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**Evaluation Report:**

**Version 1.0**

**Pilot Activity 1**

**03.2020**

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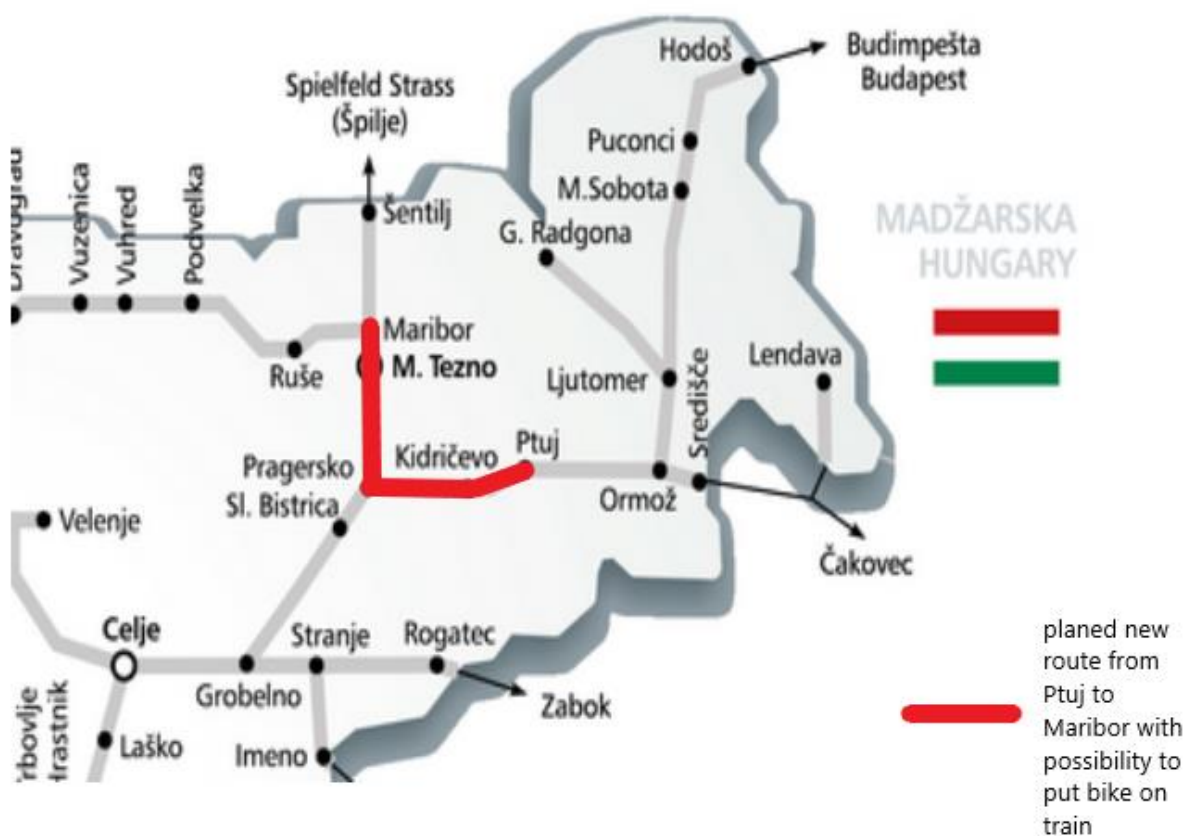
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The document shows the process and results of the pilot activity, achievements as well as deviations in order to fulfil the SubNodes pilot action in Slovenia - east part.

## 1. Pilot Activity

The pilot action in Slovenia (SubNodes Pilot Activity 1) focussed on *contribution to the sustainability of travelling*. Pilot activity implemented new railway routes from Ptuj to Maribor and back, which offer the possibility to put your bike on a train.



Map showing railway tracks in the region incl. the connection from SubNode Ptuj to TEN-T hub Maribor

