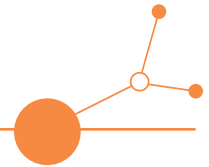
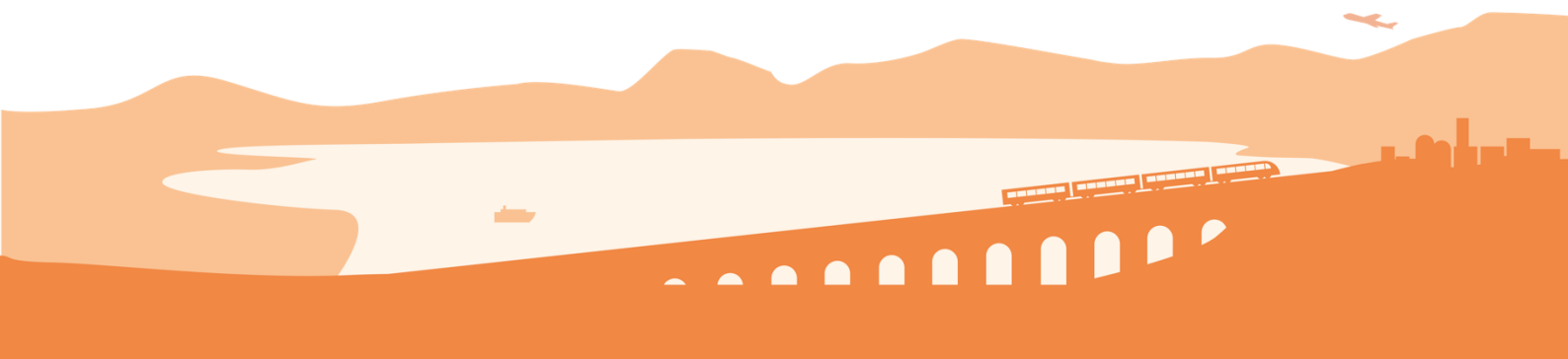


# D1.4.3 Final report on pilot 1.2: governance and planning model for integrated DRT-public transport



Final Version  
09 2025





## Authors and log change of the document

Partner No.	Partner Acronym	Name of the author	Action	Version
2	Redmint	Gabriele Grea Anja Seyfert	Template	0
1	SRM	Chiara Lepori Dario Marchini	1st version of the document	1
11	nexus	Wiebke Blum Carlo Thomsen Martin Schlecht	Drafting of Stuttgart pilot chapter	2
9	RMO	Jakob Britz	Drafting of East Tyrol pilot chapter	2
11	nexus	Wiebke Blum Carlo Thomsen Martin Schlecht	Consolidation and forwarding to the reviewers	3
10	TUB	Massimo Moraglio	Review of the document	4
11	nexus	Wiebke Blum	Addressing of reviewers' comments and preparation of proposed final version	Proposed final
9	RMO	Jakob Britz	Addressing of reviewers' comments and preparation of proposed final version	Proposed final
2	Redmint	Gabriele Grea Anja Seyfert	Review of the document	Proposed final
1	SRM	Chiara Lepori Dario Marchini	Edited approved version for official release	Final



## Contents

1. Executive summary .....	4
2. Introduction .....	5
3. Stuttgart Region, Baden-Württemberg .....	6
3.1. The pilot testing elements .....	6
3.1.1. The solution components to be tested .....	6
3.1.2. Stakeholder involvement, competences and roles.....	9
3.2. Pilot management and testing implementation .....	11
3.2.1. Activities and responsibilities.....	11
3.2.2. Timeline .....	13
3.2.3. Analysis of deviations.....	14
3.3. Results of peer-review and alignment actions after 30 June 2025 .....	15
3.4. Conclusions of the testing phase .....	15
3.4.1. Outcomes of the testing phase.....	15
3.4.2. Lessons learned.....	17
3.4.3. Fine tuning and joint finalization of the modular components.....	17
4. East Tyrol .....	19
4.1. The pilot testing elements .....	19
4.1.1. The solution components to be tested .....	19
4.1.2. Stakeholder involvement, competences and role.....	20
4.2. Pilot management and testing implementation .....	21
4.2.1. Activities and responsibilities.....	21
4.2.2. Focus on procurement .....	22
4.2.3. Timeline .....	23
4.2.4. Analysis of deviations.....	24
4.3. Results of peer-review and alignment actions by 30 June 2025.....	24
4.4. Conclusions of the testing phase .....	25



4.4.1. Outcomes of the testing phase.....	25
4.4.2. Lessons learned.....	26
4.4.3. Fine tuning and joint finalization of the modular components.....	27
5. Conclusions .....	28
6. References.....	30
7. Annex: Pilot 1.2 local and project media releases communicating the results of testing actions, and public presentations summary (from 1 July 2025 ahead) .....	31
7.1. Stuttgart .....	31
7.2. East Tyrol.....	31



# 1. Executive summary

The territory of central Europe is characterised by uneven transport connections and mobility opportunities, across and within regions, between urbanized contexts and rural and peripheral areas.

The project's common challenge is to improve accessibility and connectivity in CE peripheral and rural areas through better integration of public transport networks with Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) services, building on joint development and implementation of governance, planning, digital and operational innovations.

DREAM\_PACE will develop innovative DRT concepts complementing regional mobility networks.

The project will improve DRT planning and delivery capacities of public authorities and operators.

A new generation of DRT services will become functional and integral part of regional mobility networks, enhancing accessibility for citizens, territorial cohesion and social inclusion. Integration is the key to the DREAM\_PACE innovative approach, as DRT services are mostly developed as stand-alone solutions to specific needs, the potential of scalable strategies and solutions is widely underestimated.

Project Partners (thereafter PP) will jointly develop a strategy for DRT in Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans to be adopted at EU level, co-design, test and implement innovative DRT solutions enhancing mobility networks. Strategies and solutions will foster a better integration of DRT and public transport (Bologna, Pavia, Budapest areas), support a higher coordination among existing DRT initiatives (Osttirol, Baden-Württemberg) and experiment new integrated approaches for DRT "green fields" (Split-Dalmatia County).

DREAM\_PACE will exploit the potential of integrated planning and digital and operational innovations for a common strategy and develop innovative DRT modular solutions. The project implementation builds on transnational cooperation to guarantee an adequate responsiveness and adaptability of project results to specific characteristics of mobility ecosystems across CE rural and peripheral areas.

This deliverable is the final report on pilot 1.2 "Governance and planning of a coordinated DRT network enhancing accessibility in peripheral and rural regions" activities developed in the pilot areas of Calw in Stuttgart (Germany) and East Tyrol (Austria) until 30 September 2025. It follows the structure of the workplans presented in D1.4.1 and of the intermediate reports presented in D1.4.2 and outlines the outcomes of the testing phase, the lessons learned and the fine tuning and joint finalization of the modular components of the governance and planning model.

Chapter 2 recalls the context, objectives, and scope of pilot 1.2.

Chapters 3 and 4 present the pilot 1.2 final achievements across the two pilot regions.

Chapter 5 drafts the conclusions of the deliverable at project level, summarizing the results of pilot 1.1 achieved by 30 September 2025, and highlighting their relevance for building up the DREAM\_PACE solutions.

The Annex contains the local and project media releases that have been used to communicate the results of the testing actions in the four pilot regions, and public presentations summary.



