

# TOURIST TRAINS OPERATION STRATEGY

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D.T1.3.5. Final strategy for HŽ Passenger  
Transport Ltd

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## 1. Introduction

Transport presents a considerable challenge, regarding free time, for many inhabitants of the capital Zagreb (Croatia), who can't drive a car, don't want to drive or own a car, or simply are not satisfied with the existing public transport services because they don't correspond to their needs. They seek organized tours with multiple activities, which organize their free time in a desired way and provide transportation.

To provide the users with what they need, HŽPP engages in a dialogue with local public authorities, NGOs and other PT service providers to discuss the mainstreaming of the concept and inclusion of further towns as destinations, researches local interests and analyses economic possibilities. Work package T1 “Integration and mainstreaming of found solutions to better connect rural regions”, aims to promote the mainstreaming and integration of results of previous Interreg Central Europe projects, foremost RUMOBIL, through action plans and strategy which are addressed to the competent decision-makers for public transport services. The action plans, underpinned by an updated strategy paper, demonstrate to public transport shareholders beyond the territories already impacted by RUMOBIL and other Central Europe projects in the passenger transport domain how these results can be adapted and used to the benefit of rural residents' mobility.

Although railway operators collaborate with many tourist agencies and different local governments, there is still no official concept on how to start such a service, but it is rather individual approach for each contracting body. Documents like contract between the railway operator and stakeholder needs to be adjusted to specific requirements and price depending on route and location.

The purpose of this Study is to describe preconditions for arranging special service i.e. train for particular purpose, in all its aspects. After preferred location/event is defined, in cooperation with different stakeholders, arranging the train operation typically starts with the railway documentation, path allocation, permissions and staffing. Second thing for which rail operator is also responsible is promotion of this service and marketing campaign, again, in collaboration with stakeholders.

This Study is a “detailed elaboration of preconditions for special tourist train operation” (D.T1.3.4) and presents learnings from tourist train trials in the summer of 2021. Documentation aims at analysing the possibility to mainstream the concept of tourist trains and spread it among interested railway operators and stakeholders - destinations and public transport operators. It takes into consideration inputs from feedback workshops with stakeholders and their requests for clarification of certain railway processes.

The document has been developed under INTERREG Central Europe project “REGIAMOBIL” and it is one of the deliverables of the Activity A.T1.3 “Strategy for Croatian Passenger railway to reinvent rail operations for tourism destinations”. It is strategy that will be adopted for the development of tourism destination travel/trips in Croatia and endorsed by the company's decision-makers and affiliated stakeholders.

It is focused on building upon RUMOBIL project experiences by documenting stakeholders' dialogue on possibilities of tourism development in Croatia, with an emphasis on Zagreb as an origin on one hand, due to the highest level of development an inhabitant density in Croatia, and more sparsely populated and less developed Croatian regions on the other hand. It will identify stakeholder types with their interests and needs, as well as define joint actions needed to implement the concept.

The document is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 - KEY ASPECTS leading to a successful strategy definition
- Chapter 3 - INPUTS describes documents leading to the strategy development, consisting of good practice analysis, stakeholder analysis and documentation of summer tourist train trials
- Chapter 4 - STRATEGY offers information about stakeholder involvement; operational issues that all involved parties must understand, due to the railway uniqueness and complexity; and communication requirements and practice examples
- Chapter 5 - CONCLUSIONS list most important finding from summer trials.



## 2. Key aspects of the Strategy

Key aspects for defining this tourist train operation strategy for the development of public transport in rural areas is necessary to mitigate the population decrease, to enable economic self-sustainability and guarantee the transferability of the strategy outside the piloting territories in Croatia. It also underlines target users as a category, to which solution should be addressed, and the users' needs, which should be satisfied.

### 2.1. Population decrease mitigation

Today, rural areas cover about half of the entire European territory and are occupied by 20% of the total population. Such a huge number of people, therefore, live in conditions different from what is considered the standard life quality for the rest of urban Europe.

The main issue affecting rural areas is the demographic change (strictly connected to the distribution of activities). Business cores, workplaces, universities, etc. are always more concentrated in big cities and, in this way, rural inhabitants (especially young and workers) have to decide to move towards the urbanized areas or stay in the rural areas trying to reach their own destination anyway. It is not rare that they leave to the cities, with the average age in rural areas increasing. This creates a circle: less people » poorer PT offer » even less people etc. Since the demand is dictating the realisation of public transport service, no one wants to invest in under-utilised system with huge costs. Also, technological development, ICT tools, and above all the awareness of them, are poorly utilised in the PT due to older population and a delay in their implementation as a result.

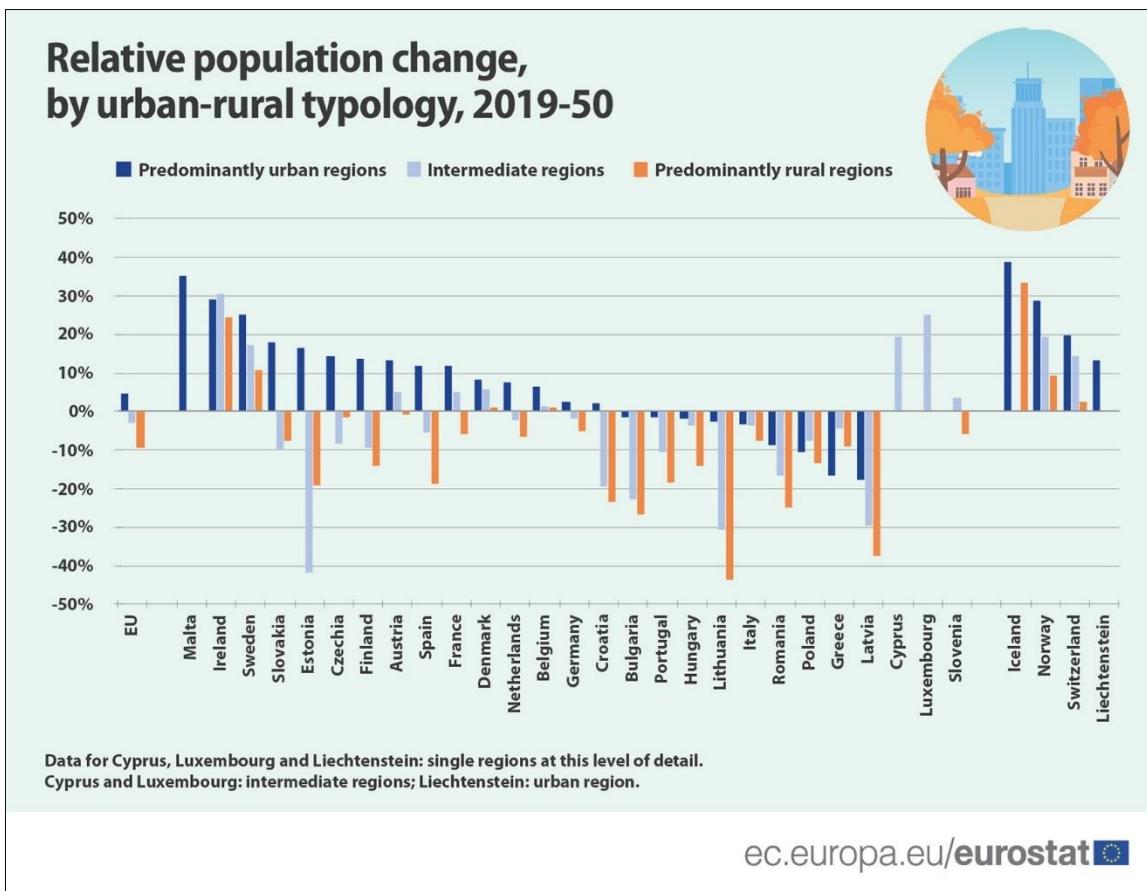


Figure 1 Relative population change by urban-rural typology



## 2.2. Self-sustainability

One of the main assumptions of this pilot activity is the planning and implementation of actions with limited resources available and an approach of financial self-sustainability. In this way, it is easier the strategy proposed will continue in the afterlife project period and also in external contexts not directly involved in the project activities (“transferability”).

In order to guarantee the future application of the strategies proposed, it is essential to carry out and continuously strengthen the stakeholder network, connecting with other public bodies, suppliers, firms, etc.

The tourist train operation itself is characterised by rather low financial resources, but the entire operation is a part of a larger set of activities that have to be highlighted, so it is possible to distinguish three financial lines of tourist train operation:

- **Implementation of a new PT service** i.e. train operation. Infrastructure costs per train are EUR 300,00 and other passenger operation costs per train are EUR 1.000,00, on average;
- **Maintenance costs** are a quite large investment but can be redistributed to all trains to minimize cost per train (ride, not vehicle).
- **Promotion**, to raise citizens’ awareness of PT services, requires a low level of resources (approx. EUR 500 per train). Most communication can be free (press releases, mouth-to-mouth, social media etc.);

## 2.3. Target users

The target users of the solution planned and adopted in rural areas of Croatia, accessible from the capital, in one-day trip, in order to promote the public transport in rural and peripheral areas, are characterised by a set of actions that suit the wide group of the inhabitants of the rural areas, as well as those in urban areas. To uplift the usage of public transport, one must address the reasons for population decrease - creating service that will develop the rural area, bring people to it and enable inhabitants from the rural area to reach the urban, as well.

