

Inter-Connect PLUS

Newsletter 2



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Inter-Connect PLUS final conference

Project partners, relevant stakeholders, and participants interested in modalities of improving sustainable passenger transport took part in Inter-Connect PLUS Final conference that was held online on 22 June 2022.

The event gathered representatives from the Interreg ADRION Programme as well as the EUSAIR Strategy, that provided a macro-perspective of the passenger transport in the Adriatic-Ionian region, stating its importance also for the future programming period.

Inter-Connect PLUS partnership presented to the audience the work that has been performed in the last 6 months by sharing key project outputs. The impact of COVID-19, especially in terms of managing new norms and travel demands, led to an update of Inter-Connect Roadmap and Toolkit, useful for all ADRION transport decision makers and key actors. Furthermore, determining passenger flows between the nodes of Zagreb and the Adriatic coast in Croatia, and identifying measures for the development of public transport and intermodality on the corridor Ljubljana airport-Ljubljana-Koper in Slovenia – were two practical cases performed on a national level that took in consideration the pandemic effect.

This final virtual event was not only an occasion to present the results of cooperation in the framework of the Inter-Connect PLUS project but also an opportunity to further discuss about ways to improve the sustainable connectivity of the Adriatic-Ionian region. Our diverse speakers-stakeholders involved in the event's last session shared their prolific experience and a vision of intermodality in the future. They agreed that the tools for improving ADRION's connectivity in that sense already exist, but we need to make stronger effort on making them more efficient and sustainable.



Intermodal Passenger Transport after COVID-19 pandemic breakout – Topic Guide

In order to find out the impact of COVID-19 pandemic in passengers' mobility, Inter-Connect PLUS partners reviewed the situation in ADRION countries and Inter-Connect PLUS cases while online surveys to citizens and transport and tourism stakeholders were conducted for adding real users wisdom in the final guide for the next day of mobility. Good practices, policy initiatives and pop-up measures were:

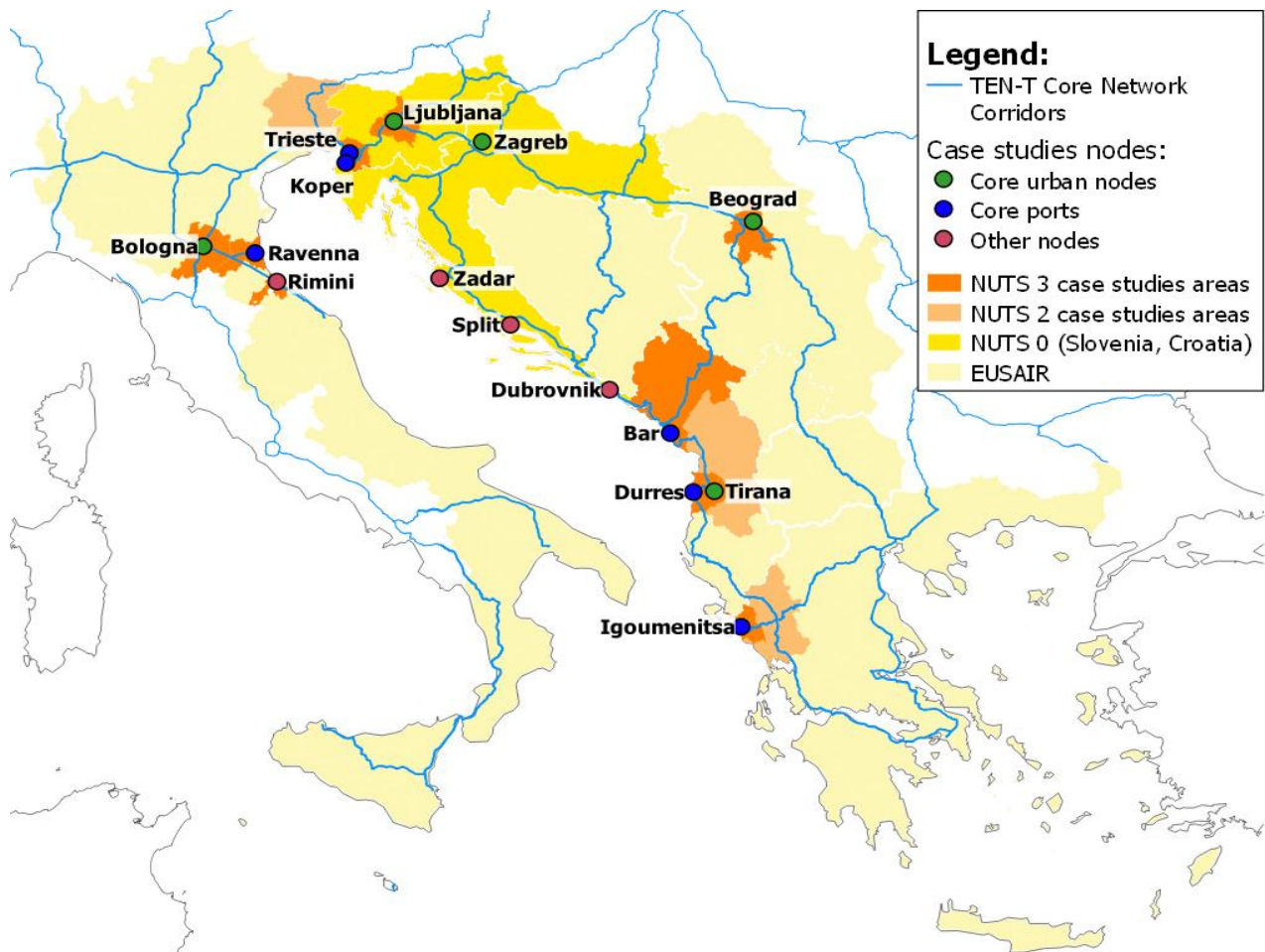
- reviewed in a three-phases (Phase A February 2020 – June 2020: Complete Lockdown, Phase B July 2020 – October 2020: Release of measures, Phase C November 2020 – March 2022: Light lockdown /on-off measures) and
- done according to the 7As framework (Awareness, Avoidance, Act and Shift, Anticipation of new technologies, Actor involvement, Acceleration, and Adaptation of behavior).

The above methodology concluded in a Roadmap for the short-term horizon (up to 2025) with measures (decalogue) to support sustainable and active mobility boost.



Inter-Connect PLUS recommendations on integrated mobility promotion in the ADRION region

In the framework of the Inter-Connect PLUS project, ITL in collaboration with the others project's partners update the Inter-Connect works related to the promotion of the integrated mobility in the ADRION Region. This new work started from the main changes occurred in the last two years: the Covid-19 emergency and new EU rules on sustainable mobility and TEN-T networks development. For this reason the study focused on two main aspects: 1) Make an update with the project's partners in order to understand how the Inter-Connect case studies evolved in these difficult years; 2) Analyzing more in deep the Proposal for the amendment of Reg. (EU) 1315/2013 [2021/0420(COD)] related to the EU TEN-T Network. All these analyses were summarized on a dedicated report. All these analysis confirm and strengthen the 25 recommendations identified as part of the Inter-Connect Project, around the strategy + value, network + space, governance + time, finance + funding, and research + data areas aimed to promote of interconnectivity for passenger services between local, regional and national transport flows and international/transnational long-distance traffic, between and across transport and urban nodes located along the Core Network Corridors, with a focus on intermodality between public transport services (particularly by railway) and maritime transport.

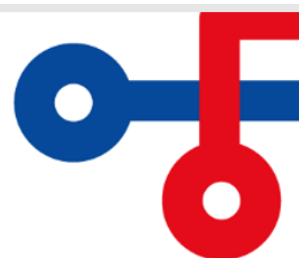


Inter-Connect PLUS Case studies updates

The current state of transport and mobility in Croatia has been analysed in a dedicated study performed by project partner HZPP, which also shed light on the impact of COVID-19 in Croatia, as the number of passengers saw a drastic decline in all means of public transport, while the use of private transport increased.