## 2. Introduction

Pilot 1.2 “Governance and planning of a coordinated DRT network enhancing accessibility in peripheral and rural regions” focuses on improving governance structures and planning processes for Demand-Responsive Transport (DRT) services in rural and peripheral regions across Europe. Given the challenges of limited public transport options and mobility gaps in these areas, this pilot aims to enhance the coordination and integration of DRT solutions, ensuring they effectively complement existing mobility networks. The initiative builds on the insights gained from the living labs, where stakeholders collaboratively developed governance and planning strategies tailored to the needs of each pilot region. This pilot action is implemented in the pilot areas of Stuttgart (Germany) and East Tyrol (Austria).

The governance and planning schemes are composed of the following.

In Stuttgart, Germany:

- Estimating possible demands of different target groups in cooperation with the local stakeholders using the “Persona method”;
- Recording motivations and hindrances of users and non-users of the DRT in pilot testing region Calw;
- Fostering and strengthening interregional collaboration through a workshop on DRT Governance in Baden-Württemberg.

In East Tyrol, Austria:

- Developing a blueprint for sustainable mobility by identifying gaps in public transport services and potential demand;
- Collaborating with stakeholders, including local authorities, transport providers, and digital service platforms, to evaluate suitable DRT solutions;
- Integrating DRT strategies into the existing mobility framework to enhance accessibility in rural and peripheral areas.

Both pilot regions emphasized participatory processes, ensuring that citizen engagement and stakeholder involvement remained at the core of decision-making. By integrating public input and fostering collaboration between municipalities, transport operators, and regional authorities, the pilot aimed to develop governance models that are both adaptable and scalable. The results of these tests served as a foundation for future DRT governance strategies, offering valuable insights into how coordinated planning approaches can enhance accessibility and mobility in peripheral and rural regions. The testing activities built on the existing DRT services in the two pilot areas. In particular, the pilot testing in the Stuttgart region focused on stakeholder engagement and participative processes, which would foster better communication and exchange among relevant players involved in the future of DRT in the region.



## 3. Stuttgart Region, Baden-Württemberg

### 3.1. The pilot testing elements

Pilot: 1.2 Governance and planning of a coordinated DRT network enhancing accessibility in peripheral and rural regions

Pilot area: Stuttgart Region/Calw, Baden-Württemberg

Peer reviewers: NVBW (Nahverkehrsgesellschaft Baden-Württemberg) and Municipality of Calw (previous Austria Tech, Redmint)

#### 3.1.1. The solution components to be tested

The Stuttgart pilot addresses two Pilot 1.2 components:

Component 1: **Strategic planning approach to DRT (strategic guidance for DRT coordination)**. This component was addressed through the testing of a planning methodology based on personas, and through a dynamic survey tool for monitoring and fine-tuning DRT services performance that was tested on the field and result propositions to fine tuning the service.

Component 2: **Alternative business model for DRT operation** (former “Business model for crowdsourcing (tested by engaging potential participants)”). The reason given for the renaming is that actual crowdsourcing has been very difficult to implement in a service, that is financed through public money. This is why the focus has been on alternative models. While the local “Rufbus” (on demand bus/ bus on call) is operated and funded by the municipality as part of the regular public transport, another DRT is the “Bürgerbus” (citizens bus). The Bürgerbus is operated and driven by volunteering citizens from the commune. Due to a lack of availability, it was not possible to conduct interviews with operators of the “Bürgerbus”. It was also not possible to exchange information with the NVBW, as it was not possible to find a suitable date due to prolonged downtime. As a result, the focus was placed on desktop research, which nevertheless generated very helpful results.

The Stuttgart pilot activities suggested a **new approach to demand analysis for monitoring and adaptive planning of DRT services in low demand areas, organized in the following 4 modules.**

Module 1) **Co-Design through Living Lab**: estimating possible demands of different target groups in cooperation with the local stakeholders using the “Persona method”.

Several meetings with the municipality of Calw were organized to define the scope in which the solutions can be designed. Using the persona method, potential target groups for the DRT service and their needs were analysed. The persona method is derived from a Design Thinking approach and aims to create detailed profiles of typical users by anticipating their motivations, struggles, and preferences. This method helps visualize the challenges users face and how DRT can meet their needs for mobility.

To validate and supplement these findings, further research methods were applied:

- Surveys targeting both users and non-users of DRT;
- Assessment of awareness regarding DRT services;
- In-vehicle interviews with users;
- Stakeholder interviews to understand the motivations and needs of passengers.

Module 2) **Recording motivations and hindrances of users and non-users of the DRT.**



In order to reach both users and non-users of the DRT, the interviews took place at two locations: the pedestrians' zone in Calw and onboard the DRT vehicles. The municipality provided the DRT booking schedule, and drivers were informed in advance about the planned interviews. Interviewers waited at pick-up points, requesting permission to interview passengers during their rides.

In the pedestrians' zone, a broader assessment was conducted to understand the main modes of transport used in Calw and the popularity of DRT services. Two posters were displayed to attract public interest. One showed different modes of transport (car, public transport, bicycle, walking, and DRT), while the other presented a popularity scale for DRT. Passersby placed stickers to indicate their preferred transport mode and opinion on DRT.

Additionally, participants were invited to complete a questionnaire. The questions, aligned with the guideline for interviews in the DRT were divided into two categories:

- Non-users: exploring reasons preventing them from using DRT;
- Users: identifying motivations and advantages of the service.

The final results provided valuable insights into how DRT is used, which target groups benefit, and which groups face challenges accessing the service.

### Module 3) Strengthening Interregional Collaboration through a workshop on DRT Governance.

This module focuses on identifying strengths and weaknesses of DRT at the interregional level. Once target groups and their needs were analysed, a workshop was held to compare results with neighbouring regions.

Since Calw and surrounding regions share similar geographical characteristics, with small towns and villages scattered across rural areas, transport challenges are often comparable. DRT managers and operators from these regions were invited to discuss common problems and potential solutions.

Three key governance topics have already been identified as critical for successful DRT operation:

- Marketing: how to effectively communicate DRT services to the right target groups;
- Financing: exploring sustainable funding models beyond regional subsidies;
- Service Flexibility: identifying ways to balance adaptability with operational efficiency.

During the workshop, participants first conducted a problem analysis, detailing the root causes of problems, those affected, and the stakeholders involved. Then, they explored potential solutions and best practices that could be replicated across multiple regions. The goal was to strengthen interregional collaboration and highlight how working together could improve DRT services.

### Module 4) Investigating other models of funding for DRT (former "Challenges in Governance and Funding").

The reason given for the renaming is that Challenges in Governance and Funding is problem-oriented. The new name reflects a focus on finding solutions.

Many counties in Southern Germany face similar challenges, such as securing long-term funding, finding reliable operators, marketing to the right target groups, and ensuring that DRT complements rather than competes with the public transport. However, given the highly fragmented and federalized nature of governance and mobility planning in the Stuttgart region, a large variety of implementation solutions across different counties exist. Consequently, different financing and funding schemes exist, yet most DRT projects are funded or co-funded by the public supra-regional actor NVBW.

A central goal of the pilot was to bring together different stakeholders from different regions around Stuttgart to compare solutions and include best practice examples of DRT governance as a means of learning from each other and fostering fruitful interregional exchange in a highly part compartmentalized,



federalized governance system. Next to other topics discussed, a central element is the discussion of financing options, co-financing and sponsorship models, including potential public-private partnerships.