The activity of tourist train operation is mainly focused on regional inhabitants, but also all potential users, depending on their interests and events organized. One train can attract families with smaller children, other families with older children, then hikers, bikers, retirees, musicians, dancers, athletes etc.

## 2.4. Users’ needs

When talking about mobility in rural and peripheral areas, the need of a cost-effective public transport system is a priority. The costs should be covered mostly from the incomes and the effective component comprises of users’ satisfaction (fulfilling their needs). Although the enhancement of the supply (frequency, no. of daily departures, etc.) is the most desired/expected direction for the PT development, there are other directions that can be explored like:

- the creation of more appealing services for the users;
- promotion in order to raise the citizens’ awareness of the services;
- more appealing PT vehicles;
- improved connectivity in interchange nodes;
- online presence and real-time information (online, phone).



### 3. Inputs

To create a Strategy that allow us to build on it, for it to be adopted in rural areas and suitable not only for the Croatia but also for other European rural and peripheral contexts (“transferability”), a couple of inputs have been considered, analysing the specific, but capable of translation to general:

- Analysis of good practices from RUMOBIL and SUBNODES projects, taking into consideration new tourist service, new tourist route, intermodal aspect with railway-bike connection and joint data display. The results are summarised in the “Work paper: potential of tourism-focused train services”;
- Stakeholder analysis identifying types of stakeholders essential for the tourism train service implementation, as well as other relevant stakeholders. The paper “Detailed analysis of interests, needs and potential partnerships” thus explains the stakeholder motivation, resources needed, possible positive impacts and benefits and presents the stakeholder matrix;
- A short overview of summer trials 2021 is presenting each train with its basic information (name, date, time, number, composition, timetable), promotional aspect and related costs. Some conclusions are presented in “Documentation of summer trials” report.

#### 3.1. Work paper on tourism-focused train services

As explained in the D.T1.3.1 “Work paper: Potential of tourism-focused train services”, two examples from tourism-related new services were analysed, from Croatia and Slovenia, giving an overview of experiences gathered during the organization of special tourist trains towards rural areas and creating sub-nodes for continuous travel chain.

Both Croatia and Slovenia have tourist attractions and natural beauty heritage sites situated in rural areas. Difficult approach, non-existing transportation offers and public transport connections, as well as lack of marketing activities, are not in favour of making the most of such natural beauties. The paper states the significance of cooperation amongst different stakeholders for joint cause - to provide inhabitants from rural areas with a public transport system that will enable them to connect to major city centres and hubs.

The examples derived from two Interreg Central Europe projects:

- RUMOBIL, aiming to support transnational cooperation between public authorities and their transport entities; and responding to pressures on regional public transport systems caused by demographic change in peripheral areas;
- SUBNODES, tackling weak intermodal integration of peri-urban hinterland regions to primary TEN-T rail hubs by identifying suitable medium-sized cities in these areas and creating attractive intermodal secondary hubs - so called “sub-nodes”.

Based on the experience of 3 partners (HŽ Passenger Transport LLC, Institute of Traffic and Transport Ljubljana LLC, Scientific Research Centre Bistra Ptuj) implementing pilot activities, some common obstacles were identified and **mitigating solutions** offered, that were used in implementing D.T1.3.3 Summer trials.

Possible obstacles	Offered solutions
<u>Public events organisation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Missing a clear list of possible interested parties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Prepare invitations</li> <li>▪ Send invitations to relevant addresses</li> <li>▪ Schedule detailed agenda</li> <li>▪ Organize promotional activities</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Missing detailed agenda</li> <li>▪ Missing element of surprise</li> <li>▪ Lack of organization details</li> <li>▪ Lack of promotional efforts</li> <li>▪ Bad weather for the outdoor events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Advertise</li> <li>▪ Invest in promotional materials</li> <li>▪ Provide people with free coffee, snacks or free tours, if possible</li> <li>▪ Reschedule in case of bad weather conditions, if possible or relocate some activities indoor</li> <li>▪ Organize additional services, if needed (bike rental, interpreter...)</li> </ul>
<u>Stakeholder involvement</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of funds</li> <li>▪ Lack of capacities</li> <li>▪ Missing benefits</li> <li>▪ Not understanding benefits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Plan a budget for stakeholders and fund their activities (cost for museum tours for groups, organized lunch, data integration...)</li> <li>▪ Cooperate with local and regional stakeholders to promote activities</li> <li>▪ Lead stakeholders by example</li> <li>▪ Give stakeholders materials to understand the project and activities</li> <li>▪ Emphasize goals and benefits for stakeholders</li> <li>▪ Give stakeholders materials to publish</li> <li>▪ Communicate with politicians</li> </ul>
<u>Complex data integration</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gathering information from various sources and data bases</li> <li>▪ Not compatible data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Explain stakeholders what the data is for</li> <li>▪ Request technical support before and during the implementation, if needed</li> <li>▪ Develop a concept to implement the same measures in other locations</li> </ul>
<u>Tendering procedure</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Legislative deadlines</li> <li>▪ Contract signing obstacles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Plan activities promptly and according to public tendering procedures</li> <li>▪ Plan risks and possible delays</li> <li>▪ Create joint interest</li> <li>▪ Introduce personally signing parties with their obligations and further steps</li> </ul>

*Table 1 Possible solutions to overcome obstacles when planning sustainable service*

Basic **suggestions**, mitigating challenges present in many rural areas across Europe, are:

- Creating demand by introducing new lines and services, rather than responding to the demand that is diminishing daily or tailoring services for students;
- Utilizing IT where possible, to attract young generations and automate processes with cost reductions for the PT operators and all involved stakeholders;
- Involving all relevant stakeholders and creating a communication platform to successfully coordinate everyone and produce results that shape the process and influence the outcome;
- Assigning enough budget for communication activities, although with some resourceful thinking, communication can be almost free (by involving different target groups with direct benefits);
- Creating duplicable, general, concepts that can be transferred into specific measures in similar conditions.

Finally, a possible **business model** was created, that was tested during summer trials, defining: key partners, key activities, key resources, value proposition, customer relationships, channels, customer segments, cost structure and revenue streams.



<b>Key Partners</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local/regional government (supporting local events)</li> <li>▪ Tourist boards (organizing local events)</li> <li>▪ SMEs (participating in produce/service support)</li> </ul>	<b>Key Activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Development of new service (multimodal if necessary)</li> <li>▪ Marketing &amp; branding</li> </ul>	<b>Value Proposition</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Affordable one-day tour by public transport to organized events</li> <li>▪ Demand-tailored service for interested groups</li> </ul>	<b>Customer Relationships</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Special offers - Customer acquisition</li> <li>▪ Customer support (during the entire tour) - Customer retention</li> </ul>	<b>Customer Segments</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Travellers looking for a local experience</li> <li>▪ Interest groups (bikers, hikers...)</li> <li>▪ Price conscious consumers (families, retirees, students...)</li> </ul>
	<b>Key Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reliable railway vehicles</li> <li>▪ Contracts with bus operators</li> <li>▪ Online sales</li> </ul>			
<b>Cost Structure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Logistics (energy, maintenance)</li> <li>▪ Infrastructure (train set-up, route, delays, energy)</li> <li>▪ Human resources (sales, promotion, support, vehicle)</li> <li>▪ Promotion</li> </ul>		<b>Revenue Streams</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sales from transport service</li> <li>▪ Revenue from event organizers</li> </ul>		

Table 2 Business model developed for tourist trains in Croatia

### 3.2. Detailed analysis of interests, needs and potential partnerships

Document D.T1.3.2 “Detailed analysis of interests, needs and potential partnerships” proved useful in starting to form a cooperation network of stakeholders.

Firstly, to identify stakeholders and their level of involvement in creating a tourist-focused service, they were divided into categories:

- Target group - groups of users that are directly involved in project implementation and whose problems are solved by the project;
- Beneficiaries - group of people indirectly benefiting from the project. The project will indirectly contribute to the improvement of their specific situation, when finished;
- Partners - organizations and persons which can be directly involved in the project implementation by signing a Partner agreement of some kind and implementing certain activities;
- Associates - organizations and persons which don't participate in project implementation on partner level, but support the implementation and, modestly, assist in achieving project goals, without being financially supported.

