

LEARNING FROM SHAREPLACE

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1. Objectives of the project

SHARED mobility and REGIONAL transport integrated PLANNING for a better connected Central Europe (SHAREPLACE)

The overall goal of SHAREPLACE is to develop an innovative approach to improve the connectivity of local, regional and transnational mobility systems. SHAREPLACE will be open to all types of passenger transport services and target groups. Initial development and testing will be carried out in six pilot regions: Bergamo, Crema (both Italy), Fuschlsee-Mondseeland/FUMO (Austria), Osijek (Croatia), Ulm (Germany) and Zalaegerszeg (Hungary). By implementing living labs and actively engaging stakeholders, transferable solutions for a more integrated, accessible and harmonised mobility system in six central European regions will be designed.

The main approach for achieving this goal is the implementation of the six living labs, which build on specific strategies for local engagement. Through identifying the relevant stakeholders for each pilot region, an active group of participants will be gathered to collectively plan the aims of the different living labs with co-design workshops. In the following report, you will find further information on the different methods for engagement, the terminology used relevant for this approach and the objective of the method.

2. Pilot/project preparations

2.1. Stakeholder involvement

Working with stakeholders in Osijek includes the following communication:

- hosting Living Lab meetings
- exchange of specific information via telephone and e-mail
- sharing information via email newsletter.

There were three Living Lab meetings held so far. Between those meetings the stakeholders were contacted for additional information. After the first and the third meeting, an email newsletter was sent to all the participants (and also to the invitees who didn't respond to the invitation). The purpose of the newsletter was to:

- provide information on the project objectives and progress
- summarise the objectives and the outcomes of the meeting held
- inform of the stakeholders that were involved and actively participated in the meeting
- communicate the next steps and the expected results.

Prior to every meeting (two to three weeks ahead), the stakeholders received the official invitation with the elaboration of the planned activities (the meeting agenda). One week before the meeting, the invitees were contacted by the City of Osijek (by phone) to confirm their participation and answer potential questions.

2.2. Methods and technologies

For SHAREPLACE we identified “co-design” in workshop format as the main approach to co-create and engage stakeholders as main participants for the living labs. The co-design methodology will be applied allowing a great variety of stakeholders to contribute to the planning and implementation of the pilots as



living labs. Living Labs have been identified as a suitable methodological approach to accelerate innovation in the field of sustainable solutions (Keyson, Guerra-Santin, Lockton, 2017).

A key aspect of running a successful living lab, is to ensure a positive stakeholder engagement. As part of this, stakeholder management is highly important to build long-term relationships with the relevant stakeholders. Long-term relationships are required as they are beneficial in terms of profitability, growth and security, as a living lab project has to meet different views, goals, attitudes, and beliefs of a number of people.

Dealing with and understanding these views and managing those relationships, as well as communicating with the people, is called stakeholder management (Wolf, 2013). Focusing on different goals, interests and expectations of the stakeholders lead to the project's success (Turkulainen et al., 2015). With stakeholder management it is attempted to turn stakeholders with negative attitudes into supporters by providing information and building trust. At the same time, positive influences on the project are maintained or strengthened. In essence, stakeholder management is a communication task and involves informing stakeholders about the project, engaging in dialogue with them, discussing expectations and negotiating goals (Steeger, 2014).

Stakeholder communication ensures effective management of various stakeholders and plays a fundamental role in stakeholder management (Turkulainen et al., 2015). Lack of stakeholder management is one of the major causes of project management failure. Every second failed project is attributable to inadequate stakeholder management (Steeger, 2014). A structured approach is necessary in order to present an objective and valid picture of the needs, opinions and experiences of the individual stakeholder groups in order to be able to shape relationships based on them in the context of corporate goals (Öynhausen & Glösenkamp, 2016).

