the A90 Queue Management System first. This was actually introduced some 15 years ago, using technology at the time which was state of the art. The issue to be solved was public transport delays caused by excessive queues, during the morning peek, on the main route to the City of Edinburgh from the north. The first problem was convincing Edinburgh council that the system would work and would not cause increased delays for general traffic. The junction which was the cause of delay was also modified at the same time by replacing a roundabout system with traffic signals, allowing a degree of control over the junction itself. This, along with the introduction of the system caused very substantial, but unavoidable, increased delays during construction which meant that the council and its officials had to be confident and resolute in supporting the scheme. Happily, It turned out to be a great success, with bus journey times reduced by up to 13 minutes and delays to general traffic only minimal.*

Edinburgh Council's Public Transport Manager, during his presentation on the Park & Ride sites surrounding the city, discussed what they had done well and what they had not done so well, which I felt was a very helpful approach for the Regiomob partnership. Site location is key and ideally the P&R site has to be located at a point where traffic accessing the site can be intercepted before the city's outermost congestion point and must also be configured to give buses easy egress from the site and thereafter routed with the aid of bus priority measures to the city centre. Issues around land acquisition are inevitably an issue both in respect of location and size. At least 2 of the sites around the city have been expanded beyond the original construction and one site, albeit introduced by a neighbouring council, is located on the wrong side of the city's southern bypass. Another problem encountered was an inappropriately designed P&R site facilities building.

Regio-Mob: Which are the key points for a successful implementation of these two practices in a region?

Jim Grieve: *Avoid the pitfalls described above! For a queue management system it is essential to carry out sufficient traffic modelling work in advance to prove that it will work and that all the necessary components are covered. It is also valuable, as in the A90 situation, to assess whether, or not, elements*

of the existing road network can be used to provide a ready- made route for the bus to overtake the queue, thus reducing the overall cost and construction time.
One of Edinburgh's most successful sites is located on the north side of the river Forth close to the road bridge in the Fife council area, from which there is a large commuter population. There is now a multi-story car park, ideally located with appropriate passenger facilities on site. Another is close to Edinburgh Airport which has also been expanded, demonstrating the location is good but, as presented during the workshop, there are problems with the facilities building on the site.

- Regio-Mob: If a region would want to implement the A90 Queue System, which would it be the first step that should consider to have a good start?

  Jim Grieve: *It would first be necessary to identify an appropriately congested junction and then check the surrounding topography to see if there is space for such a system. It is necessary to identify space for both stacking traffic and allowing accommodation for buses to overtake a queue. Signage, both electronic and static should also be considered, from a road safety perspective.*

- Regio-Mob: And, in the case of a Park & Ride?

  Jim Grieve: *Fundamentally, a suitable site has to be established and it may be necessary to consider compulsory land purchase which, in the UK, can lead to extended timescales as public enquiries into the land acquisition may be deemed necessary.*

• Method applied to prioritize best practices in REGIO-MOB

In the REGIO-MOB project, the participating regions proposed 43 good practices related to their regional mobility. This made necessary the application a methodology to select the best ones due to the fact that only 14 could be transferred through the interregional workshops foreseen.

The key factors or criteria that have been used to appraise and select the good practices identified by the different partners are the following:

- Alignment with the strategy of my region.
- Ease to be replicated in my region.
- Relevance of the expected impact in my region.

This way, on the base of these criteria, the REGIO-MOB best practices will be those that:

- Are the most aligned with the largest number of the regional strategies.
- Are the easiest of replicating in the largest number of regions.
- Have the highest expected impact in the largest number of regions.

