Mediate – Methodology for Describing the Accessibility of Transport in Europe

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Executive Summary

The Mediate project, Methodology for Describing the Accessibility of Transport in Europe, is funded as a Co-ordination and Support Action within the 7th European Commission Framework Program, Theme 7: Transport, under the Call FP7 - Sustainable Surface Transport (SST) – 2007 – RTD – 1, on the topic SST.2007.3.1.1 New Mobility Concepts for Passengers ensuring Accessibility for All. The Mediate project runs from December 2008 – November 2010.

The overall objective of Mediate is to contribute to the development of inclusive urban transport systems with better access for all citizens. The project objective is to establish a common European methodology for measuring accessibility to transport. Key elements have been the establishment of an End-User Platform (http://www.age-platform.org/EN/IMG/pdf_EUP_composition.pdf) and the web portal on public transport accessibility www.aptie.eu (www.accessiblepublictransportineurope.eu). More information about the Mediate project can be found on the project’s website www.mediate-project.eu.

The partners of the Mediate consortium:
- SINTEF (Norway, coordinator)
- Promotion of Operational Links with Integrated Services - POLIS, (Belgium)
- The European Older People’s Platform – AGE (Belgium)
- Transport & Travel Research Ltd - TTR (United Kingdom)
- Transport for London - TfL (United Kingdom)
- IMOB Transportation Research Institute, Hasselt University (Belgium)
- TIS.pt (Portugal)
- TIMENCO (Belgium)

This report constitutes the Exploitation Plan for the Mediate project. The key objective of this document is to enable some advance planning beyond the project’s end regarding dissemination of the main achievements by each partner and by the consortium as a whole. Therefore, this report will provide an added value to the dissemination of the project developing a structured approach to the exploitation of short and long term results by the Mediate partners and stakeholders involved. The approach will take advantage from the results of the project looking at target groups on one hand and stakeholders on the other hand.

In order to attend the aforementioned objective some key questions should be addressed, being this exploitation plan a contribution to its answer. The envisaged questions are:

- What are the results expected and attained with the participation in the project by each partner?
• In which way are the developments in Mediate connected to partner’s own development strategies?

• Will the project help in deploying technologies and know-how, already achieved in different business sectors?

In this document the reader will be provided with relevant information regarding the project dissemination and communication strategy, exploitation plan at midterm and the achieved results taking into account the used vision and approaches.

Taking into consideration that the main exploitable results are the Good Practice Guide, the Self Assessment Tool, The End-Users Platform and the APTIE website, it is envisaged that these outputs form the substrate for the emergence of a productive and lasting community of practices, tools and learning that fosters maximum innovation to accessible transport systems.

Successful exploitation or sustainability of Mediate’s outputs is one of the objectives of the project. To enable the exploitation, this document includes all the most important aspects: the products to be exploited and the foreseen actions at short, medium and long term.

In the period immediately after the project’s completion the results will be used mainly for demonstration purposes, to encourage new actors to take part in the public transport self assessment system.

Regarding the exploitation of the results, each partner has specified their commitment depending on their own strategic plan and acting field, to take advantage of both the knowledge acquired throughout the project and its tangible results.
1 Background for Exploitation

1.1 Urban action plan

European transport systems play a key role in the transportation of people and goods, and are essential to Europe’s prosperity, being closely linked to economic growth. Despite the progress made in recent years in improving accessibility for all, it is estimated that 10 to 20 percent of European citizens, including disabled people and older people, are still experiencing barriers and limited accessibility to public transport (EMCT 2006). These barriers limit the possibilities and opportunities for employment, social and leisure activities, and full participation in society. Also, the demand for accessible transport will increase, as a result of the rapid growth in the number and proportion of older persons aged 60 years and above. The population of Europe is more than 700 million (UN 2007). There has been a rapid and unprecedented growth in the number and proportion of older people, and the majority of older people live in cities.

Demographic trends are important for planning the future development of Europe in terms of urban public transports. The recent publication on the Future of Transport\(^1\) refers to a demographic transition trend: by 2060, the median age of the European population is projected to be more than 7 years higher than today and the number of people aged 65 or more is expected to represent 30% of the population as opposed to 17% today. An ageing society will place more emphasis on the provision of transport services involving a high level of perceived security and reliability, and which feature appropriate solutions for users with reduced mobility. Designing public transport modes and systems coping with this new reality implies making them safer, inclusive and more user friendly for all passengers.