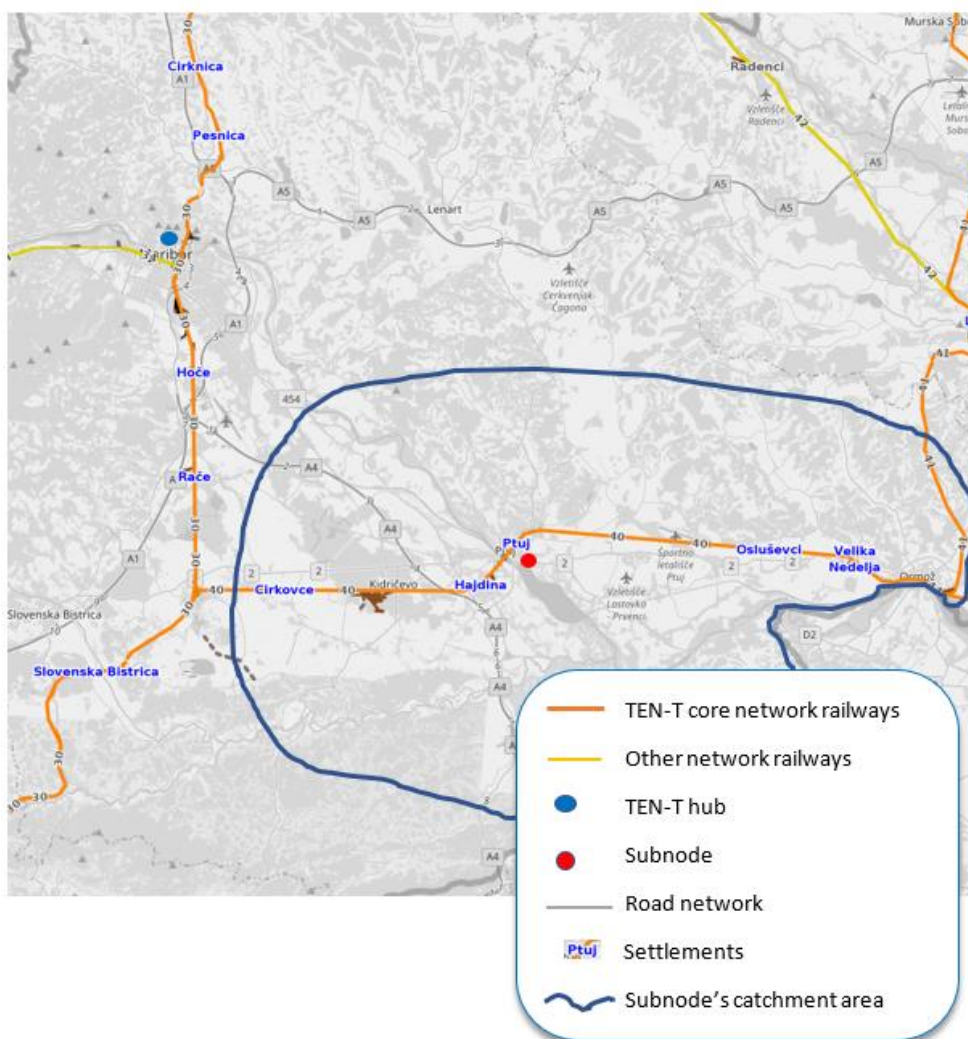
Our intent with this pilot action is to increase the use of railway on shorter distances. Short distances are mainly overcome by cars, and public transport in our region doesn't have a population, which would use buses or trains on short distances. Public transportation is used only by high school students during school time. Vacations are again poorly visited. To increase sustainability in our region, we implemented our pilot action, which now offers a new transportation possibility for inhabitants. When people can put a bike on the train, they can overcome even more considerable distances (in biking terms). They can use bikes to overcome



short distance to the train station, then they can put their bike on a train and overcome 20 or more km, and at the chosen station, they can use their bike again to overcome short distances in another city. With this kind of travelling, we contribute to increasing travelling to work without a car. We are also improving free time travelling in the sense of higher uses of public transport

The pilot started in April 2019, when Slovenian railways implemented 8 routes per day, with the possibility to put bikes on the train.

The City of Ptuj, capital / administrative seat of the subregion Spodnje Podravje, was during this project, identified as a 'SubNode'.



An investigation on the general concept, the baseline and ideas for implementation of the new service for subnode's catchment area was set as a pilot action within the SubNodes project since it has the potential for the achievement of positive developments in the field of mobility for the population in the country. A central improvement could be the broader useability of public transport offers for more target groups than pupils, such as e.g. working commuters, poor population, also tourists. The pilot action is one measure to elaborate an improved connection between a SubNode and a TEN-T core network node according to the principles of the SubNodes strategy.



## 2. Process

The whole process of implementing the pilot was being made with the cooperation of Slovenian Railways. Slovenian Railways are the only provider of train connections in Slovenia. The company is in state ownership.

After the first introduction meeting with Slovenian Railways, we set down several activities. Slovenian Railways were very cooperative with our pilot action idea. They also had the intention to extend the offer of putting bikes on trains. Until the cooperation, there already was a possibility in Slovenia to put a bike on the train, but only in a few connections.

Activities we set down were:

- Slovenian Railways check the possibilities which railway connections can be upgraded with an option to put a bike on a train
- SRC Bistra Ptuj makes a market analysis of demand on this service
- Pilot action should be implemented by April 2019

In April 2019 Slovenian Railways opened the possibility to put a bike on a train on relation Ptuj - Maribor. The opportunity was offered on 8 daily routes.

After the implementation of routes in SRC Bistra Ptuj, we started with promotional activities - preparation of video (we prepared short promotional video and one longer presentational video) and designing the poster. The poster will be put on different public spaces with the intention to promote the use of train with a combination of the bike.

## 3. Output

The output of pilot activity is new railway routes from Ptuj to Maribor with the possibility to put their own bike on a train. The outputs are also promotional activities - posters, promotional and presentational videos. With promotional activities, we increase awareness among people to use public transport. Our goal was to expand the uses of public transport as a way towards sustainable transport. With additional service (to put their own bike on a train) we expect to increase the use of public railway transport in our region. In the year 2019 results were already seen - the increase of bought tickets for bikes on trains was made by more than 200%.