To create a user-oriented service, HŽPP engaged in a dialogue with multiple stakeholders to test the created concept, involve different destinations, satisfy local interests and boost local economy. The models and concepts designed to involve stakeholders into the planning process, identified in this work paper, enabled easier, more transparent and coherent organization of tailored transportation services, which serves as an economic generator as well. Cooperation models in this analysis included different aspects that were considered and that lead to a transparent model for the future:

- Benefits for the stakeholders and general public;
- Resources needed for the implementation;
- Communication activities;
- Ecology.



Most important benefits for all involved parties are identified, to create a positive climate for the cooperation:

Positive impacts / benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increased employment through tourism-related opportunities</li> <li>▪ Economic growth on a smaller scale</li> <li>▪ New products or services in production or have been commercialized</li> <li>▪ Empowerment of individuals and communities</li> <li>▪ More quality lives</li> <li>▪ Positive social changes</li> <li>▪ Mitigation of conflicts between different interest groups</li> <li>▪ Raised awareness about local heritage</li> <li>▪ Positive boost for HŽPP image</li> <li>▪ Improved connectivity between communities and access to cultural/heritage sites</li> <li>▪ Reduced climate impact</li> <li>▪ Local policy decisions influenced</li> </ul>

*Table 3 Positive and negative impacts of the service*

Since tourist trains are intended for one-day trips from the capital (due to the highest potential), it is important to understand the spatial context of the paper and display a map of Croatian territory with marked primary contacted event sites. Distances are as follows:

- Zagreb - Hrvatska Kostajnica = 91 km by road, 87 km by rail
- Zagreb - Sisak = 59 km by road, 50 km by rail
- Zagreb - Ivanić-Grad = 41 km by road, 38 km by rail
- Zagreb - Ogulin = 106 km by road, 109 km by rail
- Zagreb - Karlovac = 55 km by road, 53 km by rail

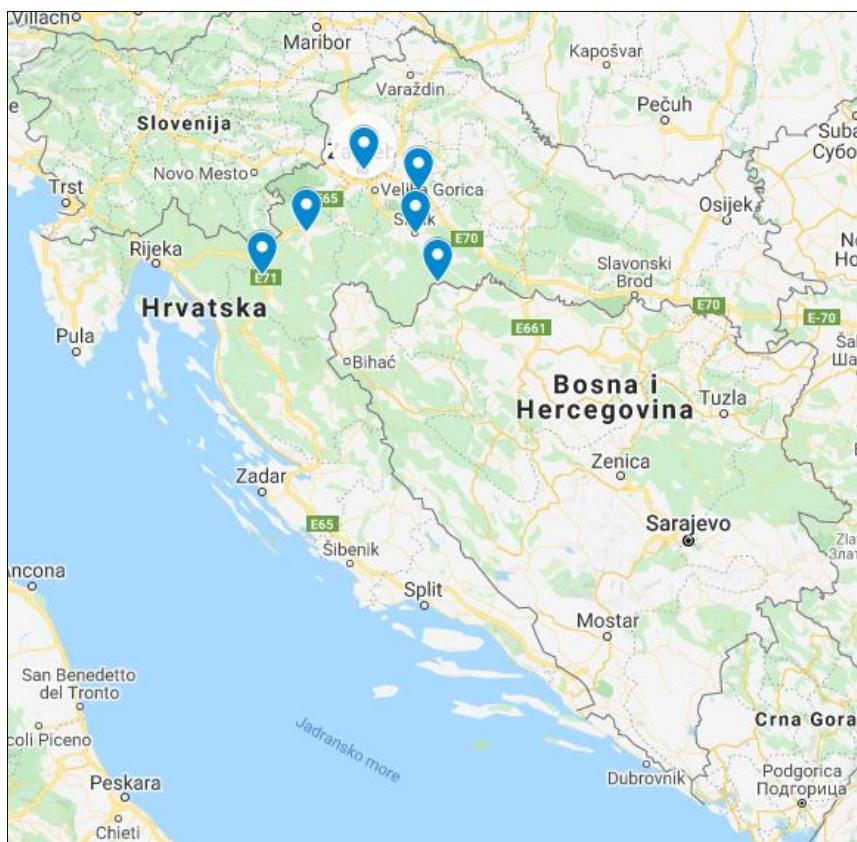


Figure 2 Map of Croatia with event sites/stakeholders

It can be concluded that main challenges in preparation of tourist trains were:

- Identifying stakeholders that are willing to cooperate - tourist boards to organize events for business promotion and promotion of the area in general;
- Sharing responsibilities - making arrangements for different activities needed to organize the entire service;
- Coordinating communication and building trust - keeping regular meetings, providing up-to-date information to all interesting parties, sharing relevant information;
- Joint coherent communication and branding - uniform communication materials (taking into consideration Programme branding rules, specifics of the event and logos from contributing organizations), agreement about target groups and communication channels.

### 3.3. Documentation of summer trials

Summer trials consisted of five (5) trains that ran in June 2021, in Croatia. All documentation is meticulously gathered and a short report about D.T1.3.3 “Summer trials” created.

The report is focused on presenting each summer trial with main information about the train organized and event to which the train is operating. The subject of the analysis are one-day trips by rail, where HŽPP is interested in summarizing train documentation in a coherent way. The documentation and this report served as an input for drafting this strategy on cooperation with stakeholders when organizing similar trains in the future. The experience shows different types of tourist excursions.



The document itself is structured to present basic information about each train, overview of related costs and some preliminary conclusion as input for this Strategy. It is accompanied by annexes as follows (for each train):

- Materials from the organiser - agenda, photos etc;
- Promotion screenshots;
- Media Press cut;
- Photos from the ride/event;
- Graphics/visuals;
- Website article;
- Official railway telegram.

Trains that ran, contrary to the first plan from D.T1.3.2 “Detailed analysis of interests, needs and potential partnerships”, were:

- *Krapek cugom u regiju ispisanu poviješću* (*Krapek train to historic region*), date: 01/06/2021, line: Zagreb Main Station - Krapina - Zagreb Main Station
- *Karlekom u bajku* (*With Karlek to a fairytale*), date: 12/06/2021, line: Zagreb Main Station - Ogulin - Zagreb Main Station
- *Lonja bike-express*, date: 16/06/2021, line: Zagreb Main Station - Sunja - Zagreb Main Station
- *Križevčanin* (*Križevci train*), date: 20/06/2021, line: Zagreb Main Station - Križevci - Zagreb Main Station
- *Bike-express Sisak - Petrinja*, date: 26/06/2021, line: Zagreb Main Station - Sisak Caprag - Zagreb Main Station

### 3.4. The process to outline the Strategy

By analysing all inputs from above-mentioned three (3) documents and based on the experiences made during previous summer trials, HŽPP drafted a Strategy and presented it to stakeholders. Initially a national stakeholder workshop was planned to get the feedback and validation of the concept. Because of national rules regarding Covid-19 and internal assessment, HŽPP organized a series of face-to-face workshops with each stakeholder involved in the trials, in order to retrieve more detailed picture on how to organize/conduct/follow and finalize event successfully and how to contribute more effectively. The purpose of workshops was to provide and present the stakeholders with a draft strategy and ask for their opinion. Also, stakeholders were asked to identify mobility needs and gaps which present obstacles for tourists to attend public events and gatherings, as well as possibilities to improve organization.

Stakeholders	Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tourist board Ogulin</li> <li>▪ Ivana's house of Fairy Tales - multimedia visitors centre</li> <li>▪ Ogulin heritage museum</li> </ul>	October 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ City of Križevci</li> <li>▪ Story room Licipter</li> <li>▪ Tourist board Križevci</li> </ul>	October 20th, 2021



▪ Kapor trade for tourist services ▪ Kindergarten Križevci	
▪ City of Krapina ▪ Public open University Krapina ▪ Tourist board Krapina ▪ Krakom - local public service provider	October 21 <sup>st</sup> , 2021
▪ Tourist board Petrinja	October 25 <sup>th</sup> , 2021
▪ Tourist board Sisak ▪ Tourist board Sisačko-moslavačka County	October 25 <sup>th</sup> , 2021

*Table 4 Stakeholders who participated on workshops*

### 3.4.1. Ogulin workshop



6 participants (list excluded from this Strategy due to personal information)

### 3.4.2. Križevci workshop



8 participants (list excluded from this Strategy due to personal information)



### 3.4.3. Krapina workshop



6 participants (list excluded from this Strategy due to personal information)

### 3.4.4. Petrinja workshop



3 participants (list excluded from this Strategy due to personal information)

### 3.4.5. Sisak and Lonjsko polje workshop



6 participants (list excluded from this Strategy due to personal information)



## 4. Strategy

To introduce special tourist trains into operation, a series of actions is needed, some of which are internal and some of which are external. When we talk about internal activities, it implies documentation and cooperation with HŽ Infrastructure Ltd (HŽI). Although HŽI is another company, national infrastructure manager, it was not so long ago under the same management as HŽ Passenger Transport Ltd (HŽPP), so all the interactions between them are considered as internal railway processes. Operator must take different actions in order to provide a proper transport service. Communication with infrastructure manager, request for route allocation, electricity, personnel on train etc. are just small part of organization process.