Significant barriers to alternative financing beyond regular state-funded DRT are present in the pilot region. First, private co-funding is not legally feasible under the current framework for DRT operations. Since DRT services are managed by public authorities, legal restrictions prevent municipalities from securing advertising revenue or external sponsorships. Second, the pilot case study Calw's DRT system is in itself highly fragmented, with 12 different sub-contractors managing operations within the relatively small district. This decentralized structure makes uniform funding strategies difficult to implement.

In order to gain insights about funding options and variations, two diverging business models for DRT are explored and compared in the pilot region of Calw: the municipalities public-funded DRT service, existing as a complementary part of general public mobility services, as well as a private, bottom-up and initially self-organized DRT service called “Bürgerbus” which functions largely on the basis of voluntary citizen work (e.g. seniors as taxi/bus drivers).

In detail, the activities carried out in the four modules described above are framed in the Components as described in the following.

#### **Component 1: Strategic planning approach to DRT.**

A central element of the strategic planning approach in the Stuttgart pilot was the application of the persona methodology to better understand and anticipate the mobility needs of peripheral and rural populations. Nexus introduced the method through co-creative workshops with local authorities in Calw. During these sessions, detailed user profiles were developed to represent key demographic groups, including elderly residents, commuters, teenagers, and occasional riders.

These personas aim to uncover distinct travel behaviours and service expectations and served as a guiding framework for both service design and communication strategies. Simulating the DRT experience through the lens of different personas allows planners to highlight critical user needs. This approach also helped identify potential access barriers and informs recommendations for better coordination between DRT and existing public transport.

To support the continuous optimization of the DRT service in Calw, a dynamic survey tool was developed to gather structured feedback from both users and non-users throughout the pilot phase. The tool combined digital methods (QR-code-based mobile forms) and analogic approaches (in-person interviews, visual voting elements) to capture diverse insights into service experience, usability, and barriers to usage.

The survey was developed through a multi-step process. First, the survey's objectives were clearly defined—specifically, identifying what information should be gathered from the target groups, which include both users and non-users of the DRT system in Calw. The focus was on analysing usage behaviour, awareness of the system, and satisfaction with the service. Based on these goals, relevant questions were developed using a mix of open and closed formats to gain both quantitative and qualitative insights.

The survey was then structured in a logical and user-friendly way to ensure clarity and ease of completion. Related questions are grouped into thematic blocks, and questions that build on one another are placed in sequence. Suitable data collection channels—such as online surveys via QR code and in-person interviews—were selected. Before full rollout, a short pilot phase was conducted to test the survey's clarity and functionality.

A survey station was set up in a public pedestrian zone, and additional interviews were conducted aboard DRT vehicles. The insights collected informed several key recommendations for operators, including suggestions for stop adjustments, communication improvements, and better alignment with user expectations. This tool also created a feedback loop for refining personas and guiding long-term strategic



planning. Additionally, it served as a basis for project-side recommendations that can then be implemented by the partner (Calw).

**Component 2: Alternative business model for DRT operation** (former “Business model for crowdsourcing”)

As part of the Stuttgart pilot project, business model approaches were examined and compared to assess how various stakeholders - such as local authorities, operators, users and local businesses - can contribute to and benefit from the long-term sustainability of DRT services. Based on stakeholder involvement during the LL and the pilot project, as well as secondary research, two different **DRT models were compared in terms of the following aspects:**

- **Customer Segments & Value Proposition:** Who is mainly using the DRT service? To whom is it accessible? How does the booking work?
- **Routing:** Which routes does the DRT service cover? Where does it stop?
- **Operation:** How is the booking organized? Who is in charge of scheduling and organizing the rides?
- **Cost & Revenue:** How is the service financed? How sustainable is the financing?

These findings were to be obtained on the basis of a comparative analysis between publicly funded and planned DRT governance and local private-public initiatives such as the “Bürgerbus” (citizens' bus) in Calw, which were examined in the context of LL meetings, studies on financing models and a face-to-face workshop.

The desired results were largely achieved in component 2. The plan was to enter into dialogue with the operators of the “Bürgerbus”. As described, this was unfortunately not possible. As a result, a literature review was conducted to achieve the desired results. Among other things, the focus was on examining financing models. Accordingly, there were no LL meetings on the topic of the “Bürgerbus”.

**3.1.2. Stakeholder involvement, competences and roles**

The following table provides an overview of the stakeholders involved in the pilot between 1 July and 30 September 2025, outlining their main competences, roles, and specific contributions to the activities carried out during this period.

To identify strengths and weaknesses in the operation of the DRT, a variety of relevant stakeholders were identified. First, the operators’ perspective is important to understand the regulatory and operational framework in which the DRT service is implemented. Their perspective is crucial for the governance and development of the service. To get insight into common but also specific issues and topics in the operation of DRT in the region around Calw, multiple authorities and responsible persons for the operation of public transport in the surrounding municipalities were involved. Additionally, the perspective of users and potential users is important to understand. Therefore, citizens were involved in the analysis of the DRT service. To get an insight into how the municipalities currently work together, the NVBW, as federal mobility authority, was invited to inform the process on policies and governance on this higher level.

Type of stakeholder*	Name and brief description	Competences, role and contribution to the pilot	Involvement between 1 July - 30 September 2025
General public	Citizens / users of DRT	Interview partners, providing valuable insights in motivations and reasons for using the DRT; Providing information about possibilities to improve the service.	Not involved between 1 July and 30 September 2025



**DREAM\_PACE**

Type of stakeholder*	Name and brief description	Competences, role and contribution to the pilot	Involvement between 1 July - 30 September 2025
General public	Citizens / non-users of DRT	Survey participants and Interview partners, all together providing an overview on the use of various modes of transport in the city and the popularity of the DRT amongst the citizens. Furthermore, giving valuable insights in reasons that keep people from using the DRT as well as demands in demand responsive mobility.	Not involved between 1 July and 30 September 2025
Local authority	Municipality, department of mobility, public transport and railway transportation.	Connection to the local municipality. Valuable insights into local DRT system, local network of stakeholders and support for carrying out the pilot (e.g. provision of workshop space). Contribution to concept of pilot as participant of the living labs.	Not involved between 1 July and 30 September 2025
Regional authority	Nahverkehrsgesellschaft Baden-Württemberg (NVBW) - DREAM_PACE Associated partner  NVBW is the public transport authority for the federal state of Baden Wuerttemberg, which belongs to the federal ministry of mobility and coordinates the public transport in the county	Contribution to and reviewing of the pilot concept, provision of contacts to stakeholders. Providing information about inter-regional governance and policies. Participant of the stakeholder workshop and the living labs.	Not involved between 1 July and 30 September 2025
Local authority	Karlsruher Verkehrsverbund (KVV)  KVV is a DRT provider from the region of Karlsruhe	Participant of the stakeholder workshop, providing knowledge of DRT service (KVV.myshuttle) and governance in the region of Karlsruhe.	Not involved between 1 July and 30 September 2025
Local authority	Verkehrs - und Tarifverbund Stuttgart GmbH (VVS)  VVS is a DRT provider from the region of Ludwigsburg	Participant of the stakeholder workshop, providing knowledge of DRT service (VVS-Rider) and governance in the region of Ludwigsburg.	Not involved between 1 July and 30 September 2025



Type of stakeholder*	Name and brief description	Competences, role and contribution to the pilot	Involvement between 1 July - 30 September 2025
Local authority	Nahverkehrsverbund Rottweil. It is a DRT provider from the region of Rottweil	Participant of the stakeholder workshop, providing knowledge of DRT service and governance in the region of Rottweil.	Not involved between 1 July and 30 September 2025
Local authority	Verkehrsgesellschaft Freudenstadt (VGF) VGF is a DRT provider from the region of Freudenstadt	Participant of the stakeholder workshop, providing knowledge of DRT service (DRT Taxi) and governance in the region of Freudenstadt.	Not involved between 1 July and 30 September 2025
Local authority	Operators of the “Bürgerbus” in the region of Calw	The operators of the “Bürgerbus” were supposed to be involved through interviews in order to obtain further information about their model. Unfortunately, it was not possible to arrange an exchange.	Not involved between 1 July and 30 September 2025

\*Stakeholder types: National/Regional/Local Authority; PTO/PTA; Digital service provider (specify if SME); Association; General public; Other (specify).