A charter on access to transport services and infrastructure that was adopted by the ECMT Council of Ministers, already on May 1999, recognises this challenge and underlines the political commitment in Europe to ensure that all new transport infrastructures should be constructed to take into account the needs of people with disabilities. Also in its communication “Towards a barrier free Europe for people with disabilities” (COM (2000)284), the Commission emphasised that “mobility plays a crucial role in ensuring participation in economic and social activity and the lack of it is an inhibiting factor against the participation rights of people with disabilities ...it also asserts that positive developments in improving access for people with disabilities have positive implications for other areas such as quality of working life, protection of consumer and competitiveness of EU industry”. Furthermore it is referred that “mobility should not be regarded simply as a convenience or even a social and economic necessity. It should be regarded as a right to which everyone should be entitled...; being widely accepted that making transport easier to use for people with disabilities would contribute to meeting broader policy objectives...”.

\(^1\) DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR INTERNAL POLICIES/ DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EXTERNAL POLICIES - POLICY DEPARTMENTS EU POLICY CHALLENGES 2009-2019 “A report to the President”
From this communication it is clear that accessibility and mobility issues are now dealt with in the light of equal opportunities and the right to participate.

1.2 The focus on Accessibility to all

Since 2007, accessibility has been a major concern for the European Commission. The Green Paper on Urban Mobility from 2007 states that “accessibility primarily concerns people with reduced mobility, disabled people, elderly people, families with young children, and the young children themselves: they should have easy access to urban transport infrastructure. Accessibility also refers to the quality of access that people and business have to the urban mobility system, made up of infrastructure and services….”. Also the EC stated in Communication on the Future on Transport, adopted by the Commission on 17th June 2009 that “infrastructure has to be built, maintained and upgraded on the principle of accessibility to all.” More recently, the Action Plan for Urban Mobility has also dealt with accessibility, dedicating Action 5 to securing accessibility for persons with reduced mobility.

Persons with disabilities have the right of access to urban transport on equal terms with the rest of the population but in reality access is often insufficient and sometimes non-existent. Considerable achievements have been made, for example on the use of low platform buses. Other modes of public transport such as subways remain often largely inaccessible. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, signed since 2007 by the European Community and all Member States, contains clear obligations.

Article 9 states "Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to (...) transportation, both in urban and in rural areas". The Commission will work with Member States to achieve full compliance with these obligations by including the urban mobility dimension in the EU Disability Strategy 2010-2020 and by developing appropriate quality indicators and reporting mechanisms. It will also support further targeted activities under FP7.

The statements above suggest that the need for tools to increase the efficiency of the process of achieving accessible transport systems in Europe are more important than ever, and developing an inclusive European transport system accessible for all may increase the market potential for transport operators and the number of people travelling by public transport.

Notwithstanding, during the recent years a broad variety of innovative concepts for making urban transport more efficient and accessible were assessed in several EU research programmes. Examples of that include the COST actions, the UITP and ECMT tasks forces and the projects running under the FP programmes, including

those under the action line “research relating to people with disabilities” (key action Ageing population of the 5th RTD framework programme).

Within Mediate an overview of previous initiatives was undertaken and reported in D2.1. However, and despite significant progress locally, many of these efforts have not been implemented in a larger European scale.

1.3 **The focus on a quality approach to accessibility**

It is recognised that an accessible urban transport system goes far beyond the provision of accessible public vehicles and should entail all services, infrastructure and built environment that in its whole enable all citizens to satisfy their mobility needs. Addressing, from a quality perspective, such complexity, implies to set up a coherent framework and to focus the analysis of the performance on the interaction and relations between the different intervening agents. How well those different components and agents, for which no formal relations and dependencies exist, fit together is a major challenge, which to be successful requires the adoption of concerted and co-ordinated decision making approaches.

For several decades quality concerns have become widespread across the economy, with several important developments: from product’ quality control to a shift of focus to the quality of the process and company engagement and then changing the main focus to client satisfaction.

The concept of TQM and its implementation is mainly based on quality management models, such as ISO (International Standard Organization) and EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) models, the best known in Europe. The ISO-model, crowned by certification is often looked at as a system killing creativity and even leading to bureaucracy. On the other hand, the EFQM-model is based on very important management values such as customer and staff satisfaction, and so far is considered the most flexible model for adaptation to several sectors. It allows pointing out the weak and strong points of an organization, thus providing a starting point for continuous improvement (QUATTRO, 1998).

The review undertaken in MEDIATE stressed the fact that accessibility cannot be achieved and/or measured without a holistic approach, i.e. by addressing the whole travel chain and therefore using the quality loop as foreseen in the EFQM. This requires the integration of multiple dimensions for accessibility measurement, ranging from the need for accurate, clear and concise information for users, to the provision of a barrier-free built environment, adoption of universal design, provision of high operational standards, intermediate solution between individual and mainstream transport options, appropriate, effective and accessible vehicle design, high levels of perceived comfort and safety, etc.

These elements should therefore be realised in a given transportation system, helping to meet the expected usability requirements, contributing for global accessibility performance.

