

Exploring Living Labs for improving interoperability between local, regional and transnational transport networks

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Living Labs and the SHAREPLACE project

The Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE co-funded project 'SHAREPLACE' ("Shared mobility and Regional transport integrated Planning for a better connected Central Europe") addresses the lack of integration between modes of transport, resulting in weak local, regional and transnational by developing an innovative approach to improve the connectivity of these transport systems.

Six pilot regions in Austria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary and Italy serve as Living Labs for planning and delivering sustainable mobility integrating conventional and new flexible mobility services as well as market-based and private sharing options.

By actively engaging stakeholders, transferable solutions for a more integrated, accessible and harmonized mobility system are created and tested and possible resulting changes in behaviour are examined. A digital service hub to support integration of different current and future mobility options within the different pilot regions and to the Trans European Networks will be developed and tested. This hub will be made available for use in other regions after the end of the project in the middle of 2020.

Why Living Labs?

Living Labs facilitate collaborative learning in a real-life context. Besides the development and testing processes they stimulate interaction between multiple stakeholders, help to raise awareness for different topics and support knowledge exchange among participant groups. Key characteristics of Living Labs are:

- Involvement of different stakeholders to generate innovative ideas
- Consideration and discussion of different needs and expectations
- Broad discussion of impacts and possible rebound effects
- Application of different methods for co-design and open innovation
- Use of real-world test environments
- Implementation in a long term process
- Higher chance of acceptance of developed solutions

Some challenges associated with Living Labs

Collaboration, sharing and co-development are essential for open innovation in a Living Lab. Challenges in pursuing these values comprise:

- Identification and engagement of all relevant stakeholders
- Definition of clear responsibilities for different activities and structures as well as the effective management of the Living Lab
- Keeping people engaged and cooperation alive without direct incentives
- Limited flexibility by the involved stakeholders
- Building of trust between stakeholders
- Openness to change among communities and institutional organizations
- Acceptance of the Living Lab approach may differ between cultures

SHAREPLACE Living Labs

Six Living Labs are set up on municipality level where concrete applications are defined and developed jointly with local and regional stakeholders. They differ from one another in terms of available transport services, cultural patterns, demographic characteristics and attitude towards mobility and transport mode choice. The Living Lab approach helps to develop services tailored to the local framework.



Recommendations for implementing Living Labs

Although each Living Lab is different, following general recommendations to ensure long term success can be made:

- Early engagement of stakeholders and key persons
- Careful selections of tools and methodologies
- Continuous communication throughout the process
- Clear identity of Living Labs
- Open discussions
- Visible outputs

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For more information and contact details please visit <http://www.interreg-central.eu/SHAREPLACE.html>

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