## 3.2. Pilot management and testing implementation

### 3.2.1. Activities and responsibilities

The following table lists the different steps - in form of consequent activities - that are envisaged for the testing of the pilot solution components.

For each testing activity, the expected result to be achieved are reported, together with the relevant KPI / target for the validation of the testing activity itself.

The last column reports the status of the testing activity and the respective KPI / expected result by 30 September 2025 (“Final” report).

#	Activity	Description	Expected result/ KPI	Status of the KPI by 30 September 2025
1	Estimating target groups from the operator’s perspective	Preparing an (online) workshop using the “persona” method with DRT provider and operator as well as municipal authorities.	Main target groups that are interesting for the governance level to focus on when analysing struggles and strengths of DRT.	Result achieved. Identification through workshops with persona method, results informed the pilot design.
2	Survey on most popular	Requesting permission to set up a stand in the	Impressions of non-users on DRT service,	Result achieved.



#	Activity	Description	Expected result/ KPI	Status of the KPI by 30 September 2025
	modes of transport and popularity of DRT as well as interviews on reasons for not using the DRT	pedestrian zone; conception of an interview guideline for users and non-users; preparing a stand including posters, pin boards, flyer.	identification of hindrances for using DRT from a user's perspective, overview of popularity and most used modes of transport and popularity of DRT in Calw.	<p>26 non-users were questioned in interviews and surveys on their mobility behaviour regarding the DRT. Reasons for choosing other modes of transport before the DRT were collected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of availability</li> <li>• Booking system</li> <li>• Safety concerns</li> <li>• No information about the offer</li> <li>• Lack of reliability</li> <li>• No suitable route or stops near me</li> </ul> <p>The reasons given by users and non-users were sometimes contradictory, which can be explained by a lack of information, meaning that non-users emphasised aspects that actually work well in a negative light.</p>
3	Interviews of users in the DRT	Requesting booking schedule for DRT from DRT provider to be able to interview passengers on the ride; conception of interview guideline; renting a car to get to the DRT-Stops.	Impressions of users on DRT service, motivations and strengths for using the DRT service, possibilities to optimize the service.	<p>Result achieved.</p> <p>Four DRT users were questioned in interviews and surveys on their mobility behaviour regarding the DRT. Reasons for choosing the DRT were collected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability</li> <li>• Waiting time is low</li> <li>• Comfort</li> <li>• Costs</li> <li>• Route</li> </ul>
4	Inter-regional stakeholder workshop	Conception of workshop, booking location, preparing templates for problem analysis and solution approaches, inviting relevant stakeholders.	Identification of common struggles, individual solutions and possibilities to work together; strengthening the inter-regional network on DRT-governance.	<p>Result achieved.</p> <p>Common goals and hindrances in operating the DRT services in the region were exchanged; the network was strengthened.</p>



#	Activity	Description	Expected result/ KPI	Status of the KPI by 30 September 2025
5	Desktop research	Scanning texts, brochures, Websites of Bürgerbusse in Calw and the Region of Stuttgart to analyse the organisation, structure and operation	Understanding operational structures to reproduce the organization of Bürgerbusse.	Result achieved. A plan for establishing a Bürgerbus was made based on the desktop research and information given by NVBW and municipality of Calw.

### 3.2.2. Timeline

The following table refers to the activities described above (see Activities and Responsibilities table) and outlines the timeline for their implementation and any deviations that occurred during the reporting period.

#*	Activity/ Milestone/other	Start	End/Achievement	Deviations
1	Estimating target groups from the operator's perspective		22/03/2024	No deviations after 30 June 2025
2	Survey on most popular modes of transport and popularity of DRT as well as interviews on reasons for not using the DRT	10/12/2024	11/12/2024	No deviations after 30 June 2025
3	Interviews of users in the DRT	10/12/2024	11/12/2024	No deviations after 30 June 2025
4	Inter-regional stakeholder workshop		12/12/2024	No deviations after 30 June 2025
5	Desktop research	01/06/2025	30/08/2025	No deviations after 30 June 2025
MI	Identification of target groups in LL-Workshop		22/03/2024	No deviations after 30 June 2025
MI	Finished pilot in Calw		12/12/2024	No deviations after 30 June 2025
MR	Publishing project on nexus Website	18/04/2023		No deviations after 30 June 2025
MR	LinkedIn Post on Pilot	20/12/2025		No deviations after 30 June 2025
PM	Pilot progress LL meeting #1 - stakeholder mapping	21/11/2023		No deviations after 30 June 2025
PM	Pilot progress LL meeting #2 - introducing DREAM_PACE to local authority in Calw	31/01/2024		No deviations after 30 June 2025
PM	Pilot progress LL meeting #3 - workshop: identification of target groups	22/03/2024		No deviations after 30 June 2025



#*	Activity/ Milestone/other	Start	End/Achievement	Deviations
PM	Pilot progress LL meeting #4 - Stekeholder mapping	26/11/2024		No deviations after 30 June 2025
PM	Pilot progress LL meeting #5 - State of the art clarification	12-18/06/2024 and 06/08/2024 <sup>1</sup>		No deviations after 30 June 2025
PM	Pilot progress LL meeting #6 - organisation of pilot / peer review of pilot actions	23/10/2024 and 26/11/2024 <sup>2</sup>		No deviations after 30 June 2025
PM	Pilot progress LL meeting #7 - Recap of pilot	08/01/2025		No deviations after 30 June 2025
PM	Pilot progress LL meeting #8 - Solution discussion	25/02/2025		No deviations after 30 June 2025
PR	Peer review of pilot results and action plan with NVBW and Calw Municipality (previous AustriaTech and Redmint)		14/01/2025	Real end: 25/02/2025

\*Milestones and other:

MI: Milestone (only has and end/achievement date)

MR: Media Release (please plan one at the beginning and one at the end of the pilot tests, and if relevant in correspondence of the milestone achievements)

PM: Periodic meeting (can be LL meetings with the stakeholders in order to launch/monitor/fine tune the tests)

PR: Peer Review of the tested solution component (with one or more project/associate partners)

### 3.2.3. Analysis of deviations

The following table provides a detailed explanation of the deviations to the timeline as identified in the table above, specifying their severity level and the adaptation or mitigation measures implemented where applicable.

Deviation	Severity*	Adaptation/Mitigation measure
Activity #PR - Peer review with NVBW (previous Austria Tech, Redmint) (real end: 25/02/2025)	1 - low	Date postponed from 14/01/2025 to 25/02/2025 due to a collision of appointments. Members of the NVBM were unable to attend the original meeting. The meeting was therefore postponed. The NVBW was selected as a peer reviewer because it is much closer to the topic in terms of subject matter, which has local relevance, and was therefore able to provide more informed feedback.