Prior to operational train introduction, stakeholders must be identified, contacted, unofficial relation established, followed by the contractual bond that builds upon oral agreements.

The last point that needs to be addressed, and maybe the most important, is promotion. This is a process which is necessary to inform people about the service and convinces them that they want it. It is specific since the service is a one-time deal and targets specific groups, so it should be done coherently and on time.

### 4.1. Stakeholders

For creating a special service, it was necessary to start a dialogue with local public authorities, NGOs and other PT service providers and include them as interested parties. It was crucial for cities and local governments to express interest about the service i.e. train which would be linked to a specific event. Public events and manifestation, as symbols of celebration, are destinations with the possibility of enhancing interest for wider population, in the form of experience or product. By analysing economic possibilities of several interested stakeholders, it was possible to arrange special eco-friendly service and expand the scope of service to different passenger groups.

As a precondition for successful tourist train operation, since long-term perspective of measure requires a high degree of support and acceptance while introducing new service, a document analysing stakeholders (*D.T1.3.2. Detailed analysis of interests, needs and potential partnerships offers detailed elaboration of stakeholder's involvement*) was created. It explained how to involve stakeholders in tourist train operation planning, how to encourage them to start activities, and it gave recommendations on how to work with stakeholders in general. The stakeholder identification process is one of the most important processes in each activity related to project management. To comply with stakeholder requirements, one has to identify all relevant parameters, such as purpose of cooperation, goals, financial benefits and target (and affiliated) audience.

Public transport is a cross cutting topic with a variety of stakeholders responsible for certain aspects of the transport chain. Therefore, different actors are relevant for the transport sector and for the implementation of different ideas which are promoting not only transport branches, but also local and regional products, contents, services, and, most of all, public needs.

Collaboration with stakeholders must be conducted to facilitate mutual learning, awareness of difficulties, identifying opportunities and possibilities. Involved parties should be aware of decision-makers with political influence and try to make agreements and cooperation with them, as well. Support from different parties is always welcome and makes planning smoother. Thus, stakeholders can be divided into categories:

- Primary stakeholders. The ones which are affected by the service as a transport measure (e.g. different social groups - certain municipalities or village communities, elderly people, young people, employed and unemployed people, business branches, organisations, etc.).
- Key actors. Ones that have political responsibility (mayors, other authority levels), financial resources (public and private funds), the authority (by domain or territory), the skills and expertise



(public administrations, universities, private sector) in transport and related domains (land use, environment, education, health, tourism, etc.).

- Intermediaries, who implemented transport policy (PT and infrastructure operators, public administrations, police, etc.). They carry out supporting transport activities (PT operators) and represent pertinent interest groups (associations, chambers, cooperatives, networks, NGOs) and are informing and reporting on transport (authorities, operators, local media).

After identifying and contacting the stakeholders, for the cooperation to be successful, it is important to have a plan that can answer these questions: what type of cooperation? Between which stakeholders? How is responsible for meeting organization? Are workshops necessary? Will communication be online, offline, or hybrid? What is the contact list? Who is dividing tasks? Who is coordinating communication to target audience? Etc.

Also, the communication must run both ways. To start with the service of tourist trains, it must be possible for stakeholders i.e. involved parties (organisations, individuals, local governments, other public transport operators), that have an interest in organizing an event/manifestation, to approach railway operator with an idea. Besides promoting an event, this kind of cooperation has the purpose of promoting a better transportation system and public services in different regions. The purpose of such cooperation is also to raise awareness about the importance of carbon footprint each person has (sustainable transport) and natural beauties, local products, cultural heritage etc.

#### 4.1.1. Contracting

If agreeing to jointly organize and promote an event with a tourist train, the relation between the railway operator and the counterparty must be made official. All the agreements that were made in person, via e-mail or by phone, should be put to paper in a form of a contract. This is to protect both parties and to ensure that everyone knows what must be done and when.

Contract between the railway operator and the counterparty (stakeholder like local community, tourist board, city, county etc.) must be agreed and signed to respect mutual rights and obligations. Based on mutual terms agreed during the joint meeting or telephone conference, one of participating parties should draft the contract that stipulated all the conditions for a special train. From the experience, this should be done mainly by the railway company, because it's introducing tourist trains multiple times and only some changeable parts should be done by the other involved party.

From the main information stipulated in the contract, railway operator is obliged to introduce train into operation, to transport passengers to an event or a destination, on an exact date, via exact designated route. Contract should also contain information on what type of train will be used for this special service, what is the price i.e. cost for this train, who will settle the invoice, payment terms, ticket price for the passenger (if any) and any other necessary annexes or data.

To follow up on the transport service, the railway operator should submit the report the counterparty, stating important facts about the train operation such as the number of passengers, deviations from the timetable (if any), difficulties in the service and similar. The contract can state that the client "ordering" the train can bear the costs of the train in total, in which case the transport fee can be free of charge for the passengers or the ticket income (price set by the client) is transferred to the client. In that case, the railway operator is obliged to submit a report about the number of passengers and totally charged amount based on ticket sale to the client. It can also state that the client "rents" the train and the railway operator sets the ticket price (prior to contract drafting).

Another important aspect, also from the financial side, is promotion. Contract can stipulate that the client must lease the advertisement space in the train for a certain amount of time, which will then be designated for promoting the event/destination. Costs of advertisement materials can be in the cost of the lease (railway operator is responsible for production) or separate (client is responsible for production). These



costs should be determined in advance and detailed in the contract. This kind of promotion can cover posters, stickers, coating with removable foils (inside, outside), flyers etc, so its visible to everyday commuters.

## 4.2. Operation

After shortly presenting why are stakeholders important (detailed elaboration in the document D.T1.3.2) and what are the key aspects of communication with them, as well as contractual relationship, it is time to start introducing trains in operation. To make the service quality, precondition of identifying stakeholders must be met. They can be identified as local communities, local and regional government, public institutions, NGOs, international organizations, private or public companies, tourist boards or any other person/entity, which has contacted railway operator with purpose of producing service. The service is then adapted to their needs.

Also, very important, regulations must be followed, different documents and forms needs to be created and filled-in with relevant data. Most of the documents rely on the railway operator, while a specific contract between the operator and stakeholders depends on both sides and has to be mutually agreed. HŽ Infrastructure Ltd, as the Croatian rail infrastructure manager, conducts the infrastructure capacity allocation procedure and allocates infrastructure capacity in a fair and non-discriminatory manner. The allocation of infrastructure capacities in the form of a train path is carried out according to the procedures specified in a document called *Network statement* for infrastructure capacity allocation:

- for annual timetable and regular amendments of the annual timetable
- for ad hoc requests (special tourist trains are in this category).

Applicants (railway operators) submit the requests for infrastructure capacity allocation using applications NTR (*National Technical Rules*) or PCS (*Path Coordination System*). NTR application is available on the HŽI website and access is enabled with user data (username and password). In case of inability to use the web application NTR, the ad hoc request for infrastructure capacity allocation can be submitted also by e-mail using “Train Path Request Form”. A request for infrastructure capacity allocation submitted to HŽI within a regular deadline, containing all necessary elements, makes a basis for timetabling and train path allocation. HŽI takes a decision on capacity allocation while taking into consideration all legally valid requests and legal provisions in force.

Bodies participating in the capacity allocation process are:

- HŽ Infrastruktura Ltd. - as infrastructure manager and capacity allocation body.
- Applicant - a railway undertaking or an international grouping or other persons or legal entities with a public-service or commercial interest in procuring infrastructure capacity.
- RNE - RailNetEurope - association founded by the European Infrastructure Managers and Allocation Bodies whose task is to provide quick and easy access to European railway infrastructure and increase the quality and effectiveness of international rail traffic. Purpose is to harmonize the requirements and procedures in the management of international rail infrastructure routes.
- FTE - ForumTrainEurope - European organization of railway undertakings, which represents the European forum for technical planning of international passenger and freight transport.

### 4.2.1. Train path request

Every year HŽI makes an annual plan with request submission deadlines and capacity allocation processes, for which undertakings can apply during the annual timetabling process and the capacity allocation process for ad hoc requests.



For passenger rail operator to provide passengers with a special train service, which is not planned in regular timetable, he is obliged to fill AD HOC Train path request under a specific number. This specific form contains technical details of the applicant/railway undertaking, address, contact person, phone number, request date and time of submission. Applicants don't have to be railway undertakings, but then they must indicate the name of the railway undertaking that will perform the service of the railway transport on his behalf. Further to these technicalities, there are basic information of requested train path such as type of train, train number, specific dates, time (departure/arrival), origin, destination, route, and other specific additional requests. In passenger railway transport, operations are conducted by trains such as EuroCity, EuroNight, InterCity, express, fast, agency trains, semi-fast, local, cross-border, suburban, tilting, empty trains or locomotive trains. In freight transport, trains can be with individual wagons, trains with single-type loads, express, fast, direct, block trains, intermodal trains, sectional, pick-up goods trains, circuit-working trains, industrial trains, trains with empty wagons or locomotive trains.