The Mediate approach is based on TQM and focuses on the quality along the policy process. Accessibility in public transport is a matter of long term perseverance; there is no instant blue print for excellence that can be easily implemented. Accessibility
has many different aspects and aims to improve travel possibilities for a wide range of mobility impairments. On top, accessibility measures can easily be conflicting with one another and in several cases, tailor-made solutions will be necessary. Because resources are very limited when compared to the objectives, there is always a need to set priorities based on needs and perspectives of end users. That is why it is believed that an approach based on process will suit the interest of improvement of accessibility best.

The policy process should take into account actual user needs, develop actions and monitor the results. Starting with obvious and evident measures and learning from results will gradually bring the quality of the accessibility policy to a higher level: excellence by development.

The self assessment tool is an instrument for local stakeholders to gain insight in the actual state of accessibility. The outcome of an assessment by means of the Mediate-tool should therefore be considered to be a starting point and a breeding ground to find inspiration and motivation for further developing the accessibility of urban public transport. It should awaken organisations and administrations to the importance and potential benefits of an integrated approach towards their policy.
2 Mediate Project

2.1 Vision

To contribute to the development of inclusive urban transport systems with better access for all citizens. The main idea is to contribute to the efficiency of the process of achieving accessible transport systems in Europe, by developing a methodology for measuring accessibility to transport and a set of common tools: common European indicators for describing accessibility, a self-assessment tool, a good practice guide, a web portal on public transport accessibility (www.aptie.eu) and a European end-user platform.

2.2 Project activities

Mediate (MEthodology for Describing the Accessibility of Transport in Europe) will assist public authorities and transport operators in achieving equality of access, by providing a methodology for measuring accessibility in transport, making comparisons with good practice solutions and exchanging knowledge between the stakeholders involved.

The overriding goal of Mediate is to contribute to the development of inclusive urban transport systems with better access for all citizens. The main activities of the project include:

- Establishing an overview of relevant initiatives and methodologies that describe and measure accessibility to public transport.
- Defining a set of common European indicators for describing accessibility in urban public transport.
- Collecting examples of good practice from European cities and collecting data supporting the set of indicators developed.
- Developing a self assessment tool for measuring accessibility in public transport, including identification of weak and strong elements, and developing targets and priorities for improvements.
- Establishing Working Groups involving European cities (local authorities and public transport operators) for the exchange of information among stakeholders, and the provision of relevant input about indicators.
- Creating an End User Platform providing end user experiences and input from a broad range of passenger groups.
- Defining a strategy plan for the long term viability of the End User Platform, with the purpose of providing a resource for other EU activities, and to tap into and engage end users with different abilities in R&D projects.
2.3 Outcomes and benefits

The Mediate project has focused on involving relevant stakeholders (local authorities, public transport operators, industry, end users and experts) throughout the project. The objective of so doing has been to coordinate their expertise, providing relevant input for the project, encouraging the exchange of information and using the stakeholders as a channel for dissemination.

The project has defined accessibility from the perspective that disabled people face physical and attitudinal barriers that restrict their full participation in society (i.e. it has adopted the principles of the “Social Model of Disability”). Its overriding goal is to contribute to the development of inclusive urban transport systems with better access for all citizens. The path to achieve that goal takes as basis the principles of the Total Quality Management (TQM). TQM recognises that the development and implementation of accessibility policy is a dynamic process through the continuous cycle, the so called PDCA cycle (Plan-Do-Check-Act), of planning, actions and monitoring, producing learning moments that bring policy to a higher level of development.

The implementation of TQM in MEDIATE is based on quality management models, such as ISO (International Standard Organisation) and EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) models, as well as bringing the relevant experience from the BYPAD project and its self assessment tool. The BYPAD tool was developed, tested and validated in many European cities and the methodological approach has been successfully implemented for improving the quality of cycling.

Also within the development of Mediate the concept of learning as a continuous process is applied: the project will strive to achieve its objective by ensuring a strong user involvement by disabled people, end users of public transport, and involving public operators and local authorities in each stage of the process, thus bringing in the real world voices, requirements and practices.

The methodology developed within Mediate will contribute to assist local public authorities and transport operators in achieving equality of access, by providing common indicators and a self-assessment tool for measuring accessibility, making comparisons with good practice solutions and exchanging of knowledge across Europe. Public authorities, transport operators, policy makers and other relevant stakeholders will be able to identify gaps and areas for improvements, and develop strategies for closing the gaps and accomplish the suggested improvements. The self assessment tool will help cities and transport operators to identify where they are on the access scale (low level to high level of accessibility), and how much effort is required to reach a higher level of accessibility. Accessible cities will enhance their reputation as an inclusive city or location for their citizens, tourists and visitors. Improvements of accessibility will also serve the comfort and quality of public transport trips for all people, and potentially increase the number of passenger using public transport.