In this context, two main methods have been applied: the ones called **"Weighted Scoring Model"** and **AHP** (Analytic Hierarchy Process). The Figure 1 shows an overview of the relationship between both methods (Figure 1).
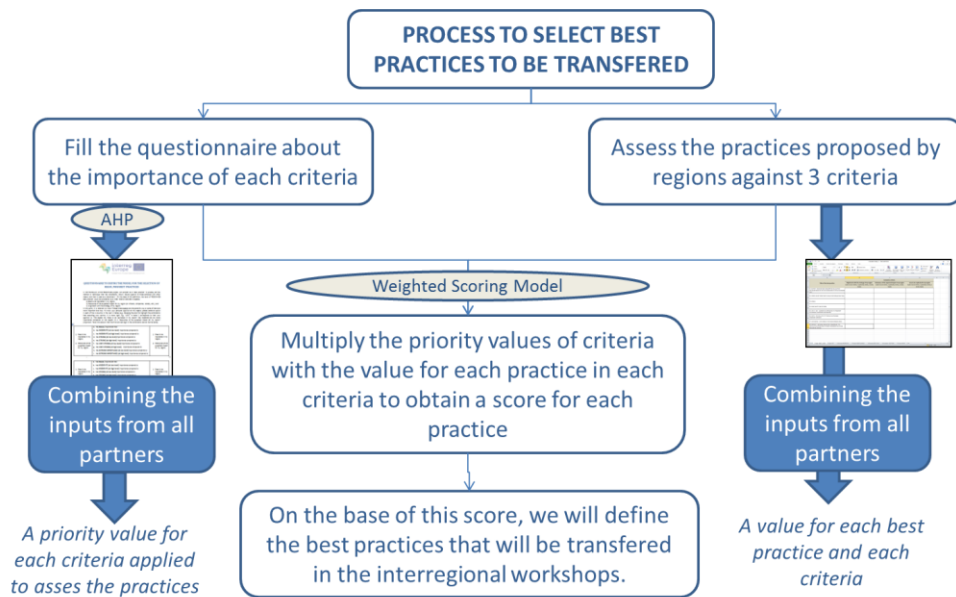
Figure 1. Overview of the methodology applied to select the best practices in the REGIO-MOB Project.

AHP consists of making comparisons between pairs of elements (in this case, pairs of criteria) and, using matrix algebra, determine the priorities between them.

Among the reasons for choosing this method are that it is simple, logical and structured, based on the decomposition of an objective or problem into a hierarchical structure of factors or subproblems. Thus, in solving these latter ones, and maintaining the existing relationship between them, the solution of the initial problem is achieved.

Nine experts from seven different European countries (partners in the REGIO-MOB project) participated in the AHP application. The experts considered the "Alignment with the strategy of my region" was the most important

criterion for selecting a best practice in the framework of the REGIO MOB project (56%). Next criterion was the "Ease to be replicated in my region" (31%) and finally, the less important criterion was the "Relevance of the expected impact in my region" (13%).

Weighted Scoring Model is a technique for putting a semblance of objectivity into a subjective process. This way, a comparison of practices was completed using a consistent list of factors o criteria weighted according to the importance of it for the REGIO-MOB regions.

The "weighted" values were obtained by assigning numerical values to the criteria (following the steps paved by AHP) and to the ability of each practice to meet each specific criteria (using a specific scale defined in the "Weighted Scoring Model"). By summing these values, the practices most closely meeting the criteria were determined.

• Second Study Visit: Roma

On March 15th-16th 2017, the interregional meeting focused on the "exchange of good practices" took place as part of the Regio-Mob project in Rome, on the initiative of ANCI LAZIO with the collaboration of the Regional Directorate for Territory, Urban Planning, Mobility and Waste Management (TUMR), in the framework of the synergies developed between Regio-Mob and Social Car, a Horizon 2020 project that seeks to assimilate carpooling into existing mobility systems.

The event was attended by 40 REGIO-MOB partners and their invited experts from Scotland, Spain, Slovenia, Poland, Romania and Italy as well, to improve knowledge, skills and competencies of stakeholders involved in the Smart, clean and intelligent mobility at regional level.