Special train needs to have data related to the desired timetable and driving calendar. Timetable shows predicted train stoppings at requested stations, and applicant must specify desired time of train departure from starting point/station and possible arrival into destination/final station. Also, official places on railway line in which train is required to stop in between, as well as time spent, must be specified, and measured in minutes. Driving calendar is number of days when train is operating. For trains that run only several days per week or year, the calendar on the entire route must be arranged and must contain train number from the previous timetable so that train path elements match applicant's request. Train route is defined by departure and destination station and two characteristic stops between these two stations. Also, necessary information are train parameters which show the type of train traction (electric or diesel), engine power, unit serial number and route section on which each individual locomotive operates. If there are additional engine power units they also need to be specified under the specific number of units, type of engine power units (electric or diesel), serial number and position on the train (engine, double heading, banking etc.). In case there is a locomotive with coaches, those coaches need to have individual numbers, weight, length, type, braking percentage and maximum speed allowed. Coaches or wagons need to be marked with letter designation of wagon series and how many of them are in a train i.e. type, number and serial number of motor units (DMU/EMU), also the weight of all vehicles in the train without locomotive has to be specified, as well as braking type (R, P, G, Mg etc.) and braking percentage. This has to be considered during timetabling and maximum train speed considering the characteristics of vehicles in the train.

To know all this data, requires talking with clients that are leasing the train, because they have to understand why a certain train is possible and other not. This directly dictates the price. The price is not the only factor, since different types of trains run on different routes due to engine power, availability and various railway characteristics.

During the train path request there can be special requirements which are time consuming such as required connections with other trains, required time period for changing the train composition, checking engine and staff, procedures at border crossings, inspection of technical brakes, water supply, waste handling and similar. There is also importance of using service facilities which needs to be specified, for example preheating and preliminary air-conditioning of the train, at which stations service facility would like to be used, is there any need for track capacity, measured in meters, type of vehicle fleet (passenger cars, locomotives, etc.) and the time period using the facility.

Special departments dealing with logistics and operation, within railway undertaking, submit these forms and are responsible for tracking each vehicle. After completing and submitting forms, specific permissions will allow passenger undertaking, in this case HŽPP, to operate with train on predetermined and requested route. Following permission and operation, invoices for the use of railway tracks, electricity train formation services, delays and use of passenger stations will be calculated. This is done on monthly basis.

Under the condition that all necessary prerequisites for running the special train are in line with valid regulations, such as a licence, safety certificate and a signed Access Contract, a railway undertaking is entitled to use the allocated capacity in the form of a train path. The use of running track, track points and



junctions on the allocated capacity enables a railway undertaking to perform train operations i.e. run trains and provide service.

Timetable	2020/2021
Number AP	
Number IM	

 **HZ INFRASTRUKTURA**  
Sektor za pristup infrastrukturni  
Zagreb, Mihanovićeva 12  
tel: 385 1 453 35 56  
fax: 385 1 453 38 98

### Train path request

1. DETAILS OF THE APPLICANT						
Applicant						
Address						
Contact person:						
Tel.	Fax.		e-mail			
2. BASIC INFORMATION OF REQUESTED TRAIN PATH						
Train category	Train number in previous timetable *	Desired time		Route		
		departure	arrival	from	to	via
Train path from framework agreement: *						
COMMENTS:						
3. DATA RELATING TO TRAIN TIMETABLE						
Stopping at establishments	Duration of stops at establishments [min]	Train running calendar				

Figure 3 Train path request form

#### 4.2.2. Timetable

Timetable is an act of the infrastructure manager which determines all planned train movements and rolling stock on certain infrastructure route during the period for which it is valid. It is also the implementation plan for the transport of passengers and goods and harmonizes the transport needs of railway undertakings with the available infrastructure capacity.

The timetable can be:

- **general**, determines the number of regular trains
- **special**, which is made for special trains and is valid only when the need for running such trains is specified. The timetable of a special train can be made in advance in the general timetable or subsequently according to an extraordinary request (ad hoc).

Before commencing timetable drafting, HŽI must publish which railway routes (infrastructure capacities) are available and then must agree with other relevant Infrastructure Managers which international train paths will be included in the timetable. The process of developing timetable begins after infrastructure manager receives inquiry for path allocation from a railway undertaking. After the regular deadline for submission of annual timetabling requests has ended, HŽI starts with timetabling and with making a timetable draft, at the same time attempting to fulfil the needs of users as much as possible in a transparent and non-discriminatory manner.



In the process of timetable drafting, the coordination between HŽI and applicants is carried out to meet the demands for capacity allocation. Allocated capacity can be used upon conclusion of an Access Contract between HŽI and a railway undertaking which will perform the service.

In the process of timetable construction, the HŽI, as far as possible, meets all requests for infrastructure capacity including requests for infrastructure capacity crossing more than one network, takes into account all constraints on applicants, including the economic effect on their business.

For train to be introduced into everyday traffic or in this case, a train that normally does not operate, timetable must be adjusted. Timetable is an official document showing all official places on railway route at exact kilometre position, allowed speed, departure time, arrival time, number of stops between two major stations, any delays and if necessary, deviations on railway tracks.

Transport based on extraordinary requirements can be performed:

- by a regular train with changing the timetable elements of that train
- by special train or
- by split train.

Extraordinary requests for transport/train for which a new route needs to be made must be submitted to the infrastructure manager no later than 15 days before the required transport or no later than 5 days before the required transport if it is not necessary to make a new route.

Changes to the timetable due to extraordinary requests must be submitted:

- as an amendment to the timetable or
- as a written dictation valid only for that transport/train no later than 24 hours before the start transportation.

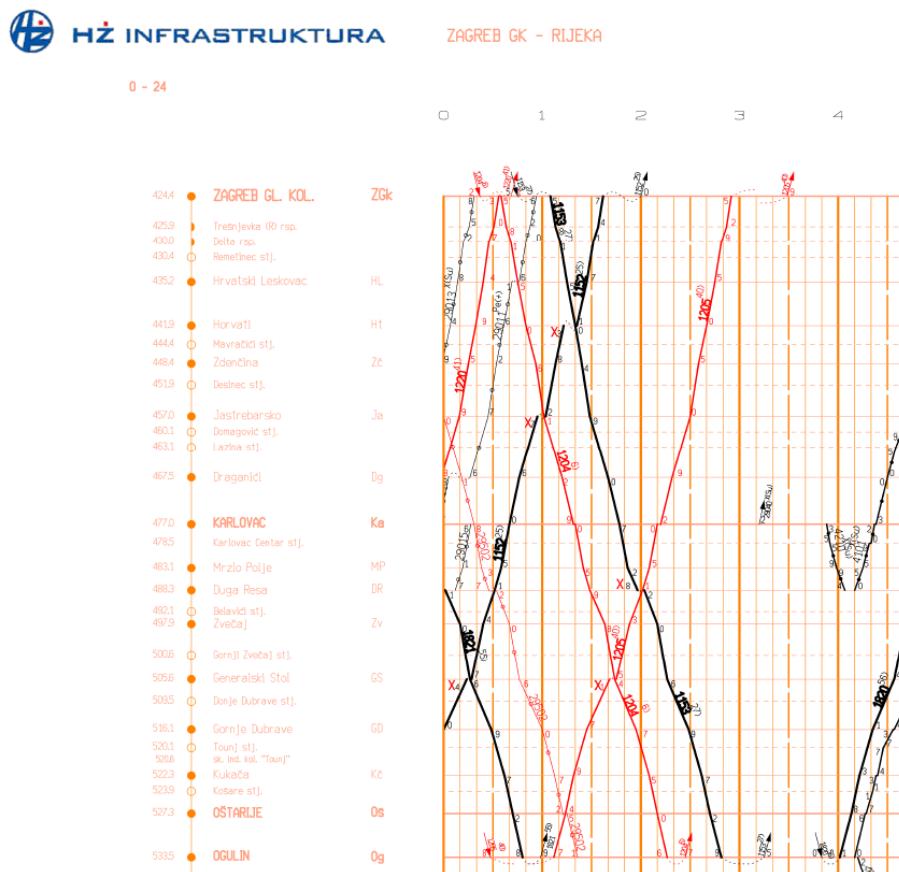


Figure 4 Timetable graph



A timetable graph is a graphical representation of the movement of trains on a designated railway line plotted in the coordinate system. A graphical grid is a two-dimensional system composed of horizontal and vertical lines in which the horizontal lines denote the official places on the railway route and the vertical lines define time division.