Policy makers will benefit because Mediate will provide a tool for measuring accessibility to transport. Accessible transport will offer mobility for people with
disabilities and enable more people to access the job market, earn a wage (instead of being passive recipients of benefits) and participate in society through shopping, eating out and having holidays etc. This cycle has an impact at a macro and micro level for all people, especially people with disabilities. Stakeholders like Local Authorities will benefit from people with reduced mobility being able to visit public services such as Libraries and leisure centres rather than having to make special travel arrangements. Manufacturers could benefit because national and local transport bodies commission accessible vehicles complying with common European specifications.

The development of inclusive urban transport system with better access for all will have an impact on the transport system, in terms of ensuring the human rights of all citizens by equal participation in employment, education & training, the community and social life.

2.4 Exploitable results

Most quality programs, while referring to TQM methodologies, put the emphasis in the consumers' perception at the end point of the production chain, without addressing the problem of interaction between the different parts of the system lying behind the operational and visible output. This gap represents a constraint in the potential for improvement of the system. Once decisions at both strategic and tactical levels are equally important, and very often critical for the final quality of the set of services provided, a continuum from planning to implementation and monitoring along the different decision levels should be ensured.

Mediate takes an overall vision of the accessibility process from the planning to the evaluation, aiming for an integrated approach where the different actors and components of the chain are addressed, resulting in a set of exploitable results.

Such exploitable results can be classified along three main streams, as highlighted in the figure below:

- **Products (Mediate tools);**
- **Processes (Mediate methodologies);** and,
- **Actors (Partners, Users, Working Group, Experts) that ensure that products and processes are exploited, but also the European Commission through the establishment of conditions for the involvement of end users' representatives in new research projects.
A brief overview on these exploitable results is here provided. In the following chapter, when designing a deployment strategy for its exploitation, further details are given.

2.4.1 Mediate Products

The following constitute the Mediate products to be exploited.

1. Four accessibility tools (Indicators, Self-Assessment tool, Good Practice Guide manuals and the APTIE website)

These set of tools can be used alone or combined, depending on the purpose that leads a city to undertake its own assessment. The level of development can be characterised employing each tool individually.
The outcome of an assessment based on the Mediate tools should therefore be considered to be a starting point and a springboard for inspiration and motivation for further developing the accessibility of urban public transport. It should awaken organisations and administrations to the importance and potential benefits of an integrated approach towards their policy.

A key aspect is that the main aim is not to judge organizations on their individual performances neither to produce a benchmarking of accessible cities, but to offer an instrument that is able to guide managers and policymakers in their pursuit of excellence by opening up a window that gives them a overview of good practices in urban public transport accessibility, which will desirably lead to a new starting point of further development.

The portal on accessibility in public transport aims to become a one-stop shop enabling a visitor to find information on or references to a wide range of matters related to accessibility in public transport. The Portal is designated as APTIE (Accessible Public Transport in Europe) and is available at www.aptie.eu (and www.accessiblepublictransportineurope.eu).

The portal will contain all the legacy of the Mediate project in addition to comprehensive information on accessibility in public transport. It constitutes as such a major tool for future exploitation purposes.
In fact, websites are seen in EU projects as one important end product, being a common problem its support after the end of the projects. Mediate’s consortium, through Polis, will give continuity to the portal APTIE for one more year, after which period funding is limited. Looking forward for mechanisms for its continuous update and development is one of the goals of this exploitation plan.

2. End users Platform

The establishment and management of an End User Platform (EUP) representing organizations of / and for people with disabilities, older people and other relevant user groups facing barriers using public transport was one of the goals of Mediate under the coordination of AGE Platform Europe.

A strategy plan for the long term viability of the End-user platform beyond Mediate, with the purpose of providing a resource for other EU activities to tap into and to engage end-users with different abilities in R&D projects, was defined. Results from that strategic plan were incorporated in this exploitation plan, being the promotion of actions towards a successful implementation of that strategy, a core aspect of this plan.

2.4.2 Mediate Processes

The above mentioned tools were supported by methodologies that constitute by themselves exploitable results.

Some methodologies can be exploited, once that they can be applied in other contexts and projects, those methodologies are related with:

1. Process of engagement of users in each stage of the project development
Including the aspects related with the decision on who to engage, how to involve
in the discussions, attention to organisational and budgetary issues, etc.

2. Joint approach to accessibility and quality management - policy cycle and
modules

How to adapt the TQM principles to accessibility issues, how to define the key
issues underlying the policy cycles, which aspects to include in policy modules,
how they are defined.