A specific survey investigated the use of public and private transport modes both before and during the COVID-19 pandemic, obtaining roughly 900 responses, which underlined once again a big decrease in the use of tram and train in favour of private cars. Moreover, when asked which factors influenced the transport choice, the travel time, the service frequency, the freedom of movement and the cost were listed as the most decisive ones. Safety during the pandemic also had a relevant impact, as bicycles and cars were the safest modes with regard to the risk of contracting covid-19. In this purpose, users demanded a higher level of vehicles sanitization, as well as the reduction of available seats in order to be able to keep a distance from other passengers.

Keeping in mind all results obtained during this analysis, the strategic goals to enhance public transport services request a higher level of coordination among different modes of transport and operators, as well as a better customization of services, the provision of ICT tools and digital booking system as well as a better promotion of new and existing services and solutions.



Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on rail transport in Croatia - a review of the "Feasibility Study in the function of defining the methodology for determining passenger flows between the nodes of Zagreb and the Adriatic coast,,

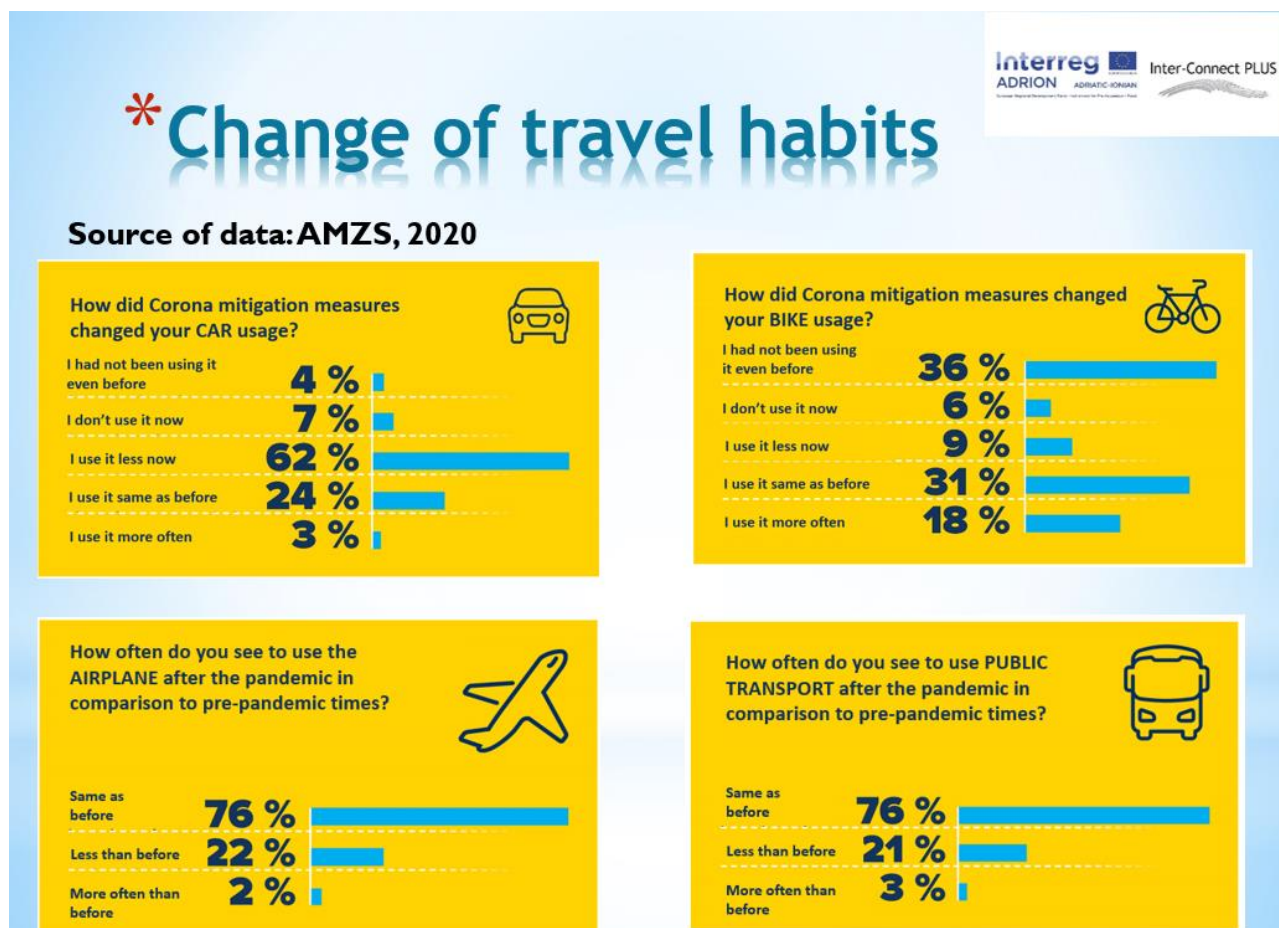
Another analysis with observation of COVID-19 effects on public transport has been performed in Slovenia by project partner RRALUR. In this sense, measures for the development of public transport and intermodality were analysed on the pilot corridor Ljubljana airport-Ljubljana-Koper. As in the case of Croatia, the aim of the study developed in the framework of the project was to analyse the state of the art of the transport sector in Slovenia and the impact of COVID-19 on public services' usage. The study also saw the