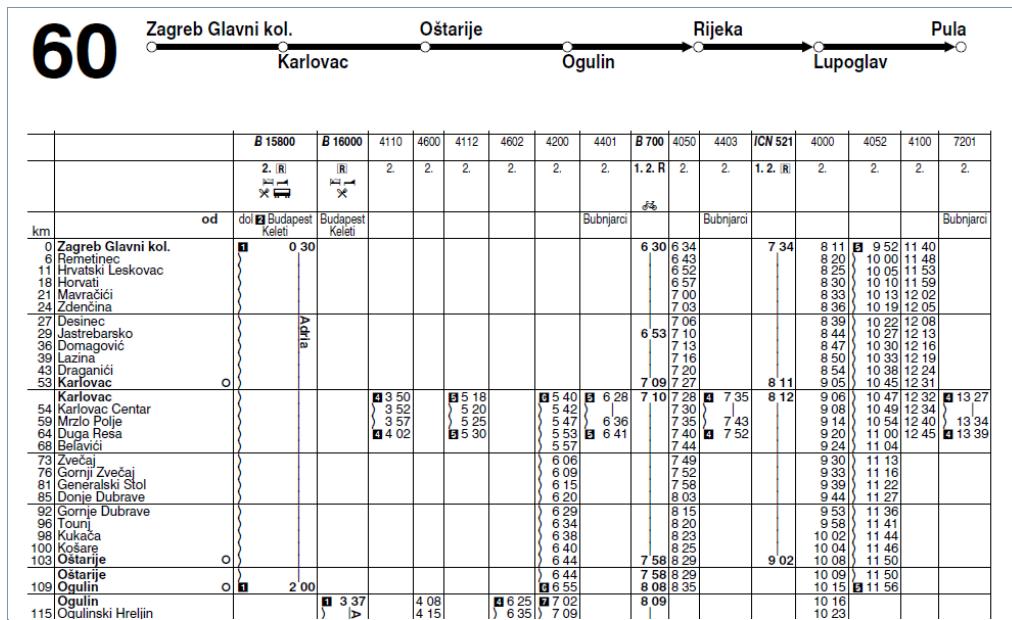


Figure 5 Timetable booklet

A timetable booklet is a set of train timetables for all railway routes and lines. It is made based on the train movement schedule and technical infrastructure conditions for the relevant timetable and must contain the timetables of all trains plotted in the movement schedule. It can be made and published as printed material in the form of book blocks or in electronic form.

		HŽ PP							
		ZAGREB GL. KOL.-DOBONA							
		R p=92% SWV:1142 Q=400t	SV				Sa		
KM. POLOŽAJ		SLUŽBENA MJESTA		BRZINA		VRIJEME		SASTAJANJA	
		PREKO SKRETNICA		RED. OGR.		NAMEĆA DOŠTENA		DOLASKA	
1		3		4		5		6	
158		7		8					
424.4		ZAGREB GL. KOL.		30		50		7.25	
RD A-63; AS									
km 425+080						60			
426.6		ZAGREB ZAP. KOL.		35		7.28			
434.0		PODSUSED TVOR.		20		7.35			
km 438+751						55			
439.6		ZAPREŠIĆ		40		7.41			
km 440+750						120			
km 445+147						55			
446.1		SAVSKI MAROF		40		7.47			
km 446+410						120			
km 451+150						95			
km 451+200 dg						100		7.51	
km 452+600						30			
453.3		DOBONA				7.54 (8.11)			

Figure 6 Timetable example



Timetable example shows in column 1 the kilometer position of the official place stated in column 2, in kilometers and hectometers separated by a dot. Column 2 holds the name of the official place, the kilometer position of the beginning and the end of the station where restricted speed is entered, kilometer position of the state border labeled as "DG"<sup>1</sup>, the name of the industrial track which is separated from the open track (only for trains running on the respective track), kilometer position train stops before the railway-road crossing labeled as "ŽCP"<sup>2</sup>, operating mode RD, AS and ETCS<sup>3</sup> devices. Names of stations and stops where the train is delayed or passes without delay must be entered, and the names of dispatches, stops and industrial tracks separated from open lines are entered only if the train has a delay in them. The names of stations for all trains is entered in capital letters, and the other official places and industrial tracks are written in lower case letters.

#### 4.2.3. Telegram

Based on the article 36 of the Railway safety law and article 16 of the Croatian railways statue, the *Regulation on the use of telecommunication connections and devices* contains provisions on transmission of telegrams, communication and information in the domestic and international rail transport.

In order to introduce all rail staff with changes in the timetable and other important information regarding works on infrastructure or any type of changes related to the operational process, railway undertaking needs to send press telegram to all stations and stops and ticket offices on desired route. A telegram is an urgent announcement of certain content that is transmitted in writing and it can be transferred in different types and with different purposes.

Considering that there are different types of telegrams, for the purpose of announcing special trains, transport-commercial telegrams are used.

Telegrams in the domestic telecommunication traffic are divided into business and others. Business telegrams are the ones whose content relates to performing railway traffic and are marked in large print with the letter F. Other telegrams not relating to the running of the railway traffic are indicated by a capital letter S. Telegrams, announcements, and information in the international telecommunication traffic are marked with the designation serv.

##### Telegram appearance:

Telegrams must have prescribed form, consisting of header, text, and signature.

1. The telegram header consists of:

- mark brz. in domestic or serv. in international traffic
- telegram number
- telegram letter (F or S)
- mark "od" ("from") in front of the telegram sender's address
- consignor's address
- date of dispatch
- consignee's address
- special remarks.

The telegram header must comply with Traffic Instruction records.

<sup>1</sup> „DG“ \_ cro. Državna granica - eng. State Border

<sup>2</sup> „ŽCP“ \_ cro. Željezničko cestovni prijelaz - eng. railway-road crossing

<sup>3</sup> RD - Radio dispatch device; AS -Automatic Stop-Start System; ETCS - European Train Control System



Dispatch date and time is indicated with 12 Arabic numerals of which the first eight digits denote the date and the other four digits indicate time.

2. Special remarks consider the signs as Urgent, Confidential, Proclamation or similar.
3. The text of train and traffic telegrams must be compliant to prescribed traffic rules.

The text of other telegrams is drawn up by the sender in accordance with the communication regarding the information he wishes to provide and in accordance with Croatian railway regulations or international regulations.

4. Each telegram must contain the sender's signature and an indication of its functions and address.

The addresses must be compliant with the names of official places, according to the railway directory and organization.

5. Telegram records must comply with Traffic Instruction records.

When addressing tourist trains, telegram contains information about traveling route, event to which a train is introduced, ticket issuing, ticket prices, specific dates, who will cover train costs, train capacity- how many tickets can be sold for a particular train and additional benefits when purchasing ticket (entrance to museum or manifestation). Annexes to the telegram is usually a timetable issued by HŽI:

<p>Brzjavka broj <b>521</b> F od HŽ Infrastrukture, 1.0. Sektor za pristup infrastrukturi    1.0.2. Odjel za vozni red    Zagreb, 10.4.2017.</p> <p>- Kolodvorima: Zagreb GK, Zagreb Klara, Zagreb Zapadni kol., Hrv. Leskovac, Horvati, Zdenčina, Jastrebarsko, Draganići i Karlovac    - Područna radna jedinica prometa Centar    - Područna operativa Centar    - Područna RJ za održavanje građevinskog infrastrukturnog podsustava Centar    - Područna RJ za održavanje SS i TK sustava, EEP i KM Centar    - Regionalna jedinica HŽ Putničkog prijevoza Zagreb    - HŽ Infrastruktura: 1.0.1., 1.1.1., 1.1.2. i 3.2.    - HŽ Putnički prijevoz d.o.o.</p> <p>Na zahtjev HŽ Putničkog prijevoza br. 6871-1/17 od 10.04.2017. god. uvode se u promet <b>dana 22. 04. 2017. god.</b> posebni vlakovi:    - <b>17000</b> Zagreb GK – Karlovac,    - <b>17001</b> Karlovac – Zagreb GK.</p> <p>Posebni vlakovi će prometovati prema listicama vozognog reda u prilogu.    Prilog: listice vozognog reda vlakova 17000 i 17001.</p> <p>Šef Odjela za vozni red    Zdravko Lakašić, dipl. ing.  </p>
--

*Figure 7 Example of a telegram*



## 4.3. Promotion

Promotion refers to the entire set of activities, which communicate the service to the users. The idea is to make people aware of tourist train service, attract and invite to travel.

From HŽPP experience, tourist trains need a detailed display of information at least one week in advance (preferably two), for users to be able to plan their journey. Reliable and safe transportation should enable distinguishable service, regarding the ecological aspect of the journey and especially since train stations in Croatia are still located in the centres of towns/cities/villages.

The entire story about tourist trains is coming down to the importance of cooperation between HŽPP and local stakeholders, mainly Tourist boards. To attract tourists to spend the entire day somewhere, where they can come with public transport, but don't have the possibility to drive back whenever they want - interesting contents must be provided. It is about finding balance between quality and quantity, it is about sharing responsibilities with partners and sharing resources, and about quality promotion activities.