3. Concept of Levels of development on accessibility

Includes the entire process of establishing the criteria that will define each level of
development and the respective limits. As well as the main aspects that defines
the passage from one level to the other.

4. Self assessment methodologies and auditing process

Like Mediate benefits from the previous experience and learning from the self
assessment methodologies promoted under the Bypad project, the developments
and updates that were promoted in Mediate could be replicated in other contexts.

2.4.3 Actors for the exploitation

Mediate is the product of researchers, experts, practitioners with user groups that
daily are confronted with the lack of accessibility conditions allowing for freely and
independent travel.

The Mediate project ensured a strong user involvement by disabled people, end
users of public transport, and involving public operators and local authorities in each
stage of the process. The stakeholders involved were organized in three groups:

- Expert Group: 6 international experts within the field of accessibility to public
  transport representing different stakeholder groups; end users, operators,
  designers, manufacturers, etc

- Working Group: 20 European cities represented by local transport authorities
  or public transport operators

- End Users: 11 end users and end user groups representing people with
  disabilities, older people and other relevant user groups facing barriers using
  public transport.

Together with the 8 consortium partners, these actors compose the Mediate
Community which structure and working mechanisms are worth to be considered as
a result to exploit. At the same time these actors act as channel of dissemination and
exploitation of Mediate.
In addition to these direct actors, the European Commission in its interest and potential efforts to involve the end users representatives in the context of new projects, could also indirectly be considered a Mediate actor.
3 Towards an organisational set up for deployment of Mediate results

As previously, the overriding goal of Mediate is to contribute to the development of inclusive urban transport systems with better access for all citizens.

In order to extract and increase potential from Mediate’s exploitation products, partners from the consortium are committed to continue systematically disseminating and raising awareness of what is presented in this project in terms of the basic knowledge and experience gained during the realization of the Mediate Project, either at local and national levels, but also looking forward to an European dimension. Those multiple channels available can comprise dissemination in events, training sessions or promotion of tools in different entities, but also finding mechanisms for a follow up action.

The exploitation comprises replication actions of the use of the project results also in other applications. Apart from that, partners may offer some of their knowledge and expertise on delivering accessibility for all on public transports to local partners. In fact for a successful project lifecycle, careful dissemination and exploitation strategies are essential. While dissemination activities have been performed from the beginning of the project, the exploitation strategy concentrates on the project’s results during the last phase and beyond to reach sustainability after the project ends.

The concept of sustainability is understood in this context as:

- the way of ensuring that the developed products are used as the basis for further developments and improvements by all the Mediate’s community and
- the way of ensuring that products and process are used in real contexts with the mainstream objective of creating added value for the cities’ accessibility to public transports.

To perform such tasks, the consortium partners can be clustered into 3 main groups:

- Consultancy companies;
- Researchers organisations;
- End-User organisations
- Local policy-maker/ operator organisations.

Within each group it is foreseen that the exploitation tools may differ in terms of actions but still be perfectly aligned in what concerns the envisaged outputs.

Therefore, the Consultancy companies will endeavour efforts towards a better and enlarged awareness through commercial presentations, giving continuity to the ongoing and future work. These partners will provide consultancy related to their particular expertise and tools developed during the Mediate project. Some of the content partners will also provide consultancy to local entities dealing with issues
related to accessibility to public transports and potentially willing to join the community performing self assessments.

**Research organisations** will be including the thematic topics discussed in Mediate within research (articles, conferences, universities’ annual programs, and graduation thesis in general). Thus, it is expected that the dissemination of the Mediate’s topics will be a reality and a day-to-day topic of the next generation of professionals. The researcher organisations can also provide assistance by making available their expertise to local entities on discussion groups, public presentations, public awareness sessions, etc. Furthermore, it could be expected that research organisations will be also involved in the promotion and supervision, as experts, of self assessment exercises in communities implementing accessibility measures.

**End-user organisations** will strive to find innovative ways to give continuity to their role in providing assistance and expert opinion to public authorities, public transport operators, city networks and others, towards the delivery of better and appropriate accessibility to public transport for all. The engagement of such organisations is very important in order to act as a connection link between entities and the community in general. Acting as results dissemination agents concerning the implementation of measures and at the same time providing feedback to the community in general concerning the progress of the discussions related with the strategies concerning accessibility topics. In fact they will be the link between two different realities, the reality of the authorities that is more strategic and broad and that of the end users which is more operational and targeted. However both of them are very important, and necessary for building the system as it is known.

In fact and due to the privileged position that these organisations may have with the authorities some new jobs can be generated when implementing and developing some of the Mediate’s products

And last, but not least important, the **Organisations of local policy-makers/operators** will continue to disseminate the products of Mediate among local authorities and transport operators. They will disseminate the multilingual brochures and refer to the APTIE website.