Findings:

- Overall, the preconditions for the implementation of our pilot were good: the Slovenian Railways had the available infrastructure, and they had an interest in extending such service.
- There could be some eventual problems regarding available spaces for bikes. Mostly there are around 8 spaces for bikes on trains, and therefore larger groups can't use the same train for transportation.



## Effects:

- New service offers new possibilities for intermodal travelling - commuters can combine bike and train for their overcoming of more considerable distances.
- With the project, we influent toward sustainable transportation in the region.
- Ptuj is getting known as a subnode area in sub-region Spodnje Podravje. Subnode area has consisted of 19 municipalities and around 100.000 inhabitants. Inhabitants in the subnode area have relatively approachable train stations in subnode area. With a bike, you can comfortably overcome even the most considerable distance.
- Pilot output also affects bike tourism and recreative biking. Because of the possibility to come back with a train, more bikers come to our region. We have essential bike routes in whole subnode area - Drava cycling route, Iron curtain cycling route, LAS cycling route, ... Mentioned routes are adjustable for leisure cycling as well as for recreational cycling.

## Experiences:

- The joint work on improvements regarding the pilot project in our region based on talks and meetings with partners from Slovenian Railways.
- Continuous work on reliable, secure communication with Slovenian Railways is essential to grant a timely implementation of the project

## 4. Objectives

The main objective, to offer new service on trains to increase the use of public transport, could be achieved.

### Achievements:

- New service offers new possibilities for intermodal travelling - commuters can combine bike and train for their overcoming of more considerable distances.
- With the project, we influent toward sustainable transportation in the region.
- Ptuj is getting known as a subnode area in sub-region Spodnje Podravje. Subnode area has consisted of 19 municipalities and around 100.000 inhabitants. Inhabitants in the subnode area have relatively approachable train stations in subnode area. With a bike, you can comfortably overcome even the most considerable distance.
- The joint work on improvements regarding the pilot project in our region based on talks and meetings with partners from Slovenian Railways.



## 5. Internal & external evaluation

The project was successfully implemented in terms of time and content. Changes were justified and, because of the results produced, were target-oriented. Objectives and measures were meaningfully defined and could be processed largely according to plans and specifications.

There was a fruitful exchange of information and experience with Slovenian Railways as primary stakeholders, which contributed to a successful conclusion of the pilot activity.

Remarks of Peer Review participants:

- Keep on working for the passenger's needs and improving the experiences.
- There is a threat of passengers making bad experiences and maybe not taking the trains with bikes again.
- Improve the accessibility of train platforms and providing parking places for bikes.

Regarding remarks of peer review participants, we discussed the problem with Slovenian Railways. They are aware of some lacks for bikers (like not enough spaces for bikes, not having secure standing for bikes, lack of wifi connections, etc.). A lot of shortages will be reduced with the arrival of new modern trains. In 2018 Slovenian Railways bought 50 new trains, that will replace old trains on our rail tracks. With new trains, wifi is coming on trains, and secure standings for bikes also.

But not all new trains will have compartments for bikes, so we will remain in cooperation with Slovenian Railways to guarantee the sustainability of our pilot action.

## 6. Obstacles and Success factors

Challenges and success factors that have flanked the handling of the pilot activity are outlined below.

Obstacles:

- During the implementation process of our pilot, we didn't have many obstacles - cooperation with Slovenian railways was very successful, and they were an essential stakeholder in our pilot. Also, collaboration with the local municipality was at an outstanding level. We need their cooperation with promotional activities and in part, where we place cycle boxes next to the railway station in Ptuj.
- One crucial obstacle occurred regarding the purchase of new trains. Slovenian Railways purchased around 50 new trains that will be put in railway traffic in 2021. Not all new trains will provide a possibility to put a bike on trains, so we stay in close contact that our implemented project will have a sustainable note.

Success factors

- The continuous, close cooperation and the involvement of various stakeholders enabled smooth handling of the pilot action.
- Promotional activities are contributing to the increase of bought tickets for a bike on a train.



## 7. Conclusion

Our pilot project was not a new approach in Slovenian trains, but we just enlarged the service to our region. The pilot project was focused on sustainable transport in Slovenia. Sustainable transport involves extensive uses of public transport and also intermodal transportation availabilities.

Our project involves activities that promote intermodal transportation as well as boosts sustainable transport system.

Slovenian Railways implemented 8 routes per day with the possibility to put their bike on a train between Ptuj and Maribor. With promotional activities, we raise awareness among the population to use public transport and to use intermodal transportation to overcome extensive distances.

The successful coordination between the stakeholders involved produced results that shaped the process and influenced the outcome. The exchange of experience with other SubNodes project partners enabled the to identify other proposed solutions (for example standings for bicycles on train, wifi connection, parking spaces for bicycles, etc.).

Within SubNode project, our pilot action will be upgraded with covered standing for bicycles - so-called cycle-boxes. In front of the railway station in Ptuj, we will put a few cycle boxes, that will provide cycle owners to safely store their bike while they use the train for further travelling.

The pilot action was successfully implemented and served as an essential basis for future measures.