

Evaluation of Pilot Action



Pilot Action definition

Purpose and Scope

Please note that the full description of the pilot action was described in detail in the 'Pilot action plan for Kaunas: Mobility management'.

Mission was clearly defined from the start – although we may not have thought too clearly about the long term continuation strategy. However, the long term strategy requires a lot of external support and commitment – something that we within the Pilot action working group had no real control or powers of persuasion over.

Our defined objectives were in line with the overall mission: we set out to primarily raise awareness of issues that had not previously been dealt with on such an inclusive level with local stakeholders before. Our task from the start was involvement of local pupils and schools in preparing a plan of action to complete research on their school journey environment.

At the very start we identified what it was that the pupils wanted from us in return for the work we were asking them to do and we made sure we satisfied their wants.

SMART objectives?

Specific	To produce a school travel plan through carrying out local research and interviews
Measureable	Work plan was in stages over a period of several months and each stage required evaluation of measurable results. Also STP produced a set of recommendations that once implemented, would provide measurable results.
Appropriate	As the city moves more towards fulfilling a range of mobility measures through EU funded projects and commits to a long term plan of doing such, it is certainly appropriate to start working more with specific social sector groups on specific mobility measures
Realistic	Yes – because we set out to start and finish by a certain timescale and our actions were what the city was already committed to doing – or was saying it was committed to wanting to do
Timed	Yes – within the time of the agreed pilot action plan within the BUSTRIP project – with a slight over-run due to an extra activity of school exchange with Lund in Sweden.

Target group

During the PR interview, the two schools VERSVU and SILAINIAI had expressed some concerns about the condition of the journey to school for pupils and teachers. Aim was to work with two schools that had previously been identified through the Peer Review visit to Kaunas, to produce a STP.

The BUSTRIP Project manager and tech specialist from transport division, looked at examples of how other cities worked with school pupils of 15 – 17 years. However, there were very few schools in cities

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around the Lithuania (and in fact around the Baltic Sea Region) that were doing this type of work with this age group.

Usually, the work is started with age groups under 10 years old and quite often much of the planning and practical implementation work is carried out by adults – either parents, teachers, local communities, or experts from external organisation.

So our immediate target group was pupils between the ages of 15 and 17 years of age, but of course the final STP would have implications for a much wider group of people.

Activities

We used a template from the Sustrans organisation in Britain, although we had to tailor our methods a little to suit our needs. Once the pupils got started they began to generate new ideas and over the course of the several meetings we came up with a more long term course of action

1. STP – presentation to city council before EU mobility week
2. to make a DVD of their experience
3. to promote their work – somehow – to the public

The activities carried out by the pupils were ultimately dependent upon the involvement of several others in order to reach their objectives. Therefore, the targets set within the actual working group of pupils was reached; we may not however have fully reached our project overall targets.

Were the chosen activities of the pilot action suitable to reach the objectives? Did they meet the needs of the target group?

Pilot Action Implementation

Stakeholder

Identification

The STP work began in November 2006 and finished in October 2007. All relevant stakeholders were identified. However, usually an STP is a wholly inclusive process from the very start. However, because we were working with a group of school pupils who had never previously been granted autonomy in such a big project, we did not want their views, opinions, motivation, enthusiasm and ideas to be diluted by a large stakeholder group of community reps that would include a lot of people from positions of power and authority – police, city councillors, municipality specialists, community leaders etc. We therefore purposely excluded all such external stakeholders from the process until the final stages.

Consultation

We also need to bear in mind that the pupils who formed the core project working group were not so much regularly contacting their peers within the school ie: all the other pupils – on a wholly regular basis. If we consider the direct stakeholders as being the student representatives in the working group and the city municipality, then stakeholder consultation was indeed happening on a regular basis.

Implementation steps

We wanted the pupils to grow in confidence and self belief before presenting or working with an older audience – which they did. So we had a small team – five from Versvu school and five from Silainiai school plus two project coordinators. We discussed the methodology and goals and of course what they wanted in return from us; what kind of support, resources, rewards etc.

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They decided that they wanted regular meetings, some help in design and layout of the STP and some steering in format and contents –and a reward of course!

The reward they requested was an opportunity to travel to another school in another country to explore how pupils there experienced their travel to school and what kind of work they were doing in this field and to share their ideas.

Support and resources were easy but the rewards – a little more difficult. Mainly because the BUSTRIP Project / BSR INRTERREG is not so flexible to allow non-project partner participants to use budget – and certainly the Kaunas Municipality were not so keen for this to happen

So we had a real task on our hands to somehow find a way of taking 10 pupils and two teachers to another city outside of LTY for an exchange programme with all expenses paid. Without knowing exactly how – we had promised this ‘reward’ to our pupils.

Meanwhile, we translated the template Questionnaires form SUSTRANS, revised them a little and the pupils used this as the basis for their research into producing a STP. They also walked most of the routes that pupils would need to take in order to get to each of the two schools –this they did in order to get a better idea of the problems and issues.

We achieved all that we set out to achieve (see results later in this report). But as previously explained, such a dynamic project working with enthusiastic young people, inevitably generates new ideas and activities. Some of these will be only be completed after the lifespan of the BUSTRIP project (life after death!!)