While organizing technical part of each tourist train, communication concentrates on advertising, not only the event, but also a transport service i.e. the entire tourist package. Tourist boards are organizing events for business promotion and promotion of the area in general but joint coherent communication and branding between service provider and different stakeholders contribute to uniform communication materials transfused into agreement about target groups and communication channels that has to be produced as well.

It is important to have in mind partners' interests and what they perceive as benefits, compromise to achieve it, if necessary, and help them to accomplish it. This should go both ways. The relationship should benefit all stakeholders, evolve, and have positive impacts. If any of the elements is missing, there will either be disgruntled tourists, dissatisfied partners, or disappointed associates.

When organizing tourism-focused trains, the railway operator must closely cooperate with key partners: (1) tourist boards to organize local events, (2) local/regional government supporting local events and (3) SMEs and associations participating in local events.

It is not enough to identify only stakeholders but customers as well. Tourism-focused train service is targeting travellers looking for a local experience, interest groups (bikers, hikers, bird watchers...) or price conscious groups (parents with children, student groups, retirees...). The promotion must be planned and done accordingly.

Another important communication aspect of the service is the customer support. Information must be provided on all available communication channels (phone information, e-mail information, website), HŽPP employees need to cater to tourist needs before entering the train and during the ride, while event organizers need to ensure support from exiting the train.

Free communication channels should be utilized where possible, such as websites (HŽPP, event organizer and involved stakeholders), social media (stakeholders', groups, and communities) and direct communication (cash desk, direct e-mailing, newsletters). Payed promotion can be utilized as well (posters, flyers, payed ads online and offline etc.). Different research results show how much promotion and advertisement is important for success of an event/manifestation, therefore it is necessary to invest funds into promotional activities, whether they will be on social media, or on paper as leaflets and posters.



**KRAPEK-CUGOM U REGIJU ISPISANU POVIJEŠĆU**  
utorak 1. lipnja

Polazak iz Zagreb GK u 10.00, a povratak u 17.32 sati

Upoznajte Krapinu uz organizirani razgled Trškog Vrha, Muzeja Ljudevit Gaja, Galerije Grada Krapine, franjevačkog samostana, Crkve sv. Nikole i Muzeja krapinskih neandertalaca, a imat ćete vremena i za kavu/ručak.

Cijena: 30 kuna. Djeca do 6 godina putuju besplatno.



**KAMO ZA VIKEND?**  
**KARLEKOM U BAJKU**  
subota 12. lipnja

Polazak vlaka iz Zagreb GK u 9.00, a povratak u 18.33 sati

Provedite dan u bajkovitom Ogulinu koji je inspirirao najslavniju hrvatsku spisateljicu za djecu Ivanu Brlić-Mažuranić. Regoč i Tintilinići dočekat će Vas i uvesti u priču, a Ciklobajka odvesti do ogulinskih jezera. Ne propustite ni sajam, predstave i pripovijedanje.



19 / 6 / 2021



**Lonja**  
BIKE TOUR

**Interreg** CENTRAL EUROPE   
HŽPP

**LONJSKO POLJE** Park prirode Nature Park

**KAMO ZA VIKEND?**  
**Križevčaninom na Sportski viKŽend**  
nedjelja 20. lipnja

Polazak vlaka iz Zagreb GK u 9.45, a povratak u 18.06 sati



**KAMO ZA VIKEND?**  
**Bike-expressom u Sisak i Petrinju**  
subota 26. lipnja

Polazak vlaka iz Zagreb GK u 8.31, a povratak u 18.45 sati



Figure 8 Social media banner examples



For HŽPP, in the summer trials organization, the biggest challenge in promotional activities was to obtain materials from the stakeholders and to create a coherent communication. It refers to the pictures, graphic design and logos. This was realized for only 1/5 trains (Lonja bike tour) and the other visuals were done identically, to have a better recognition in public, during the entire month of June 2021. Regardless, the graphic elements of the entire campaign were present for the Lonja bike tour promotion as well. Online banners were shown on the most popular local portal for Zagreb area and they led to articles on HŽPP website where all the information was available. Also, as HŽPP got agendas, pictures, logos, links and other materials, the articles were updated regularly.

#### 4.4. Business model update

First draft of a business model was created in August 2020, in scope of D.T1.3.1 “Work paper: Potential of tourism-focused train services”, based on two examples from tourism related new service in Croatia (RUMOBIL project) and Slovenia (SUBNODES project). Since summer trials i.e. tourist trains, is a concept more similar to the first example, the business model has to be adapted and updated.

Analysing the service of tourist trains, it is obvious that implementation of this specific service can be considered as an on-demand service (event related) or demand-tailored service. It is a service supplementing the elementary, basic, service provided through PSOC (Public service obligation contract) with the State. It is tailored to the needs of passengers taking one-day trips in their free time and, most important, is representing an alternative to the individual transport. The table below shows most important aspects of the business model, answering to all key questions and explaining the deviation from the original plan with reasons, where applicable.

<b>VALUE PROPOSITION</b> <b>What is being developed</b>	Affordable one-day tours by public transport to organized events from Zagreb to rural areas for the purpose of leisure, sport, entertainment etc.  Demand-tailored service for interest groups	
<b>WHERE</b>  Lines where tourist trains ran	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Zagreb Main Station - Krapina - Zagreb Main Station</li> <li>▪ Zagreb Main Station - Ogulin - Zagreb Main Station</li> <li>▪ Zagreb Main Station - Sunja - Zagreb Main Station</li> <li>▪ Zagreb Main Station - Krževci - Zagreb Main Station</li> <li>▪ Zagreb Main Station - Sisak Caprag - Zagreb Main Station</li> </ul>	<i>Deviation: Stakeholders contacted during D.T1.3.2 drafting couldn't deliver when the implementation process started, so new events (destinations) were considered and planned.</i>
<b>WHEN</b>  Dates/month of tourist train operation	June 2021	<i>Deviation: First plan was July/August, but due to favourable weather and Covid-19 restrictions, HŽPP opted for June.</i>
<b>HOW</b>  Operative phases of implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Phase 1: Getting in touch with interested stakeholders, oral arrangements, contracting</li> </ul>	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Phase 2: Preparation for the train operation (internal railway procedures) - HŽPP; Event preparation - stakeholder</li> <li>▪ Phase 3: Joint promotion/communication</li> </ul>	
<b>KEY PARTNERS</b>  Stakeholders essential for implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tourist Boards (organizing local events)</li> <li>▪ Local/regional government (supporting local events)</li> </ul>	<i>Deviation: SMEs that were on the list couldn't be involved directly. Local/regional government had to approve the events as a Tourist board owner.</i>
<b>KEY RESOURCES</b>  Which resources are a necessity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reliable railway vehicles</li> <li>▪ Human resources</li> </ul>	<i>Deviation: Originally identified online sales was not possible and it proved that isn't necessary. Contract with bus operators weren't signed, but rather Tourist boards at the destination organized transportation where necessary.</i>
<b>CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS</b>  Plans for customers/passengers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Special offer - customer acquisition</li> <li>▪ Customer support (during the entire tour) - customer retention</li> </ul>	
<b>CUSTOMER SEGMENTS</b>  What are the target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Travellers looking for a local experience</li> <li>▪ Interest groups (bikers, hikers...)</li> <li>▪ Price conscious consumers (families, retirees, students...)</li> <li>▪ Children</li> <li>▪ Tourist guide community</li> </ul>	<i>Deviation: Children are singled out as a segment because of the event specifics. Tourist guides are added.</i>
<b>CHANNELS</b>  Communication channels used for promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Website (HŽPP, event)</li> <li>▪ Directly (e-mailing)</li> <li>▪ Social media (banners on portals, interest groups)</li> </ul>	<i>Deviation: Newsletters are sparse and there wasn't any in preparation at the time, for cash desk promotion one needs printed materials and Union approval. Facebook groups proved effective.</i>
<b>COST STRUCTURE</b>  Types of costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Logistics (maintenance, personnel, depreciation)</li> <li>▪ Infrastructure (train set-up, route, delays, energy, station fee)</li> <li>▪ Human resources (sales, logistics, promotion, administrative support)</li> <li>▪ External communication</li> </ul>	<i>Deviation: Some sub-categories are added.</i>



<b>REVENUE STREAMS</b> <b>Types of revenue</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sales from transport service (summer trials used this concept)</li> <li>▪ Revenue from event organizers (in case of train lease)</li> </ul>	
<b>PROBLEMS</b> <b>Main problems tackled or to be tackled</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Financial issues for stakeholders</li> <li>▪ Reduced accessibility of some rural areas in Croatia by train, due to railway network lines and characteristics</li> <li>▪ Long approval procedures with stakeholders</li> <li>▪ Bad weather (rain, heat)</li> <li>▪ Extra working hours for personnel during weekends</li> <li>▪ Untrained train personnel</li> </ul>	
<b>REDUCING PROBLEMS</b> <b>Recommendations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cooperation between local stakeholders</li> <li>▪ Interoperability of the entire transport system (railway especially)</li> <li>▪ Sharing communication costs (reduction per stakeholder)</li> <li>▪ Utilizing other public transport and bikes as extensions from the railway lines</li> <li>▪ Setting up a predefined procedure for stakeholder approval and internal processes</li> </ul>	

*Table 5 Business model - updated*

Measures that can improve the quality of life, for local communities:

- Effective use of cultural heritage
- Strengthening the capacity of public services
- Investing in the preparation of strategic documentation
- Creating conditions for a stimulating entrepreneurial environment
- Revitalization of small and medium enterprises - improving economic activity
- Development of a competitive economy based on knowledge and local capacities
- Investing in knowledge and employment.