cooperation of local and regional stakeholders, who offered their own input and point of view on how to strengthen public transport and behavioural change among citizens and tourists.

Once again, data reported a relevant drop in the presences of users on public transport, with a 81% reduction of passengers during the first lockdown of 2020. The same applies to cruise ships arriving to port of Koper, which was greatly affected during the pandemic by the low number of passengers. Nonetheless, the number of passengers is now on track to reach the same numbers of 2019.

Looking at the main challenges to increase the use of public transport services, some main factors are represented by the travel speed, the frequency of travels (shortening the intervals between bus departures from initial stops) and the modernization of the fleet.



Roundtable on behavioural change of PT users held in Zagreb

The roundtable on Development and strengthening of the role of multimodal public transport in all segments from a passenger and touristic perspective was held on 28 April 2022 in Zagreb at the Ministry of Regional Development and European Union Funds (MRRFEU), organized by HŽ Passenger Transport and the Directorate for Islands of MRRFEU.

The event was organized by the MIMOSA project (Interreg Italy – Croatia) and the Inter-Connect PLUS project, where following topics were addressed:

- Solutions and services for sustainable maritime and multimodal passenger transport, MRRFEU
- Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the transport sector, HŽPP
- Efficiency analysis of current multimodal maritime transport solutions within the MIMOSA project, MRRFEU.

With this event, HŽPP presented own work i.e. study that is elaborating new patterns of behaviour, new requirements, and new rules regarding the mobility of citizens during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study analyzes the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the transport sector, namely rail transport in Croatia due to the fact that health measures have a great impact on the psychology and behavior of passengers. The aim of the study is to analyze the entire business of the company, determine the consequences of the pandemic and create a new approach for improving transport sector.

Participants discussed also how to encourage tourists and locals to use public transport services and what solutions could contribute to more efficient mobility planning.



Emilia-Romagna Region and ITL joint local dissemination event

It was held in Bologna, on 10 June 2022, the local scientific event dedicated to the promotion of the public transport integration. The meeting was divided in two separate sessions: one dedicated to the international, European and national experiences on public transport integration, with a specific focus on the fares integration solutions. The second part was dedicated to present some Emilia-Romagna best practices. In this framework the Emilia-Romagna Region presented the main effort putted in place in order to increase the regional public transport integration. T-Per, the Bologna public transport authority, presented the update related to the regional Maas App called Roger. The Bologna Mobility Agency (SRM-Reti e Mobilità) presented the Interreg Central Europe SMACKER pilot action focusing on the test of an demand-responsive transport solution in a mountain area. Start Romagna presented the Rail Smart Pass, a bus-train integrated ticket developed also in the framework of the Inter-Connect project. Finally the Bologna airport presented some concrete actions implemented in the past years in order to improve better accessibility to the public transport options. The event was organized as a joint event also with the EU projects REFORM and Interreg Italy-Croatia project MIMOSA.