Stakeholder management can be divided into the following steps:

- Step 1: Identification of all stakeholders
- Step 2: Characterization and evaluation of all stakeholders
- Step 3: Classification of the stakeholders
- Step 4: Communication planning (Klunke & Krins, 2015)

For the first step, it is first necessary to identify the stakeholders with the help of an “environmental analysis”, mapping existing local resources and actors (Step 1). On this basis, a decision regarding stakeholder cooperation or possibly competition can be made (Stahl & Menz, 2014).

In most cases, not all stakeholders can be considered, and the exchange is limited to communicating with e.g. main investors, shareholders and journalists. However, the stakeholders should definitely include the project team, suppliers, partners, competitors, citizens, organizations and the media. The communication and integration of the employees is essential, they must not be neglected (Steeger, 2014)

Once all stakeholders have been identified, they can be analyzed and evaluated for their attitudes and impact (Step 2). There are various evaluation criteria, methods and tools for this. Assessment criteria can be: attitude to the project, power / influence, potential for conflict, expectations and fears (Melbinger, 2014). According to the stakeholder salience of Mitchell et. al (1997), the stakeholders were classified according to their demands in the dimensions of power, legitimacy and urgency. According to this approach, these three characteristics are crucial for deciding how much attention and what kind of attention a stakeholder should receive from the management. The knowledge gained from the characterization of the stakeholders can subsequently be used for classification and prioritization (Step 3).

The prioritization of stakeholders is important as the allocation of scarce resources is necessary, especially with regard to human resources management (Stahl & Menz, 2014). With the results of the previous stakeholder analysis, communication planning can be carried out (Step 4). The developed communication



strategies and tools should contribute to the optimization of the communication structures. The measures should be defined as operationally as possible and optimally transferred to a person or group for completion by a defined date. Since a company is confronted with different stakeholders, it is necessary to individualize the communication measures, which include individually optimized communication strategies and the selection of the respectively appropriate communication tool (Hermann-Reuss, 2017).

To increase the awareness and acceptance of a project, a variety of measures and media can be used. The choice of communication channels depends on the question of which media can be used to reach the relevant stakeholders. The decision which measures are taken is dependent on the relationship between effort and benefits. The usefulness of the instruments can be evaluated according to the dimension's range, effect and integration of the stakeholder. However, project marketing involves more than the mere communication of project content and cannot be carried out without further things to do. It is not only to consider what is communicated to whom and when, but rather the "how" - the nature of communication and interaction is in focus. It is important to show the stakeholders that with the project the greatest possible benefit and profit should be achieved for them. This can be achieved through stakeholder participation.

Participation means involving stakeholders, having them "codecide", having them co-design, referring to them and informing them (Melbinger, 2014b). As a result, the stakeholders feel involved, contribute to the development of plans and finally to the project and are part of the project. Participation and individual treatment of stakeholders can be achieved through dialogue. This dialogue brings advantages for both sides. The stakeholders can thus communicate their requirements directly to the company and influence their business decisions (Ferdinand, 2004). The company profits from the participation of the stakeholders, as this way dangers and trouble spots, but also support potentials can be recognized. The dialogue also allows the perspectives involved to be broadened and new perspectives to be taken in order to discover new ways of solving problems of operational service provision and exploitation (Stahl & Menz, 2014). The prerequisite for this is that companies are prepared to integrate stakeholder claims into processes and concepts and to align them with company strategies and goals. This requires the company's willingness to actively listen, ask questions, take into account other ways of thinking, empathize, and actively take on and influence different perspectives and moods, fears, or resistances (Klunke & Grins, 2015).

2.3. Risks and obstacles

The main recognized challenge relates to combining this project and pilot element implementation with other mobility projects and their activities. As mentioned before, the list of relevant stakeholders in mobility projects is usually the same for all projects that are developing in parallel with SHAREPLACE project and that considers a significant expectation on participation and regular interaction with stakeholders.