Budget

(See above points relating to use of budget for non municipality staff expenses). We did not foresee a budget spend for the actual activities related to the production of the pilot action STP. The budget we had was spent on STP promotion – something that the STP working group planned once the pilot action had started. The budget we wanted to spend but could not access through the BUSTRIP project, we were fortunate to get through a successful bid to the SIDA¹. Our pilot action developed a schools exchange programme that SIDA supported with a grant of 11,800 euros. This allowed an exchange between Kaunas and Lund in Sweden.

Also we received an unexpected bonus in the shape of a 2000 euro award from the UBC² Commission for Transport.

Risks

Risks were generally related to whether the students would manage to stay the course in terms of their commitment and motivation for completing the STP. I believe that we managed to maintain their enthusiasm through the ‘carrot dangling’ of a school exchange with Lund in Sweden.

Assessment & Results

Monitoring and evaluation

¹ Swedish International Development Agency

² Union of Baltic Cities

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Activities and objectives

Our initial plan of action was as outlined in the following table:

Pilot Action activity: What do we want to do?	Help Schools understand and develop a School Travel Plan
Objective: What do we want to achieve?	Improved mobility choices and environment for school children and other community stakeholders.
Indicator of Activity: What indicators show that we did what we said?	
Indicator 1	Journey audits of routes
Indicator 2	Preparation of STP
Indicator n	
Indicator of Progress: What indicators show whether or not we are achieving what we set out to achieve?	
Indicator 1	Completion of STP
Indicator 2	Recognition of issues at political level and assurances for corrective action
Indicator n	

Indicator definition

Impact	Indicator	Description (Location/ Quality, etc.)	Unit	Methods of measurement	Sources of data	Time/ frequency of measurement
Improved journey environment	Completion of STP			Action of recommendations	Student research	
					Communication with other schools	

Conclusions and 'Lessons learnt'

The STP work began in November 2006 and finished in October 2007. The achievements within this year include –

1. completed School Travel Plans for 2 schools
2. presentation to city council (plus an additional promise from city council for schools to present concrete proposals to Municipality Road Safety Commission)
3. scripted and starred in video production of the STP research and experience
4. participated in design of city public transport trolleybus car-free city advertising campaign

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5. designed promo t-shirts for BUSTRIP project
6. Planned and helped to organise school exchange programme of activities between Kaunas and Lund.
7. We managed to successfully apply to SIDA for nearly 12,000 euros to cover the whole cost of a school exchange programme between Kaunas schools and Lund in Sweden. Our pupils travelled to Lund during the EU Mobility Week and Lund came to Kaunas during week 43.
8. Our pupils – some had never travelled outside of Lithuania before and some had never flown before – were justifiably reward for doing a fantastic job.
9. End result: Pupils received their reward for a lot of hard work – and Municipality (and BUSTRIP Project) received positive results from a successful pilot action !!

Improvement potentials

1. To work with a national support body from the start. For example, to have involved the Ministry for Education and Ministry for Transport (Division responsible for road safety) and to have them committed to supporting the idea of STPs being developed at all schools where practical across the country And to recognise this pilot action as potentially a flagship project that would help develop a national STP methodology for Lithuania.
2. However, as an add-on to this oversight, we will be mailing a 'mobility pack' to Ministers and key Ministry personnel early in the new year. This will contain all information about the school project (DVD, T-shirt, BUSTRIP newsletters etc) along with a recommendation that Kaunas receives support to roll out the STP initiative in other schools using the pupils from our two pilot project schools as mentors.
3. To have had a stronger commitment from the city council for the pilot action and its recommendations, as well as stronger recognition of the increased city profile for leading in STP development in Lithuania.
4. To have a permanent PR person for the project / pilot action. The city of Kaunas currently has no marketing or PR Division and therefore a lack of resources / little interest in promoting successful projects. I believe that this is a huge issue within the city and one that has an adverse affect on city participation in successful EU projects – such as BUSTRIP.

Lessons learnt

For all the planning that we did, we could not have foreseen the political changes that happened within the project; political changes that saw a Director of one of the schools become the Head of the city Municipality Administration (the most important position within the city administration after the city Mayor) – as well as a community leader involved at the beginning of the project with one of the schools becoming a city councillor and chair of the City Budget Commission.

These political changes came towards the end of the year (November 2007) but they mean that we now have a true commitment to deliver on some of the STP's recommendations. I understand that this will see new cycle shelters being built at the schools, improvement to the pedestrian walkways along side main roads near to the schools, and improvements to road signs near to schools. Although these improvements will not happen until early in the new year they nevertheless represent a significant achievement for the BUSTRIP pilot action in Kaunas.

What are the transferability potentials of the pilot action?

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I believe that there is tremendous transferability potential with this project. In Kaunas, as already mentioned, we have several continuation activities that will maintain interest in the pilot action. Also, because we are perhaps the first city in the Baltics to work on School Travel plans with pupils of this age group – 15-17 years, we feel that this is a unique point for exchange.

Project recommendations include:

- empower young people to make their own decisions – don't make decisions on their behalf
- Develop a reward system as a motivation tool – but it has to be what young people suggest
- Political support – final pilot action recommendations need to be supported at the highest level
- Needs to be a flexible municipality administration system
- Ability to link pilot action to other relevant initiatives
- Look to promote the results as widely as possible.

It has been a real pleasure working with such motivated, enthusiastic young people too, because they needed minimal guidance and management, they did not generate any bureaucratic processes that made decisions difficult to make or impossible to implement.
