**PROJECT**

**EQUIP**

**Extending the Quality of Public Transport**

**Funding:** European (4th RTD Framework Programme)  
**Duration:** Jan 1999 - Jun 2000  
**Status:** Complete with results

**Background & policy context:**

Throughout Europe, there is currently a trend towards greater monitoring and improvement of the internal performance of public transport operations, in order to achieve a high quality service within the available resources. Transport operators have been looking for a mechanism to investigate and achieve quality refinement and optimal management standards, and benchmarking is perceived as able to play this role. Up to now, only a few benchmarking methods have been developed that are able to assess the internal quality (efficiency and competitiveness) of public transport operators. Therefore EQUIP has developed a series of comparison procedures, and has identified and tested the most suitable indicators to measure quality and the areas that could yield improvements in efficiency.

**Objectives:**

The project objectives were to:

- develop a tested methodology for benchmarking the internal performance of local public transport operations;
- develop a handbook that can be used for self-assessment of internal performance by local public transport operators;
- ensure that potential users are aware of the existence of the handbook.

**Parent Programmes:**

[FP4-TRANSPORT - Specific research, technological development and demonstration programme in the field of transport, 1994-1998](#)

**Institute type:** Public institution  
**Institute name:** European Commission; Directorate-General for Energy and Transport (DG TREN; formerly DG VII)  
**Funding type:** Public (EU)

**Partners:**

NA

**Organisation:** Transport Operations Research  
**Address:** Claremont Tower, Claremont Road  
**City:** Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7RU  
**Contact country:** United Kingdom

**Key Results:**

The major result of EQUIP is the handbook for self-assessment of internal quality performance of local transport operators, available both on paper and in electronic format. There are five separate but compatible versions of the handbook for five public transport modes (bus, trolley bus, tram/light rail, metro and local heavy rail) plus a short version of 27 'super indicators' to provide an entry to benchmarking.
The handbook is composed of two parts:

Part I - contains the method, which describes the rationale for benchmarking and the data handling methodology used in EQUIP.

Part II - is divided into two sections - a list of 91 indicators (subdivided into 11 clusters, e.g. revenue and fare structure, safety and security, company profile), and a separate Guide to Completion, which will assist users.

Validation and feedback have been provided by the EQUIP Network of operators and users (authorities and passenger interest groups).

A publicly accessible database of benchmarking results has been created. All confidential information placed on the public database is in an anonymous format.

Policy implications

The EQUIP project has played an important role in providing public transport organisations with relevant, measurable and comparable indicators for benchmarking, in line with the EU Commission's recommended actions to improve public transport systems ('Developing the Citizens' Network', COM(98)431 final).

The project's results are mainly addressed to persons responsible for managing benchmarking actions within public passenger transport organisations. Nonetheless, a shorter document on Conclusions and Recommendations has been generated for policy makers and other interested readers.

The handbook is suitable for land-based local public transport operators in diverse operating environments. It can be used for self-assessment and for comparing with other operators using an anonymous centralised database. The handbook is suitable for internal, national and international benchmarking, although the level of application varies according to the individual indicators.

Related Projects:

- ISOTOPE - Improved structure and organisation for transport operations of passengers in Europe.
- DG Transport - 1998/1999 pilot project on benchmarking of local transport systems.
- QUATTRO - Quality approach in tendering urban public transport operations.

Documents:

equip.pdf (Final report)

STRIA Roadmaps: Smart mobility and services
Transport policies: Decarbonisation, Societal/Economic issues