\* 1 - low; 2 - moderate; 3 - high; 4 - very high

<sup>1</sup> This topic was addressed across three separate meetings. A dedicated workshop had originally been planned, but due to last-minute cancellations by some participants, nexus opted to split the session into multiple meetings to ensure full participation and effective discussion.

<sup>2</sup> This topic was addressed across two separate meetings. A dedicated workshop had originally been planned, but due to last-minute cancellations by some participants, nexus opted to split the session into multiple meetings to ensure full participation and effective discussion.



### 3.3. Results of peer-review and alignment actions after 30 June 2025

The planned pilot actions were discussed with NVBW (selected as a peer reviewer due to its strong thematic relevance) and the Municipality of Calw, who is responsible for the DRT planning. This included the questions asked in the interviews and street survey with users and non-users of the DRT service as well as the method and discussed topics in the stakeholder workshop. The peer reviews of the pilot actions took place as online meetings on 23/10/2024 and 26/11/2024 (LL meeting #6). Follow up peer reviews on the pilot outcomes and solutions as part of the action plan were held on 25/02/25 with NVBW.

Since 30 June 2025, there have been no results of peer review and alignment measures to report, as there have been no developments since then.

### 3.4. Conclusions of the testing phase

#### 3.4.1. Outcomes of the testing phase

##### **Outcome #1: Bringing together different actors**

A key insight is that cooperation between different actors is essential for the further development of on-demand services. This became particularly evident during the inter-regional stakeholder workshop. Different perspectives help to better understand challenges and to develop suitable solutions. The exchange of experiences between districts, transport associations and political decision-makers enables mutual learning and strengthens collective capacity for action. This idea of networking represents an important outcome of the workshop, as it not only promotes knowledge transfer but also provides the foundation for the sustainable development of services.

##### **Outcome #2: Telephone and online booking**

The results of user surveys show that telephone booking remains indispensable for many passengers, but is prone to errors, cost-intensive and often associated with communication problems. The outcome is to professionalise telephone booking while at the same time complementing it with user-friendly digital alternatives. In this way, barriers for less tech-savvy individuals can be reduced, reliability improved and overall system efficiency enhanced.

##### **Outcome #3: No-shows**

No-shows by passengers place a significant burden on the system, as vehicles and staff are tied up and the provision of essential services is jeopardised. The issue affects contracting authorities, staff and passengers alike. The outcome is that only a joint approach by all stakeholders can provide relief. This includes raising awareness among passengers, applying sanctions for repeated misconduct where necessary, and implementing additional measures such as staff training and software improvements. This shows that a cooperative approach is essential to ensure fairness and efficiency in operations.

##### **Outcome #4: Target group orientation**

The diversity of target groups poses a challenge, as different expectations can lead to misunderstandings and problems of acceptance. The outcome is to involve local actors as multipliers in order to identify target groups precisely and to develop tailored strategies. In particular, the communication should take into account young people and those without a car, as they benefit most from the DRT. Clear, understandable communication and a target group-specific approach strengthen trust, increase usage and firmly anchor the service in everyday life.



### **Outcome #5: Limits of marketing**

Another challenge is that overly successful marketing can increase demand to such an extent that a transition to fixed-line services becomes unavoidable. This contradicts the original aim of on-demand services and threatens their continued existence. The outcome is that marketing can only be effective if it strategically focuses on clear branding while also taking systemic limits into account. This requires close coordination between stakeholders and supporting studies that sensitise political decision-makers and enable coordinated management of activities.

### **Outcome #6: Expansion of services**

Growing demand can be a sign of success, but it also confronts providers with the challenge of how to expand services without incurring considerable additional costs. If expansion is not planned in time, operational overload and frustration among users can occur. The outcome is that scenarios for possible expansion must be considered early on. Political decision-makers should be sensitised to these challenges so that the necessary resources are made available and a joint strategy for the timing and implementation of extensions can be developed.

### **Outcome #7: Sustainability of financing**

Ongoing uncertainty arises from the lack of a long-term financial basis. On-demand services risk being discontinued after pilot phases, even though they are already integrated into people's everyday lives. This makes it difficult to build a stable user base and undermines acceptance. The outcome is that a reliable system of regular financing is needed, secured by federal or EU funds. Only through structural changes, which clearly define responsibilities between the federal level, municipalities and associations, sustainable financing can be ensured and dependence on short-term budget cycles can be overcome.

### **Outcome #8: Barriers to usability and everyday suitability**

Surveys of non-users show that uncertainties about the service, limited operating hours and a lack of reliability are central barriers to the use of the DRT. The outcome is to make the service more visible, build trust through clear communication and align operating hours and availability more closely with people's mobility needs. In this way, the DRT can be reliably integrated into everyday routines and become a genuine alternative to existing modes of transport.

### **Outcome #9: Awareness and role of the „Bürgerbus“**

In many municipalities, the „Bürgerbus“ is still little known or is seen as a special solution. This can mean that the potential for flexible and socially embedded mobility is not fully exploited. The outcome is to establish „Bürgerbusse“ as a recognised part of public transport. Through targeted information campaigns and the involvement of municipalities, transport associations and civil society, „Bürgerbusse“ can strengthen their image as a sustainable, community-based complement to public transport.

### **Outcome #10: Dependence on voluntary engagement in „Bürgerbusse“**

A central problem is the strong dependence on voluntary drivers and civil society structures. This creates uncertainties in terms of continuity and reliability. The outcome is that municipalities and states must create framework conditions that ensure voluntary engagement on long term. These include legal clarity on insurance, funding programmes and organisational support so that „Bürgerbusse“ can be operated on a permanent basis.

### **Outcome #11 Transferability of the „Bürgerbus“ model**

One challenge is transferring the model to other regions, as legal and organisational frameworks differ. The outcome is that „Bürgerbusse“ can be established in other municipalities through the provision of guidelines,



checklists and funding instruments. Demonstrating successes on the ground and holding workshops with decision-makers help to create acceptance and motivation for adopting the model.

#### **Outcome #12: Combination of „Bürgerbusse“ and DRT services**

A key problem is that „Bürgerbusse“ rely heavily on voluntary engagement, while DRT services are professionally organised but often financially insecure. Both models have strengths that complement each other: „Bürgerbusse“ stand out through local anchoring, social proximity and everyday flexibility, while DRT services offer digital booking, greater reliability and institutional backing. The outcome is that combining the two approaches creates new synergies. „Bürgerbusse“ can be integrated into an overarching DRT system by taking on local feeder functions while at the same time being connected through digital platforms. This can reduce service gaps in rural areas, increase efficiency and strengthen the social dimension of mobility. The result is a hybrid model that makes use of both technological and community resources to secure sustainable, needs-based mobility in the long term.

### **3.4.2. Lessons learned**

#### **Lesson learned #1: Early involvement of key actors**

As operators of Bürgerbusse could not be interviewed in the project, their perspectives had to be derived from literature. A central learning is therefore to involve key actors at an early stage of planning and implementation in order to gain authentic insights and strengthen the validity of results.

#### **Lesson learned #2: Building networks strategically**

The exchange between different stakeholder groups proved particularly valuable, as it enabled knowledge transfer and mutual learning. A learning is that such networks should be fostered more frequently and in a structured way by creating regular platforms for joint exchange that can continue to have an impact beyond the project period.