Nevertheless, despite which group is exploiting Mediate’s results, the path to achieve the goal takes as basis the principles of the Total Quality Management (TQM). As also mentioned, TQM recognises that the development and implementation of accessibility policy is a dynamic process throughout a continuous cycle, commonly known as PDCA cycle (Plan-Do-Check-Act). This PDCA cycle has to be always conceived with the view of continuous learning in all of its development stages.

Bearing this into account, the next points will identify for each of the Mediate results, the set of different actions to be taken in different time periods as well as who is responsible to put them up. This can be presented in the following manner:

- What to do?
- When to do?
- Who will do?
Some of the actions herewith presented result from the EUP long term strategy deliverable\(^3\), a key issue of Mediate.

Even so, all partners plan to realise some type of follow-up activities or projects. The diversity of these actions varies according to the type of institution and its overall strategy.

Other actions, for instance, a Mediate follow-up, may imply evaluating the coming list of calls for proposals. This list should have a focus on EU-funded activities, but in countries with a transport research tradition, interesting projects could also be funded.

In addition to actions that could be taken by the consortium as a whole, the exploitation plan also identifies possible actions by each of the actors. For example, what can be done at national and local levels to create more awareness on transport accessibility?

In summary, the strategy that each actor (consortium partner, expert, users or working group member) could envisage /implement to give continuity to the products that Mediate has developed, is not yet mature enough to be detailed and planned in this exploitation plan. However, it does encompass different activities that comprise the organization of workshops, presence in public events as well as national dissemination through newsletters, articles, lecturers, brochures, application of concepts in consultancy works, etc.

How can Mediate contribute to the promotion of standards and harmonised guidelines for transport accessibility? How can Mediate contribute for the development of applications for passenger real time information and accessibility information ensuring that they are presented in similar ways regardless of modes and operators?

These are some open questions for which this plan intends to provide some possible answers. Public transport information systems are rapidly developing and improving, but a challenge for disabled people is the range of different systems and the incompatibility both in content and presentation of the information. This is a topic that Mediate is willing to explore.

### 3.1 Mediate actions to exploit the project potential

Table 1 presents a first list of actions to be promoted, identifying the products to which they refer as well as the main actors' that could / should be involved in its promotion.

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\(^3\) Strategy Plan on the long-term availability of the End User Platform – Mediate D1.3
For each of the actions, the time frame for its application is indicated. This timeframe has not been determined scientifically, but in terms of feasibility and good sense:

- Short – from now until the end of the project
- Medium – up to 2 years after project conclusion
- Long – more than 2 years

Basically, this draft exploitation plan aims to identify:

- Who are the target groups for Mediate products?
- How can they be reached? This means, which actions can be envisaged to reach target groups.
- What is the expected impact of those actions?

However, above all, and independently of the timeframe, the cohesion and commitment of the Mediate consortium towards the foreseen objectives has to be emphasized. It has allowed for the development of a proposal, which in turn has resulted in this project whose results and practices are understood as very good and the continuity of the work developed important enough to have the commitment of all Mediate partners. In the short term, actions to promote refer to:

- Mediate’s final conference and its use as a compelling and effective dissemination tool.
- Use of social networks, like Facebook or Linked-In, to gather more opinions on the quality of the public transport system when using the self-assessment tool.
- Raising awareness on the importance and relevance of the End Users Platform as an advisory council that can provide valuable inputs and insights to the improvement of the public transport systems as a whole. These efforts have already been started, but are far from having been concluded.
- Strive to find national and local initiatives where the replication of Mediate can be performed.
- Establish contact with the European Committee for Standardization to present the Mediate project and consider the feasibility of engaging the EUP into their activities.
- Promote contact with other EU actions, such as the Transport Research Knowledge Centre (TRKC) to disseminate Mediate and in particular the APTIE portal.
- Establish the connection with UITP and ITF (International Transport Forum) and OECD to spread Mediate results in their networks, but also to make them aware of EUP benefits and APTIE tools.
- Promote training workshops on Mediate tools in other cities.
- EC awareness on the importance and benefits of the presence of end users in project activities, looking for targeted recommendations on how this could be promoted (i.e. in new call for proposals, highlight the existence of EUP and recommending its consultation and involvement).
• Create awareness on EC research bodies on future applications for Mediate at EU level (i.e. a follow up demonstration action through a dedicated call in Civitas, for instance).

This list of actions is in fact a snapshot of what could be undertaken after the end of Mediate. Nevertheless more detailed information is provided in Table 1. As previously mentioned the identified activities have to be understood as belonging and developed by an expert group composed by Mediate partners.

