

PROJECT

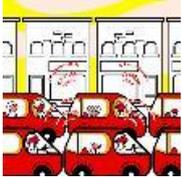
MARETOPE

Managing and Assessing Regulatory Evolution in local public Transport Operations in Europe

Funding: European (5th RTD Framework Programme)

Duration: Apr 2000 - Jan 2003

Status: Complete with results



Background & policy context:

Previous research identified the legal and regulatory frameworks of urban public transport (UPT). However, during the last years significant changes in these frameworks occurred or are starting to occur in several cities over Europe. Simultaneously, the European Commission (EC) started a process leading to an appropriate legal framework at European level, stressing the need of more transparent and competitive environments for public transport.

All these different initiatives are contributing to an overall modification of public transport organisation.

Objectives:

The overall objective of the MARETOPE project was to investigate in an integrated way the impacts of change on the roles and activities of the different stakeholders: public transport operators, public authorities, users and producers of transport means and systems.

Furthermore, it also focused on the identification of barriers that hindered and/or simply delayed the adaptation to change and the development of tools to support decision-makers in that process and in the management of transition periods. From a strategic point of a view, the research objectives can be synthesised as follows:

1. to promote a harmonisation of concepts, based on the review of previous studies, and aimed at establishing a common framework for the understanding of concepts and terminology;
2. to update views on legal, organisational and financial frameworks in urban public transport operations in Europe, Norway, Switzerland and Accession countries;
3. to carry out a detailed and in-depth assessment of 31 case studies covering a variety of situations in Europe, Norway and Hungary. Case studies are meant to collect quantitative data and qualitative information underlying the cause-effect processes behind the change phenomenon;
4. to assess the impacts of change in economic and financial performance in selected cases, as well as to identify the main barriers to change and social impacts of change;
5. to develop tools to overcome or at least minimise barrier effects and to support the different actors in the change process;
6. to develop guidelines and recommendations for the management of transition periods.

Methodology:

The progress of MARETOPE, was divided into three main stages:

- a first one dedicated to the harmonisation of concepts, state of the art of regulatory reform in the different countries, data collection on change processes (WP1 and WP2);
- a second one dedicated to the in-depth analysis of impacts, barriers and tools (WP3 and WP4);
- and a third one fully devoted to the production of guidelines and recommendations on change management (WP5).

Related Projects:

- ISOTOPE
- SORT-IT

- QUATTRO
- FISCUS
- PATS
- TRANSPLUS
- METEOR

Parent Programmes:

[FP5-GROWTH KA2 - Sustainable Mobility and Intermodality](#)

Institute type: Public institution

Institute name: European Commission, Directorate-General for Energy and Transport (DG TREN)

Funding type: Public (EU)

Partners:

Co-ordinator:

- TIS.PT, Consultores em Transportes,
- Inovação e Sistemas S.A

Partners:

Austria: FGM-AMOR, Forschungsgesellschaft Mobilitaet

Denmark: HUR, Hovedstadens Udviklingsrad / Trafikdivisionen (former HT)

Finland: LT Consultants, Ltd

France: ENPC, École Nationale des Ponts et Chaussées

Germany: TRANSTEC Consult (TransTec Transport und Technologie Consult Hannover GmbH) - HVV, Hamburger Verkehrsverbund GmbH

Greece: NTUA, National Technical University of Athens EL

Hungary: TRANSMAN, Transman Consulting for Transport System Management Ltd HU

Italy: ISIS, Istituto di Studi per l'Informatica e I Sistemi

The Netherlands: NEA, Transport Research and Training - ERASMUS, Erasmus University Rotterdam

United Kingdom: TSU, Chancellor Masters and Scholars of the University of Oxford - HGL, Halcrow Group Limited

Norway: TOI, Institute of Transport Economics

Switzerland: INFRAS

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Key Results:

MARETOPE aimed to investigate in an integrated way, the impacts of change on the roles and activities of the different stakeholders: public transport operators, public authorities, users and producers of transport means and systems.

The project has produced:

- Reference framework and harmonisation of concepts
- Updates of views on the current legal, organisational and financial frameworks of local public transport systems
- Analytical framework for the assessment of barriers, impacts and tool changes
- Synthesis of empirical experiences
- Assessment of barriers and impacts to change
- Tools to assist key players in the process of change
- Recommendations for the management and assessment of regulatory evolution in local public transport operations in Europe - 'Real world' feedback

These are described in more detail below:

Reference Framework and Harmonisation of Concepts

In most cases researchers inside and outside the consortium are better acquainted with the national public transport settings, i.e. legal basis, contractual terms, than with the nature of the differences existing between the different countries. Reference framework and harmonisation of concepts provide a systematic review of previous research and a common reference framework of concepts and terms enabling further comparability of results. Elements of 'right of initiative', 'levels of planning and control in public transport', 'organisational forms', 'market failure', 'analysis of relations between actors' as well as the development of a glossary are included in this report. The dissemination and application of this framework represents a clear added value in the process of current and considerable changes in European transport organisation where its advocate the promotion of more competitive environments for the transport production. Different cities will be faced with this change in the coming years and therefore this project output has a strong relevance and potential for direct application. By providing an harmonised definition of terms and concepts it enables that comparisons and exchange of experiences be made avoiding the risk of misunderstandings resulting from the use of a same term with different meanings.

Updating Views on the Current Legal, Organisational and Financial Frameworks of Local Public Transport

Policy implications

Despite the strong objectives established for the project from the outset some difficulties had been present. A major pitfall in undertaking the research was undoubtedly the limited number of cases in which sufficient time lag had passed after the implementation of the reform that could allow a measurement of full extend of impacts. Although the main criteria underlying the selection of case studies was the existence of a change process with possibilities to assess performance levels before, during and after the reform, with the exception of the UK and some Scandinavian cases the process of change is still occurring, a fact that turned out to make the analysis more difficult.

The last years have witnessed in a number of European countries significant changes in the organisational frameworks of local public transport in order to ensure the improvement in transparency, economic efficiency and quality of service. This development is being promoted by the European Commission through the provision of an appropriate legal framework at the European level. These developments confirm the importance of the efficiency concept, both in the production and in consumption of local transport systems as one of the main building blocks for sustainable growth and employment in Europe, as well as to contribute to economic and social cohesion for which local transport services play a determinant role by being safe, affordable, easily available and reliable, and last but not least delivering a quality that fulfils citizens needs and expectations. However, independently on the regulatory regime in force, the success of these developments depends very much on the effectiveness of the relationship between authorities and operators. Background studies revealed that productive efficiency pressure was more effectively applied through tendering procedures, with authorities taking the role of the entrepreneur, but experience reveals also that a deeper involvement of operators is needed to cope with a 'new mission' of public transport in the improvement of urban living conditions. A general movement from gross to net cost contracts could also be observed. The research highlighted that the main driving force for change in most European countries and cities was of financial nature: the cost coverage of public transport was regarded to be too low and the amounts of money involved through subsidies too high. Additional driving forces observed concern the improvements towards more transparent, effective and quality UPT services.

Documents:

 [maretope_final_version.pdf \(Final report\)](#)

STRIA Roadmaps: Smart mobility and services

Transport mode: Road transport

Transport sectors: Passenger transport

Transport policies: Societal/Economic issues

Geo-spatial type: Urban