#### **Lesson learned #3: Continuity in the project team**

A learning is that a stable project team is crucial for success. Frequent staff changes hinder knowledge transfer, slow down processes and can lead to friction losses. For future projects, attention should be paid to keeping the team stable throughout the entire project period in order to ensure consistency, trust and efficient collaboration.

#### **Lesson learned #4: Clear project structures from the outset**

A learning is that it is helpful for project success to establish clear structures right from the start and to plan the process according to milestones or work packages. This allows all participants to see which steps are coming up and how tasks are allocated. At the same time, the project design should remain flexible enough to adapt to new findings and changing conditions during implementation.

### **3.4.3. Fine tuning and joint finalization of the modular components**

#### **Component 1: Strategic planning approach to DRT (strategic guidance for DRT coordination).**

- The fine-tuning built on the persona-based planning method and dynamic survey tools tested in Calw. Inputs included workshops with municipal stakeholders, user and non-user interviews, and a public survey station. Outputs were refined user profiles, improved survey instruments, and recommendations for service adjustments.



- The finalisation combined insights from surveys, interviews, and the interregional governance workshop. Recommendations were consolidated into a planning framework that can guide future DRT service design.

#### **Component 2: Alternative business model for DRT operation (former “Business model for crowdsourcing”)**

- Inputs came from comparative research on publicly funded DRT models and volunteer-driven “Bürgerbusse”, complemented by stakeholder discussions in living labs and literature analysis. Although direct interviews with “Bürgerbus” operators were not possible, secondary sources provided insights into financing schemes, organisational responsibilities, and sustainability challenges. Outputs were a structured comparison of DRT models, highlighting trade-offs between professionalised, state-funded operations and voluntary, community-driven alternatives.
- The finalisation consisted of consolidating information on how to establish a “Bürgerbus” as alternative model for a DRT. A plan was made which steps to take and which actions to consider for municipalities, that would like to build a DRT based voluntary drivers. This approach on organising a DRT is a bottom-up approach, powered and run by the citizens themselves and supported by the municipality through financing and the provision of vehicles.



## 4. East Tyrol

### 4.1. The pilot testing elements

Pilot: 1.2 Governance and planning of a coordinated DRT network enhancing accessibility in peripheral and rural regions

Pilot area: East Tyrol, Austria

Peer reviewers: Nexus, Redmint

#### 4.1.1. The solution components to be tested

The components of the East Tyrol pilot address the following Pilot 1.2 components.

**Component 1: Strategic Planning Approach to DRT (strategic guidance for DRT coordination)**, which is developed in form of a Blueprint for sustainable Mobility in East Tyrol by filling existing gaps with DRT-Services.

In cooperation with an external expert team, a Blueprint of the region's current mobility landscape has been developed to identify gaps in public transport services in relation to potential demand. By analysing these gaps, suitable Demand-Responsive Transport (DRT) solutions can be proposed. The study has been conducted in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders, ensuring robust results that provide a strong foundation for implementing new mobility solutions in the region.

Methods used are e.g. interviews with different stakeholders, workshops in small and big groups, analyses of traffic data and maps intersecting population and traffic movements.

Results show that there are several underserved areas in the region and issues in matching lines and modes of transport. So, there is room for improvement which can be used by the coordinator to develop the mobility situation in the region, especially using and optimizing existing DRT systems.

**Component 2: Governance scheme for the coordination of DRT, and set up of coordinator (demonstrated on field)**. By coordinating the planning process described above, RMO acts as "junction point" between all stakeholders involved in the process and subsequently extract a governance scheme for the coordination of DRT which can be translated to different contexts and regions with some necessary adaptations.

First experiences show that a mobility coordinator in a region plays a pivotal role in shaping, managing, and optimizing the regional mobility ecosystem and ensures the consideration of a bottom-up approach, which rather than top-down takes the voices of the region's population into account, especially where public transport and DRT services intersect. Acting as a junction point between all stakeholders, this person ensures smooth collaboration, alignment of interests, and efficient mobility outcomes. Key responsibilities are stakeholder coordination in general and especially bringing different mobility purposes together which otherwise would develop in parallel without coordination, bridging science and practice and bringing representatives together and aligning interests, raising awareness in the public and "keeping the ball rolling" because decision makers often have lots of projects running simultaneously. So, the overall goal of the mobility coordinator is to ensure the regional mobility ecosystem functions cohesively, meeting the needs of residents, achieving sustainability goals, and fostering innovation, while maintaining efficient communication and alignment among all stakeholders involved in PT and DRT, achieving sustainability goals, and fostering innovation, while maintaining efficient communication and alignment among all stakeholders involved in public and demand-responsive transport.



#### 4.1.2. Stakeholder involvement, competences and role

The following table provides an overview of the stakeholders involved in the pilot between 1 July and 30 September 2025, outlining their main competences, roles, and specific contributions to the activities carried out during this period.

Type of stakeholder*	Name and brief description	Competences, role and contribution to the pilot	Involvement between 1 July - 30 September 2025
PTA	ÖPNV Verband Osttirol, PTA representing public interests	Can influence PT providers like VVT or ÖBB and their offers.	Involved in bilateral discussions on further steps and take up of the actions.
Local Authorities	33 Municipalities of East Tyrol	Collect and Provide information from public.	Not involved between 1 July and 30 September 2025.
Digital Service Provider	ÖBB 360° Wegfinder App	Brings together route planning, booking and payment of different services to one app, could make useability easier for residents and also tourists.	Not involved between 1 July and 30 September 2025.
Regional Authority	TVB Osttirol	Representing interests of tourists, accommodation providers, bring information of hotspots for activities and during tourists' season.	Not involved between 1 July and 30 September 2025.
General Public	Residents of East Tyrol and Tourists	Interests represented by Municipalities and TVB. Most important target group, also provider of information.	Not involved between 1 July and 30 September 2025.
Regional Authority	Land Tirol	Also funds the project; high interest for successful outcomes and high potential influence.	Not involved between 1 July and 30 September 2025.
Regional Authority	Chamber of Labour	Represents interests of workers; potential users of new PT-Services.	Not involved between 1 July and 30 September 2025.
Regional Authority	Chamber of Economy	Represents interests of organisations and economic growth.	Not involved between 1 July and 30 September 2025.
Other (enterprises)	Liebherr, Loacker, Hella, IDM	Biggest firms in the region, could support the use of new offers, promote it to their workers, funding/sponsoring,	Not involved between 1 July and 30 September 2025.
PTA	VVT and ÖBB.	High power and influence on all PT and DRT offer, since they operate most of the services.	Involved in bilateral discussions on further steps.



Type of stakeholder*	Name and brief description	Competences, role and contribution to the pilot	Involvement between 1 July - 30 September 2025
	They coordinate and operate PT in Tyrol Region		

\*Stakeholder types: National/Regional/Local Authority; PTO/PTA; Digital service provider (specify if SME); Association; General public; Other (specify).

## 4.2. Pilot management and testing implementation

### 4.2.1. Activities and responsibilities

The following table lists the different steps - in form of consequent activities - that are envisaged for the testing of the pilot solution components.

For each testing activity, the expected result to be achieved are reported, together with the relevant KPI / target for the validation of the testing activity itself.