Inter-Connect PLUS Greek Joint Event

A joint virtual workshop with REFORM Interreg Europe project was held on 17 June 2022, with an aim to open a wide discussion with stakeholders and municipalities of Region of Central Macedonia (RCM) regarding the effect of COVID-19 pandemic on connectivity and sustainable mobility.

Ms. Glykeria Myroval from CERTH/HIT presented Inter-Connect and Inter-Connect PLUS projects' approach, linking their final recommendations with marketing techniques and methods for awareness raising and sensibilization of travelers towards sustainable modes of transport (Word of Mouth, Cause Marketing, Digital Marketing, Dialogue Marketing, Relationship Marketing, Wheel of persuasion, Guerilla and Undercover Marketing).

At the end of the workshop, the participants (the representatives of RCM Municipalities) were asked to present their experience from the pandemic and link them with awareness raising efforts. The enthusiasm of the participants verified the need to engage real users, therefore travelers, in the mobility decision making.

The screenshot shows a virtual meeting interface with several participants at the top: Άννα Πούλιου, ΠΤΑ ΚΜ, Stefanos Angelis, ΓΛΥΚΕΡΙΑ ΜΥΡΟΒΑΛΗ, ΕΚΕΤΑ/ΙΜΕΤ, Maria Morfoulaki, V.Patoulidou, and X. Falegkas. The main presentation slide is titled "Inter-Connect PLUS" and contains the following elements:

- η επίδραση της πανδημίας COVID-19 στην κινητικότητα και στον τουρισμό** (The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mobility and tourism)
- έρευνες πολιτών** (Citizen research)
- έρευνες φορέων (μεταφορές και τουρισμός)** (Research of entities (transport and tourism))
- ανασκόπηση** (Review)
- Interventions' categories** (A 3D diagram showing categories like private vehicles, public transport, etc.)
- Interventions' categories** (A table listing various interventions and their status)
- ARCH** (A logo featuring a stylized virus/cell)
- Interreg ADRION ADRIATIC-IONIAN** (Logo of the Interreg ADRION ADRIATIC-IONIAN project)

Other dissemination events

On 28th of June, 2022, the Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform organized its first onsite workshop of the year in Thessaloniki, Greece. The topic of the event was behavior change and participatory processes for sustainable mobility. During the event CERTH/HIT had the opportunity to present to the audience the results of Inter-Connect PLUS project posing a specific focus on the need of engagement in order to achieve a real shift of travelers towards active and sustainable mobility in the after COVID-19 era.



The aim of the presentation was to present a link of Inter-Connect and Inter-Connect PLUS project outputs with travellers' engagement in sustainable mobility; innovative for decision-making although widely and effectively used techniques in the marketing sector (Word of Mouth, Cause Marketing, Digital Marketing, Dialogue Marketing, Relationship Marketing, Wheel of persuasion, Guerilla and Undercover Marketing) were mixed with key findings of the two projects.

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GDPR Policy

We are sure you are aware that new laws about data protection have come into force in May 2018. As your privacy is important to us, we wanted to assure you that your data will only be used to keep you informed about the latest activities of INTER-CONNECT PLUS and invite you to INTER-CONNECT PLUS events. We will not give out your data to any other third party address on its mailings list nor to other people without your permission.

You do not need to do anything unless you no longer wish to receive emails concerning INTER-CONNECT PLUS project. Should this be the case, please contact us in reply to the email stating this fact. If we don't hear from you we shall assume you wish to continue receiving information about INTER-CONNECT PLUS and keep your email address on our list.

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