Additional measures to be addressed:

- Ensuring funds for an integrated marketing campaign
- Improving accommodation capacity for larger groups of tourists
- Specialization of the tourist offers according to target segments
- Utilizing different sources of funding for local development projects
- Influencing the development of transport infrastructure
- Including cultural and historical heritage into tourist offer
- Connecting tourism-related stakeholders and encouraging cooperation with other regions
- Involving administrative bodies in strategic planning of touristic attractions.



## 5. Conclusions

For creating a specific service, the promotion strategy is the key for positioning a new brand on the market, in this case a comprehensive transport service, making people aware of the services offered and how their choice benefits them.

With creating a promotion strategy, stakeholders can also define plan and tactics they wish to implement in their marketing plan to increase their product and service demand. Promotional strategies have a vital role in the marketing mix (product, price, placement, and promotion), and they revolve around:

- Target audience. Who is the service for? What are their interests?
- Budget. How much will be invested in promotion?
- Plan of action. What strategy to adopt to reach sales objectives?

The promotion of a specific service such as tourist trains HŽPP organized during summer 2021, needs different social media involvement, emailing newsletters, sponsors for events, promotions on tv and radio channels. It must comply with the following requests:

- **Build awareness.** Start making target audience aware of the service. To build it, it is important to identify the profiles of people to be reached.
- **Make people interested.** Once that service is out there, interest around it has to be created and people intrigued and interested.
- **Create service demand.** In this step, people will start relating emotionally to service by seeing something that may benefit them.
- **Make them take action.** Create a way for target audience to engage with service. Place a call-to-action button on website (buy ticket online, go to event FB...), by sending emails, placing ads or posting on social media profiles.

For placing new service on the market, a few social media platforms, depending on the audience, can be used for promotion (Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Snapchat, YouTube etc). Online communication is also important for service promotion and social media marketing is a great mediator between potential customers and the service provider/organizer.

It is really important to have in mind partners' interests and what they perceive as benefits, compromise to achieve it and help them to accomplish it. The relationship should benefit all stakeholders, evolve and have positive impacts. If any of the elements is missing, there will either be disgruntled tourists, dissatisfied partners or disappointed associates.

To summarize the experience from the summer trials, HŽPP prepared a list of most important findings that can be elaborated further. Also, each of these below-listed recommendations proved valid in continental Croatia so every other European rural area should take into account regional and national specific and adapt it as necessary:

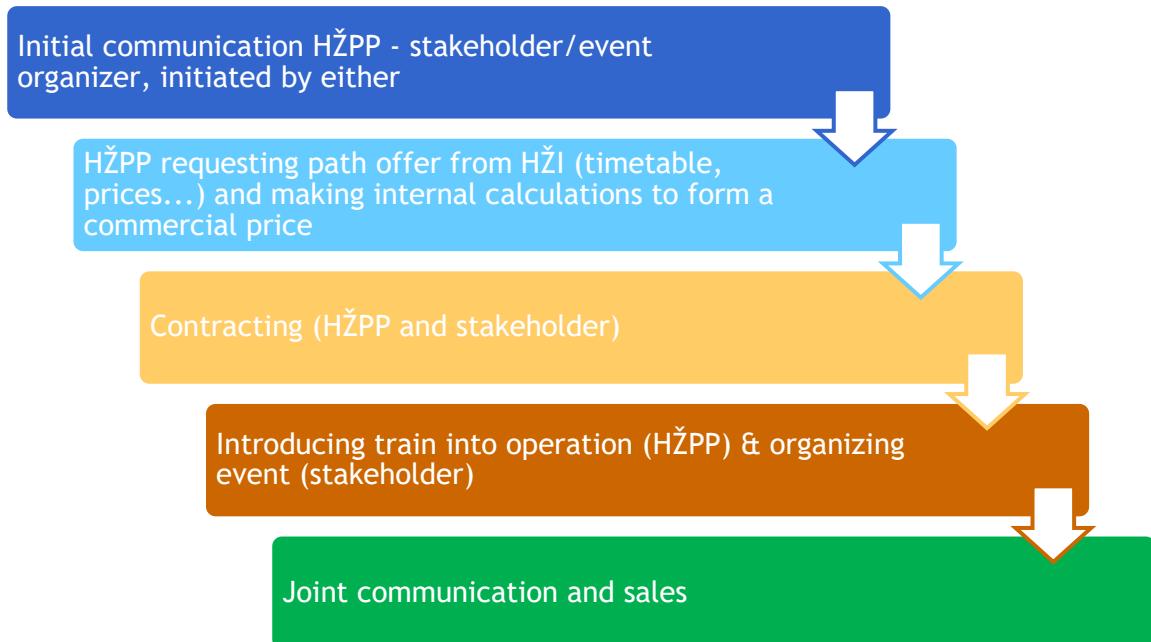
- Existing offer of public transport doesn't correspond to the citizens' needs, regarding their free time.
- The purpose of summer trials was to create a content on a certain destination, to attract people and encourage economic development at the same time. Primarily, economic development attracts new inhabitants and prevents immigration of young people.
- Today, there is no need for a regular tourist service on lines of the summer trials, but rather the events dictate the demand. Developing some events into regular ones (seasonal, weekend), could create a regular demand and more recognizable brand.
- Each event should create something special, distinguishing, that defines it.



- It is important to create an entire tourist package (transport, fun/educational/sport/cultural content, food/beverage, guidance).
- Service organization must be more flexible: cancellation, postponement or a contingency plan in case of bad weather, for example.
- As supposed to the experience in RUMOBIL project, the stakeholders who were interested in summer trials quickly understood the benefits and started planning event and cooperating with HŽPP and local stakeholders. Some of them recognized RUMOBIL as a brand train.
- Joint/multiple interests must be found - for the event organizer, for local inhabitants in the rural area and tourists visiting it.
- Stakeholders should be aware of benefits of joint cooperation. Ones that approach HŽPP already see the benefits or have previous experience in such cooperation, but HŽPP has to approach new stakeholders organizing different events - public ones, as well as private ones.
- Politics is a factor in the service organization.
- Stakeholder list for direct cooperation should be short and the communication to other local stakeholders should be left to the key actor. Event and transport organization should be done by the main stakeholders and others should involve themselves based on timely communication to express interest.
- Standardized contracts for tourist train operation between railway operator and stakeholders need to be created. The contracts shouldn't be publicly available, but baseline and concept should be communicated. Stakeholders often don't reach out to HŽPP because they don't have enough information.
- Sharing information is often an obstacle, when cooperating. Involved parties should concentrate on distributing available data, as soon as they receive it, to interested parties. This enables timely and coherent publication.
- Details about events must be publicly available, such as agenda, transport options, guidance, food/beverage possibilities, utilities etc. The more details are available, more people are inclined to decide on using the service. When there are many unknowns (how much do they have to walk, is the terrain flat, what is the food choice, what are the prices of tickets etc.), people tend to skip the event or go with their own car.
- Customer support must be available in all stages (planning, travelling, at event, post-travel). The support should be provided by both HŽPP and event organizer.
- Railway system is a very expensive one to maintain, which is only the back end of the operation process. The operation process itself is what a passenger sees (and stakeholder organizing the event), but the entire system should be understood from stakeholders' side, to avoid misunderstandings.
- Railway is not as flexible as other public transport means, thus must be sometimes combined with bus/taxi/bike etc. It depends on the event location. Most Croatian villages have train station near the centre, but some events might take place in the wider area, so an additional transport should be provided to passengers, to have a complete service.
- Different communication channels, depending on the target group, must be taken into consideration. Online tools are a great way of communication for tourist train service - they are flexible, fast and cost-effective, but for the older audience, more traditional means of communication should be utilized - TV, radio, newspaper, magazines or printed promotional materials. The prices of advertising on TV or radio are much higher than online, but it can be done with guests in morning shows, giving ticket as prizes and similar.



- Stakeholders organizing events also must actively promote it to target groups. This should be done in cooperation, to avoid different communication to the same groups.
- Resources must be planned in detail (organization, operation, promotion, maintenance, contingency) to avoid surprises and cancellations. Also, involved parties should be transparent about their expenses.
- Business model should be adapted if new findings arise.



*Figure 9 Tourist train Implementation process in short*