

Preparation of a pilot carpooling scheme introduction for a selected city in Bulgaria.

Summary:

Our project set the groundwork for the prospective introduction of carpooling in a selected Bulgarian city. It entailed research on schemes in operation elsewhere – what conditions are suitable for carpooling, what kinds of schemes are most effective; research on conditions and attitudes in Bulgaria with respect to carpooling; and contacts with an eye toward establishing partnerships with key stakeholders, i.e., municipalities and large employers. The project confirmed the need for, and receptiveness to, carpooling, and identified Sofia as the site for the pilot introduction.

Target Audience				Actions			
	Children		Transport companies		Clean and Energy Efficient Vehicles		Traffic Management
	Teenagers		Car sales people		Cycling	X	Car Pooling
X	Students	X	Private companies	X	Transport Demand Management		Transport for People with reduced mobility
X	Adults		Other	X	Flexible mobility services		Eco Driving
	Old Age Pensioners				Travel Awareness Event(s)		Walking
X	Decision makers			X	Mobility management		Other
X	Local and regional authorities				Public Passenger Transport		

Implementation Process

Fill out this step by step process of implementation for your project:

1. Conduct research on existing carpooling schemes, Web sites and good practices in various countries around the world.
2. Development of criteria for identifying a city in Bulgaria suitable for the introduction of a carpooling scheme.
3. Identification of a city in Bulgaria suitable for the introduction of a carpooling scheme.
4. Conduct research on transport-related problems in the target city, both in terms of quality (e.g., air quality, existence of cycling paths, receptiveness of municipal officials) and quantity (e.g., car-to-population ratio, number of parking spaces in city centre, level of emissions).
5. Conduct survey on commuting habits in target city.
6. Identification of major intra-city destinations.
7. Estimate the potential number of participants, impact on fuel usage and air quality.
8. Awareness-raising among main stakeholders – municipalities and large employers – through discussions of transport-related issues, presentations and articles on good European practices.
9. Development of a concept for the introduction of a carpooling scheme.
10. Development of partnerships with the main stakeholders.

Barriers, Pitfalls or Unexpected Successes

Please elaborate with detail on any unexpected turn of events during the course of the project, albeit whether they affected the project in a positive way or a negative way.

It is difficult to imagine any event – whether drastic changes in the price of fuel or a severe economic downturn – that could affect this project. It is possible that, say, municipal officials could turn more resistant to the idea of carpooling than they have thus far been, although it is difficult to envision any turn of events that could create such an increase in resistance. It is also possible that another organisation could propose a competitive carpooling scheme, although we are not aware of any such efforts and consider it unlikely.

Impact of the Results of the Project

List clearly the results of your project in terms of the results achieved versus the initial targets

1. Our study results enabled us to develop the foundations to support a concept to introduce Web-based carpooling in Bulgaria. We were able to apply criteria developed elsewhere to conditions in Bulgaria.
2. Well grounded and articulated concept developed for discussions and acceptance by local authorities and stakeholders
3. Our study confirmed the suitability of Sofia as the location for introduction of a carpooling scheme. This finding was not unexpected.
4. The percentage of citizens of Sofia indicating an interest in participation – 29 percent – was higher than our expectation.
5. The percentage of automobile drivers who said they would not change their mode of transportation as a result of higher fuel prices – 74 percent – was unexpectedly high.