The first panel discussion was focused on the two Italian good practices selected by the partners and proposed by Anci Lazio: 1) Limit4WeDA – Light Mobility (Light Mobility and Information Technologies for Weak Demand

Areas) and 2) PASTA (Physical Activity Through Sustainable Transport Approach), respectively introduced by Andrea Campagna from Transport and Logistic Consortia of Sapienza University of Rome and Francesco Iacorossi from Rome Mobility Services Agency of the City of Rome.

The LIMIT4WeDA deals with mobility in areas affected by weak demand of transport, particularly in rural areas generally characterized by inefficient public transport systems and consequently with a widespread use of private car. P.A.S.T.A. aims to show how promoting active mobility (i.e. walking and cycling) can lead to a healthier, more physically active population - saving money and more importantly improving our lives.

The second panel gave insights in the development of innovative solutions for a sustainable mobility system in the Region of Western Macedonia, as partner of Regio-Mob project.

Dimitrios Mavromatidis and Paraskevi Christopoulou discussed the potential of Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) to reduce road traffic accidents, while Valantis Ketikidis – Technical Chamber of Greece / Department of Western Macedonia presented the Green eMotion project that is an exciting and innovative project aimed to promote the electromobility in Europe, being part of the European Green Cars Initiative (EGCI).

The second day was dedicated to a study visit to the Control Room of the Termini Railway Station from which rail traffic of central Italy is controlled, as well as communications and signaling systems of all railway stations.

The technological evolution of the control systems renovated in 2016 was illustrated. Such improvement of the control system has allowed to increase the number of trains traveling from the South and therefore from the metropolitan area of Rome that is the focus area particularly analised by Anci Lazio for Regio-Mob project.
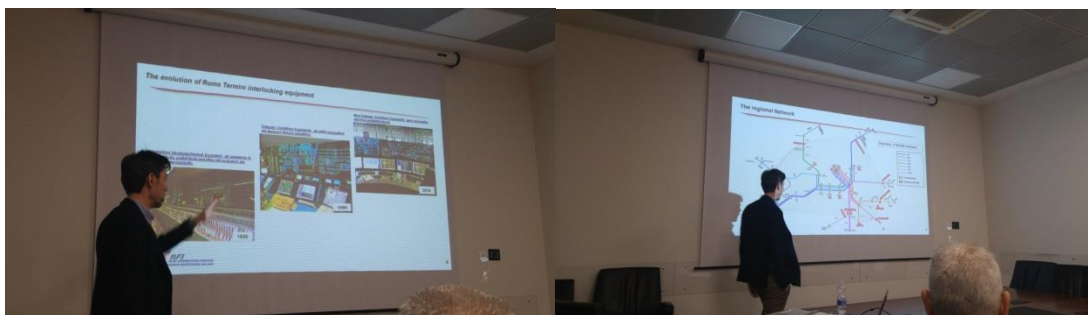
Attendees then participated in a visit to the new Line C of the metro system of Rome running from Monte Compatri, in the southern peri-urban area of Rome and project's focus area, to the station of Lodi, the last station opened in June 2015. The line is not yet connected to the other two metro lines in Rome, though it is going to interchange with Line A by 2017, at San Giovanni station. It is the first fully automated metro line in the city and for this reason the attendees visited also its Control room.

• What is going on in REGIO-MOB?

Stakeholders meetings

Partners newly meet with their stakeholders to present best practices in sustainable mobility:
Institute of Traffic and Transport Ljubljana (Prometni institut Ljubljana) held their third REGIO-MOB Stakeholders Meeting on 20.4.2017 in Ljubljana.
Institute of Traffic and Transport Ljubljana presented to Slovenian Stakeholders selected Scottish and Italian Best Practices in Sustainable Mobility. Stakeholders had great debate and discussion, and Institute of Traffic and Transport Ljubljana would like to thank all attendees for their participation!

Regio-mob study visit and exchange of experience in Ljubljana

Regio-mob partners and experts will meet in Ljubljana next 24th-25th of May in order to exchange experiences on best practices implemented in Ljubljana. The workshop and study visit are organized by the partner Prometni institut Ljubljana. Practices that will be transferred

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Region of Western Macedonia – RWM
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