Due to Corona crisis and related restrictions, communication with stakeholders and some project activities are currently limited (living labs, workshops, service testing). For example, the public transport service in pilot region hasn't been operating at all or very limited. Furthermore, significant number of public transport users switched to private transport modes and working from home regulations decreased the need for traveling and number of daily commuters.

Even tough, the Corona situation in Croatia is getting better there are still big impacts left on the current mobility needs and overall transport system status. In regards to achieve the pilot implementation goals, it is crucial to place the planned project activities in the right time. Furthermore, the critical elements of the pilot activities will be organized online with adjusted tools and approach to target groups and other participants.



3. Pilot/project implementation

The successful collaboration with stakeholders depends on the level of interests and activeness of engaged participants. To ensure that kind of participation, it is crucial to adjust the approach, or the way of communication, according to the profiles and interests of working group members, whether it is a classical workshop or some other solution provided.

The 4th Living lab, that has been planned for March 2020, had the focus on three main workgroups: user assessment survey, DRT service co-design workshop, MMTP web application presentation and beginning of start-up phase. Even though the living lab should take place before Corona crisis, a combination of different solutions and tools for activities has been planned to keep and to sustain active collaboration among the participants. The planned workshop tools included available online forms and tools but also the proven “in site” workshop solutions.

The Corona crisis impacts on developing more innovative solutions based on digitalization and online approach. In Osijek pilot region, it considers developing more interactive online tools and forms to achieve the same living lab goals and more direct communication with preferable participants. Still, a lot depends on overall Corona restrictions and regulations that impact on the number on daily trips, negative behavioural changes to private transport modes, limited public transport operations...

Stakeholders	Contribution
Dyvolve Ltd.	Developing solutions, activities and tools for living labs, surveys, testing phases.
City of Osijek	Supporting the communication with stakeholders, organizing events
GPP - public transport operator	Providing information about current services, organizational and operational characteristics and infrastructure related to providing public transport services
Prototyp Ltd. - IT developer	IT support for maintenance and improvement of MMTP web application according to the user feedback

The next steps in the pilot implementation process will take place according to Corona crisis status. The participants will be contacted and engaged in a collaboration with the City of Osijek and other key stakeholders. The planned workshop activities will be switched to online forms and tools and organized depending on public transport restrictions. If possible, some activities will take place in June. Otherwise, September will be the option.

4. Results

Flexible solutions as DRT were discussed by Living Labs especially in Crema and Zalaegerszeg, but other areas considered them as a complementary option to the transport system, and discussed the flexibility issue to a broader extent.

Two main categories of needed services have been identified, on one side those to better connect low demand and rural areas to the existing network, on the other one the ones providing more flexible and on demand access to main nodes. In Zalaegerszeg, the need for a DRT system has been investigated in



peripheral areas where the access to the main transport network is hindered by a lack of services; needs were identified mainly with the trip motive, commuting, shopping and access to main public services. In Crema, the need for flexibility is expressed mainly by a need for better access relevant nodes like the railway station, in order to make multimodal transport more attractive for commuters and other users, and the hospital, where no reliable alternatives to private vehicles exist.

Concerning the latter, it is interesting to note that the need for flexibility emerges not only about the availability of door to door connections, but especially in terms of availability of the service all over the day, therefore different/ mode frequency. A similar need is expressed in Bergamo, with reference to flexible services in general but especially on carpooling for university students, where one of the main needs is the development of solutions complementing the existing public transport schedule with innovative solutions in off peak hours, since students' flows are less regular and more distributed and therefore require higher flexibility.

As consequences of the expressed needs, a cross cutting expectation revealed is the need for a better integration (physical, informational and digital) of flexible and scheduled services, in space (with flexible services covering low demand) and time (flexible services integrating the supply in off peak). The stakeholders from Osijek see flexible services as a very important complement for expanding the existing network towards low demand areas and city outskirts, under the condition of a higher degree of integration of services from different operators under a common umbrella.