The last column reports the status of the testing activity and the respective KPI / expected result by 30 September 2025 (Final report).

#	Activity	Description	Expected result/ KPI	Status of the KPI by 30 September 2025
1	Definition of Stakeholders	Identification of relevant stakeholders, also in cooperation with experts to make sure, all groups are found.	List of Stakeholders with characteristics and influence/ interest on project.	Result achieved. Relevant stakeholders identified (see List of Stakeholders above).
2	Analysis of status quo	Analysis of current PT situation using experts' tools and knowledge, compared with population density.	Clear points of insufficiency of PT, where DRT-Offer would be useful.	Result achieved. Points of the region with the most potential for measures i.e. DRT offer adaption/implementation were identified
3	Creation of actual maps	Creation of maps which show clearly where the best points for implementation are.	e.g. Heatmaps or similar tools.	Result achieved. See cross-cut maps of population and PT quality grades in regional blueprint D1.2.3 "Co-designed solutions blueprint of integrated DRT implemented /tested through pilot activities".
4	Workshop with experts and stakeholders	Organization of a Living Lab/workshop with relevant stakeholders	Workshop with as much participants as possible.	Result achieved. LL meeting/workshop held on 25 June 2025: 16 participants, 16



#	Activity	Description	Expected result/ KPI	Status of the KPI by 30 September 2025
		and the expert-team to present findings, collect feedback, and complementary input, and discuss the results of the analysis.		of the most relevant stakeholders were present.
5	Elaboration of possible implementation into App and other digital tools	In cooperation with ÖBB 360° to get solid information about cost and feasibility of implementing digital tools like Wegfinder app or similar.	Feasibility and Costs of implementation into Apps like “Wegfinder”.	Result achieved.  Most feasible solutions (RegioFlink, Postbusshuttle) do have existing apps, no feasibility of creating new apps at this point in time.
6	Final presentation of result	Final presentation of results to invited stakeholders.	Final presentation and discussion of results with relevant stakeholders.	Result achieved.  Integrated in LL Meeting on 25 June 2025

#### 4.2.2. Focus on procurement

A procurement for an external expertise on the creation of a regional mobility blueprint came into play after not implementing a practical pilot in the earlier stages of the project. The idea of working together with external experts in traffic planning to commit to the process of planning and governance in the region and by this set up a detailed planning approach of DRT-Systems in rural and remote regions.

The procurement of the service of an external expertise concerning knowledge and skills in traffic planning, mobility change processes and GIS-Systems played a key-role in conducting the pilot action 1.2 “Governance and Planning of a coordinated DRT network”. Setting up the procurement we first put focus on the procedure itself and opted for best bidder process rather than taking the cheapest offer. First, budget for this service was fixed anyway and second there are many characteristics, the bidder must be able to advise in a certain way and deliver a high quality. In the following, we briefly describe the characteristics one should bring for this service.

First and foremost, the knowledge of the region and its relevant characteristics is important to reliably find its weaknesses and points for potential adaptations. Even though in our case we could assist with local knowledge and communication within the region, it is still very helpful having experts who see the region’s characteristics with a trained eye. Hand in hand with this goes the skill of technically being able to manage maps, GIS-Analyses and other relevant tools. Moreover, we also valued the knowledge of the “market” in DRT Systems to have an orientation of benchmarks and best practices to learn from. Also, relevant previous projects were a good indicator of the suitability of the external expertise setting up the “mobility-blueprint” of the region.

Out of 4 bidders, we selected the offer from Kairos OG and Technical University Vienna with the best package out of the before mentioned characteristics, who in retrospect proved to be the right choice. All in all, setting the desired qualitative goals beforehand and measuring the bids accordingly is in our eyes the right way finding the suitable partner for this service. The experts from Kairos and TU Vienna helped to



design the process of how to approach the setup of the blueprint, analysed the region regarding its relevant characteristics and designed data and maps to illustrate the relevant potential and related actions to take.

### 4.2.3. Timeline

The following table refers to the activities described above (see Activities and Responsibilities table) and outlines the timeline for their implementation and any deviations that occurred during the reporting period.

#*	Activity/ Milestone/other	Start	End/Achievement	Deviations
PM	LL meeting #1	01/12/2023		No deviations after 30 June 2025
PM	LL meeting #2	22/02/2024		No deviations after 30 June 2025
PM	LL meeting #3	17/06/2024		No deviations after 30 June 2025
1	Publication of Procurement	13/11/2024	13/11/2024	No deviations after 30 June 2025
2	Contracting of procurement	12/12/2024	12/12/2024	No deviations after 30 June 2025
3	Definition of Stakeholders	02/12/2024	15/01/2025	No deviations after 30 June 2025
PM	Meeting with experts	15/01/2025		No deviations after 30 June 2025
4	Analysis of status quo	15/01/2025	15/02/2025	No deviations after 30 June 2025
PM	Meeting with experts	15/02/2025		No deviations after 30 June 2025
5	Creation of actual maps	15/2/2025	28/02/2025	No deviations
6 PM/MI	Workshop with experts and stakeholders	01/03/2025		+11 days - Real end: 23/03/2025 No deviations after 30 June 2025
PM	LL meeting #4	06/05/2025		No deviations
7	Elaboration of possible implementation into App and other digital tools	01/03/2025	30/05/2025	Real end: 28/07/2025
8/MI	Final presentation of results	Expected 30/06/2025	25/06/2025	No deviations after 30 June 2025



#*	Activity/ Milestone/other	Start	End/Achievement	Deviations
PM	LL meeting #5	25/06/2025		No deviations after 30 June 2025
9 MR	Publication of a personalized version of the final blueprint - Ref. D1.2.4 “Co-designed solutions blueprint of coordinated DRT implemented /tested through pilot activities”, adapted especially to the East Tyrol region	01/08/2025	15/09/2025	Postponed to 31/10/2025

\*Milestones and other:

MI: Milestone (only has an end/achievement date)

MR: Media Release (please plan one at the beginning and one at the end of the pilot tests, and if relevant in correspondence of the milestone achievements)

PM: Periodic meeting (can be LL meetings with the stakeholders in order to launch/monitor/fine tune the tests)

PR: Peer Review of the tested solution component (with one or more project/associate partners)

#### 4.2.4. Analysis of deviations

The following table provides a detailed explanation of the deviations to the timeline as identified in the table above, specifying their severity level and the adaptation or mitigation measures implemented where applicable.

Deviation	Severity*	Adaptation/Mitigation measure
Activity #6 - Workshop with experts and stakeholders	1 - low	No measure needed since only minimal impact - caused by appointment issues.
Activity #7 - Elaboration of possible implementation into App and other digital tools	1 - low	Minor delay with the outcome of no feasibility to adjust existing apps at the moment.
Activity #9 - Publication of a personalized version of the final blueprint	2 - moderate	Delay caused by holiday season and fine tuning with stakeholders. Finalization will be made by 31/10/2025.

\* 1 - low; 2 - moderate; 3 - high; 4 - very high

#### 4.3. Results of peer-review and alignment actions by 30 June 2025

The peer review mainly influenced the structure and preparation of the workplan and the actions taken during the pilot activities. Peers brought up some untransparent descriptions in the workplan draft which then could be worked out very easily and without any further issues. Bringing this to attention early prevented subsequent errors and related possible problems in reporting.