It is the consortium’s belief that Mediate’s outputs have been fully accomplished, but there is a feeling in the consortium that much more can still be done. This is true at local and national levels, where most partners already have started efforts, but if the intention is to provide an EU dimension, a new EC project seems to be the most feasible option.

For this reason, the motivation of having a new opportunity of giving continuity to the work that was performed is significant and the determination of this consortium in bringing to light one other opportunity in this area is very significant.

The table below provides an overall vision for the Mediate actions, highlighting the action, the product to which it refers, its time frame and also the main actors most suited to promote it.
TABLE 1 Mediate’s foreseen actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action No</th>
<th>Possible actions</th>
<th>Target group</th>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>Products</th>
<th>Actors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Evaluate the interest and cost of Intellectual Property Rights for Mediate’s products</td>
<td>Consortium</td>
<td>Short</td>
<td>SAT</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>GP Guide</td>
<td>EUP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Long</td>
<td>APTIE</td>
<td>Partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>WG Experts EUP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Mediate’s final conference</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x x x x X x x x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Develop a standard presentation of Mediate products (package and single products)</td>
<td>Cities CEN</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>X (Polis)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Look forward to the replication of Mediate community at national and local level</td>
<td>Consortium</td>
<td>x x x x</td>
<td>Make use of Mediate processes in national studies (research, consultancy)</td>
<td>X (Key partner: all partners)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Each partner will contact the entities where they have connections such as European Committee for Standardization (CEN) for: • Cooperation activities (present Mediate process and products in their events) • Request their direct involvement in technical commissions, • Assessment of the eventuality of engagement EUP into their activity</td>
<td>CEN National bodies</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x x</td>
<td>X (Key partner: TC 320 TIS and accessibility and inclusive design TfL)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Partners engagement to disseminate Mediate on events including those at national level (newsletters, leaflets, presentations)</td>
<td>All potential users</td>
<td>x x x x x x x x</td>
<td>X (Key partner: all partners)</td>
<td>x x x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Promote training workshops (EU level, National level?)</td>
<td>Cities Nat bodies</td>
<td>x x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>X (Key partner: all partners)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Explore networking opportunities and contribute to stimulate discussion on accessibility between a wide range of stakeholders all over Europe (and other continents), engagement of people throughout the brochure.</td>
<td>EU</td>
<td>x x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>X (Key partner: AGE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Nº</td>
<td>Possible actions</td>
<td>Target group</td>
<td>Time Frame</td>
<td>Products</td>
<td>Actors</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cities</td>
<td>Short</td>
<td>SAT</td>
<td>GP Guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Groundwork with cities helping them to develop concrete action plans or to provide them assistance or consultancy support to identify barriers and bottlenecks to the implementation of smart accessibility solutions or when performing their assessment using the self assessment tool</td>
<td>Cities</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Support and commitment to put in practice the envisaged measures specified on Mediate’s D1.3 (EUP long term strategy)</td>
<td>EU</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Propose to the EC the formalization of the EUP as a selection criteria in the terms of reference in future calls on accessibility and transport matters</td>
<td>EU</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Find possibilities for further developments of Mediate (EU dimension) throughout the application for new calls such as the 7th framework program.</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The purpose of the **first action** is to assess the feasibility of having the self assessment tool for identification of the level of development in terms of accessibility, registered. It is very frequent in national terms to have people using tools developed at European level, for which they are not totally acquainted with. To prevent this from happening, it is suggested to register the property rights of the tool with clear identification of people able to further implement the tool in a certified way (in similar terms as what is done with the ISO standards). While Mediate foresees during the final conference a “train the trainers” session, this is considered as insufficient for the overall purposes.

This first action will make easier the accomplishment of the fourth foreseen action, which is the replication of Mediate at National or local scale. By providing the latter, the work can deliver the best results in the shortest amount of time.

The **seventh action** which is the training sessions can be the tool where national experts can have training on the use of the self assessment tool, and therefore acquire the required certification to become included in the experts network.

The **second**, **fifth** and the **tenth actions** are in some way connected. The aim is to raise awareness on the accessibility to public transport, free from barriers, which is a concern for all and not only of a minority. Therefore, as an issue on the public agenda, it should be addressed by all and listed in the priority agenda. The final conference, besides presenting the accomplishments of Mediate, will be used as a dissemination tool for establishing contacts with relevant entities (e.g.: CEN). It is the Mediate consortium’s belief that the conference is a suitable environment and arena to attempt the beginning of these contacts where stakeholders feel more alert and available to be approached. The idea is to give continuity to the EUP and to the long term strategy defined by EUP.

To ensure a common approach to stakeholders, an “institutional” presentation (**third action**) of the project and its products has to be made and therefore it is seen as an exploitable product within this action list.