In Crema, where DRT systems replaces the traditional scheduled urban transport since several years, the expectations of stakeholders focus on the development of a new generation of flexible services, based on operational, technological and collaborative innovations. In fact, stakeholders discussed a possible "hybridisation" of the service with a mix of shuttle and on demand service, a higher level of information and real time booking options, a higher attention to vulnerable groups and collaboration with volunteering association in order to mesh formal and informal services where possible raising the quantity and quality of provided services.

The discussion on shared options found its main field in Zalaegerszeg and Bergamo, although the implementation of car and bike sharing options has been mentioned as a need for the future also in Crema (e-bikes), Osijek and Fumo.

Within the SHAREPLACE perimeter, shared options are mainly identified with carpooling (or ride sharing) services dedicated to specific categories in order to provide more responsive and flexible services to their needs. In particular, in Zalaegerszeg the Living Lab identified commuters as the main target group, with an interesting potential in reducing traffic and private owned car dependency within the flows connecting main industrial areas where public transport services are limited. In Bergamo, the main target group is the university students, distributed in different campuses in the city and outskirts, and showing a high need not only of point to point connections in several times of the day but also higher accessibility to the main regional transport nodes such as the railway stations.

Especially in Bergamo, carpooling is seen as a tool to be integrated in the system in order to generate benefits in terms of higher and more reliable supply, as well as positive impacts on environment (traffic and emissions), urban landscape (reduced need for parking) and life quality.

Moreover, as mentioned before, solutions must be designed in order to complement the existing public transport schedule in off peak hours, as mobility flows are decreasingly regular and more distributed and therefore require higher flexibility.

The main expectation emerged related to carpooling is a better integration in the existing transport network. In this, the digitalization process assumes a fundamental role, enabling the sharing of information on available services among different operators and users.



Carpooling potential users identify two more critical elements of success: on one side the reliability of the provided services, and on the other (especially for commuters) the potential cost saving related to the adoption of carpooling commuting schemes.

Integrated mobility concept represented a more cross cutting issue for the Living Labs, although Fumo and Osijek mainly focused on this topic. In order to exploit its potential, integrated mobility must valorise the role of strategic nodes in the territory. A pre requirement especially pointed out in Osijek, is the harmonisation of transport services' schedules and a higher degree of cooperation among different operators.

Concerning those areas where the discussion focused largely on flexible solutions and shared options, the integration of these services into the formal transport network is fundamental in order to exploit the potential benefit and deliver attractive mobility schemes.

At different maturity stages, the integration of information and functionalities at digital level represents a relevant expectation. In Osijek, where sharing and flexible services are being planned and developed, the interoperability between across the network is considered crucial, therefore stakeholders expect as contribution by SHAREPLACE a concrete support in the design of multimodal planning systems that allow the integration of different existing and future services in order to optimize resources and maximise attractiveness potential of demand.

In Fumo, where the masterplan highlighted the need for developing a strongly integrated mobility concept, the role of a digital platform integrating relevant information and functionalities is expected to be the boosting element for increasing demand, by enhancing the perception of the system as a whole by potential users.

5. Lessons learned

The collaborative approach of co-design is seen as an appropriate approach to successfully develop a sustainable and multimodal mobility service within the SHAREPLACE project. It aims at involving different stakeholders with different roles, such as public administration, researchers, companies, citizens/user to design, develop and implement a new mobility service able to fit with specific users' needs and urban possibilities.

Location:

- To hold the first meeting at an easy to access location can increase awareness and acceptance.
- The location of a LL depends on the methods, materials and devices which are necessary.
- Different locations are conceivable for a LL. These range from a single room to an outdoor area.

Organizational frame:

- Co-creation can be realized in different ways. For example, in a long-term project which could take several months to years, or in a short-term project which could be a one or two-day workshop. Motivation for a stable participation (over a longer period of time) and collaboration among volunteers is essential to achieve useful results in the LL process (Nesti, 2017). Therefore, the methods and tools should be easy to understand, the collaboration should be associated with fun and enough breaks with refreshments (drinks, snacks) should be provided.
- A LL should create opportunities to evaluate digital ideas, scenarios or (sub-) solutions in an effective manner and to prototype together with relevant stakeholders in real-life conditions.