During the process of performing groundwork with cities to establish action plans (action 9) where strengths, weaknesses and bottlenecks are identified, some dissemination at local level can be done. Through means of the identification of eventual institutions or municipalities which can be interested on being submitted to the self assessment procedure (**action 6**).

As part of the long strategy of EUP is the networking opportunities (e.g.: UITP, ITF, OECD), which can make the difference between the continuity or not of the EUP and is herewith listed (**action 8**).

The last two actions identified (**actions 11 and 12**) are deeply connected. They are related with the EC. One could propose to the EC to formalise the use of the EUP in the new terms of references for studies, and in the coming calls for proposals, The use of the EUP has been of utmost importance in this project and would be of interest to all stakeholders to have such a platform available when addressing accessibility issues. In this manner, all stakeholders would have the confidence that the improvements, policies, research, testing which they sought to implement would be truly relevant and accessible to end-users. The interest of the EC in continuing the
use of the EUP would contribute in giving a future to the EUP and demonstrate the importance of having this approach in order to enable accessible public transport for all.
4 Main remarks & thoughts

Looking to the project in a global perspective there are good reasons to be interested in the Mediate’s products, processes and results, whether as an authority/operator concerned with results that allow future improvements to their network, or as an end user concerned with the accessibility to public transports provided in European towns and cities.

It can be said that from the beginning Mediate was different from previous framework research projects in this topic area in several ways:

- It looked at both travel awareness and transport accessibility together; commonly, in previous projects, they have been studied separately.
- It focused less on demonstration projects and more on developing outputs that can be applied widely across the EU. But without neglecting the contribution that sites are able to provide to improve the project’s quality.

There are two distinct ways to assess the accessibility or usability of a travel chain: one is measuring the “objective” physical elements of that travel chain; the other is the assessment of the subjective experience of the trip. Accessibility and universal design may be described along a scale as degrees of a quality. As Slagsvold (1995) points out, the action of attributing weights and total scores to quantitative data in order to access the quality level has to be carefully thought. The advice is to describe quality profiles or make a comparison with an ideal situation. In a certain way this procedure was performed by Mediate. However it is far from being finished and therefore there is space for additional improvements. These improvements could be further developed in a follow-up to Mediate.

EU projects such as Mediate normally produce a website as one important end product, but a common problem is that no one supports the website after the project ends. The Mediate consortium (through Polis) will give continuity to the APTIE portal for one more year after which there will be no more funding. What could be ideal is linking the portal to the future EUP. The Mediate consortium will be approaching the EC in order to assess the possibility of including both in the terms of reference of future calls.

Another possibility is to provide assistance to the EUP in finding financial support and incorporating the APTIE portal into this package. Therefore contact will be established with Transport Research Knowledge Centre (TRKC) to assess any opening to integrate APTIE and the EUP into their structure.

The long term strategy for EUP points out the funding issues for the EUP activities. Involving end users and particularly when assistance is needed represents a cost

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that must be considered at the initial stages of planning either for European level actions or for national ones.

Mediate has produced tools that it is envisaged to be useful for stakeholders or general people involved, over a long period of time. To meet this goal the involved stakeholders must maintain the process (that has started with this project), sharing information and knowledge towards a more sustainable and accessible Europe in terms of Public Transport.

Through the self assessment tool, indicators and best practices, Mediate is clearly contributing to the harmonization of public transport accessibility concept at European level. This idea has been broadly communicated and disseminated along the project time frame, and this continuous dissemination and communications should be maintained by each of the Mediate actors.

The aim of the exploitation plan was to present the project status and the actions to be undertaken concerning the dissemination of the project and at the same time to provide some recommendations on how to promote its future take-up as well as to support a wide use of the tools.

The exploitation plan tries to outline how continuity of support services for authorities and users could be maintained, i.e. identifying possible user support, acting as helpdesk, correcting errors and updating specifications, providing results, disseminating information, etc. It is also important to disseminate documents like guidelines, good practice guide, etc.

It is recognised that work developed in Mediate will need to be updated. As user requirements change, the indicators, the self assessment tool and good practice guide will need to be revised, so the looking forward for resources should be anticipated.

It is clear that at local and national levels, Mediate will be promoted, however, and having the previous issues in mind, it is also clear that there should be a follow-up to the Mediate project. Through an EU action it will be possible to improve the developed products and processes, and above all to implement the long term strategies of the EUP as well as secure the future of the portal, thus enlarging the Mediate community.

The challenges included in this exploitation plan are not easy and involve the willingness from a great number of participants and institutions. However its return can be very rewarding, making the difference of being just one more European Project that comes to its end or being the pillar to the beginning of a platform fully dedicated to accessibility in all issues and ultimately a more user friendly European public transport network.
5 Annexes

MEDIATE brochure with products and results