Experts and non-experts represent different perspectives. By working together, they can share expertise and expectations (Maffei & Villari, 2017). A LL should include all necessary stakeholders from the study



area. Maffei & Villari (2017) point out that the design of mobility solutions needs interaction of both macro- and micro-systems. Micro-systemic levels contain competitive scenarios of new products and services. Macro levels are linked to political affairs (like sustainable development models or urban policies) and design strategies (such as consumption models and users' behaviour) (Maffei & Villari, 2017).

Participants:

- In order to create a higher level of acceptance in society and to meet the mobility needs of the general population, the group of participants should be heterogeneous.
- Different stakeholders with different roles should be included. The creative phase should be a collaboration of a mixed team of institutional and entrepreneurial stakeholders (like public administration, universities, mobility companies and/or other industries), a multidisciplinary team composed of experts (like designers, engineers and researchers) and other volunteers (like users, citizens, community groups, representatives of the municipality) (Maffei & Villari, 2017).

Co-design tools & methods:

- The use of tools determines the level of interaction which means that the determinants of interaction need to match different integration types. In other words: "one-size-fits-all" (Mengual et al., 2018, p.307) is not appropriate for all LLs, because every participant is different. For this reason, a repertoire of matching tools should be prepared. Mengual et al. (2018) discovered three categories of tools for participant integration: passive integration, reactive integration and co-creation.
- Co-creation spaces and co-design workshops should be designed in a way that visitors can choose the most suitable integration tools by themselves. This strengthens the focus on the type of interaction, not on the type of user. Even if a LL already has a variety of tools for reactive integration, there could be the need to develop new tools. For time-sensitive visitors, for instance, you need a tool that generates enough high-quality feedback in a short time with less information (Mengual et al. 2018).
- In order to collect structured data and support the innovative way of thinking, a LL should use tools that create enough freedom for creativity or a mix of tools while interacting with visitors in order to address different types of participants (Mengual et al. 2018).
- The chosen workshop methods should bring the complexity of the topic of mobility closer to its participants. To avoid situational emotional influences that can hinder acceptance afterwards, an emotional distance of modelling enables an objective substantive exchange. This was noted as particularly positive in the case of Lindner et al. (2016).

Interaction rules:

- In co-creation processes participants, should be given the possibility to select their own roles, otherwise creative visitors may not become active and innovative. The reason for that is the so-called 'role taking process'. This means that a role is predefined, while users react to given expectations or responsibilities and follow the instructions, whereas role making allows users to define their own roles in living labs and become proactive. A more proactive user is more likely to ideate and design novel products (Leminen et al., 2015). Thus, a LL should open the opportunity to become proactive. The more proactive participants the better. Leminen et al. (2015) state also that a careful user selection is very important for the living lab's innovation outcome.
- Time and commitment (besides matching tools for different integration types) are the limiting factors for interaction with visitors in a LL. It is important to consider the structure of interaction (Mengual et al. 2018).
- Group dynamics play a key role in action research methods that build on the interaction between participants. To archive a spontaneous and flexible atmosphere, tasks and questions should not always be set with too many details. To leave the comfort zone and to take new perspectives requires the



willingness of participants to deal with the unforeseen. In addition, an increased degree of flexibility and spontaneity from the accompanying research team is required (Kirchberger et al., 2017).

- It is necessary to give participants time to reflect the tasks and methods used (Kirchberger et al., 2017). The retrospective reflection after the workshop of Linder et al. (2016) showed how every group has applied the methods differently. This shows the important part of the moderation in paying attention to the group and to respond accordingly. Moderation is necessary to overcome contradictions and misunderstandings. Otherwise the motivation of the participants suffers (Lindner et al., 2016).



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