#	Peer reviewer contribution / input	Description	Consequent alignment in the pilot activities
1	Redmint - Bringing attention to some untransparent actions and descriptions in workplan	Advise to restructure the procedure of the pilot to have an improved design and comprehension by third parties.	Adaption of workplan draft resulted in a better understandable description of pilot activities and sorting out some possible sources for errors.

## 4.4. Conclusions of the testing phase

### 4.4.1. Outcomes of the testing phase

#### Outcome #1: Existing DRTs can be “updated”

Existing DRTs in Puster Valley and Defereggental can be designed more flexible by determining service areas rather than operating fixed lines with the need of a reservation. This eliminates the weakness of being too inflexible and bound to one line and at the same time brings more flexibility timewise with service hours instead of a schedule and also area-wise with a service area instead of a fixed line.

#### Outcome #2: Several suitable municipalities for DRT

There are more municipalities inside East Tyrol where implementing a DRT would make sense. These are Heinfels, Kals, Virgental, Kartitsch, Iselsberg-Stronach and also for Lienz and surroundings a DRT would be an alternative to the existing Citybusses. The biggest restriction from doing so is of course the high cost and the relation of cost to outcome.

#### Outcome #3: No “One fits all”

But also, RMO found that in some cases a DRT System at first glance seems like a good and desirable solution but when checking all the parameters, it is still better to focus on a traditional bus line. This can be the case when there are peaks in usage because of tourists, pupils or commuters. In such cases, it is highly recommendable to allocate resources in a smart way to buffer these peaks and in low-demand times opt for a DRT System. To do so, of course the resources and characteristics must be existent in a certain way and this is often hard to realise for a PT and DRT Operator.

#### Outcome #4: Evidence-based regional analysis

The project developed a comprehensive analysis of East Tyrol’s regional characteristics, including geography, settlement structures, demographic trends, and mobility patterns. Tools such as GIS mapping and demand modelling were used to identify underserved areas, and detailed municipality profiles highlighted the wide differences in transport needs across the region.

#### Outcome #5: Assessment of existing public transport (PT)

The current public transport system was assessed, showing that while valley-corridor routes such as trains and buses provide a strong backbone, peripheral areas remain poorly connected. The analysis also revealed that seasonal peaks in tourism create significant challenges for balancing capacity and efficiency.

#### Outcome #6: Governance and stakeholder cooperation



A clear governance structure was established, involving the Verkehrsverbund Tirol (VVT), municipalities, and local initiatives. To prevent fragmentation and ensure long-term continuity, the role of a regional mobility coordinator was introduced as a central element in coordinating diverse stakeholders.

#### **Outcome #7: Technical tools and communication**

Technical analyses such as GIS mapping and visualisations were applied to highlight coverage gaps and support decision-making. By presenting clear maps and evidence, planners were able to communicate needs effectively, while combining data-driven insights with validation from local knowledge.

#### **Outcome #8: Service options for DRT**

Different DRT models were explored, ranging from line-based services like RegioAST to area-based systems such as RegioFlink and the Postbus Shuttle. The findings underlined that service models must be tailored to the local context and remain inclusive, for example by offering telephone booking options for people unfamiliar with digital tools.

#### **Outcome #9: Funding and procurement model**

A sustainable financing approach was developed, with the VVT and the federal state covering around 75 percent of the costs and municipalities covering 25 percent. Additional funding sources, such as local sponsors or foundations, were also considered to support pilot phases and ensure long-term stability.

#### **Outcome #10: Strategic conclusions**

The overall conclusion of the project is that rural mobility planning requires a strong backbone of public transport, complemented by flexible DRT in peripheral areas. Success depends on multi-layered governance, a regional mobility coordinator, participatory and evidence-based planning methods, and a strong commitment to digital inclusion to avoid excluding vulnerable groups.

### **4.4.2. Lessons learned**

#### **Lesson learned #1**

It is always worth to check the possibility of implementing DRTs in rural areas and regions, but one also has to verify the usefulness of it in that certain case. There might be special circumstances which might influence the aimed target of creating a more efficient way of operating PT.

#### **Lesson learned #2**

At least in East Tyrol case, DRTs are mostly not much cheaper for a region to offer for their residents but can be set up more efficient which frees resources that can then be allocated in a better way.

#### **Lesson learned #3**

DRT Systems don't work as stand-alone offer. They build up on a strong PT base of bus and train which are the backbone of public transport. Coordinating the different parts of the system in a way that each of them builds on the other is crucial for an enhanced overall system.

#### **Lesson learned #4: Engagement and participation**

The project placed strong emphasis on participation by organising five Living Labs and other consultation formats. These processes enabled municipalities, citizens, companies, schools, tourism organisations, and social services to contribute actively to the design of new mobility solutions.



### Lesson learned #5: Integrated network approach

The project demonstrated that DRT should not replace conventional public transport but rather complement it. By integrating DRT services with school buses, company shuttles, and tourism transport, a more efficient and balanced regional mobility system can be achieved.

#### 4.4.3. Fine tuning and joint finalization of the modular components

##### Component 1: Strategic Planning Approach to DRT (strategic guidance for DRT coordination)

- Fine-tuning the solution component for the strategic framework was done in cooperation with the external experts from Kairos and TU Vienna. First, a structure was designed to fill in the contents from the work in the LL, bilateral discussions, excursions, expert rounds and several analyses. After agreeing on the final structure, the contents were filled in by RMO. Some missing illustrations and data for the argumentation were recognized, mainly data to underline the potential of residents and tourists using DRTs and also numbers of people who are currently not served by public transport. In the end, a very detailed and well-structured report was designed with all points of discussion underlined by facts and fitting solutions using DRTs as one part of a sustainable PT-System.
- The draft of the final solution component on the strategic planning approach was designed with a strong focus on the regional characteristics, planning and stakeholders. This was done to be able to distribute the documents afterwards to the region's players. This draft was then sent to Redmint for review. The feedback contained mainly the need for adjustment to a more general version of the blueprint with less focus on the region to be able to use it as a replicable manual. This was done by dividing the regional blueprint into the two solution components and extracting the generally applicable guidelines and learnings from the process.

##### Component 2: Governance scheme for the coordination of DRT, and set up of coordinator (demonstrated on field)

- Finalizing the solution component on the governance scheme, we also relied on the expertise of Redmint, differentiating the two components from each other and clarifying how the general structure of the blueprint in this regard should look like.
- Inputs were mainly the own experiences during the coordination of the project in the region but also previous experiences from other mobility projects RMO was involved.



## 5. Conclusions

In conclusion, this deliverable provides a cohesive yet detailed overview of pilot action 1.2 “Governance and planning of a coordinated DRT network enhancing accessibility in peripheral and rural regions” of the DREAM\_PACE project. While specific suggestions and steps for the two respective testing regions were identified, broader conclusions for the overall project aims can also be drawn. To be concrete, Pilot 1.2 consists of three components: firstly, 1) a governance scheme for the coordination of DRT and setting up of a coordinator; secondly, 2) a strategic planning approach to DRT (strategic guidance for DRT coordination); and thirdly, 3) the development of a business model for crowdsourcing and private-public partnerships. The various components involved decision makers and relevant stakeholders and, by focusing on real service cases, aimed to validate the consistency of the solutions suggested through real-life use-cases. The results provide important learning and valuable suggestions for future sizing and upscaling. After testing, ideas for solving existing hurdles will be updated and improved in a way that they are ready to be taken up and upscaled in the respective regions.

The two pilot areas located in Stuttgart (Germany) and East Tyrol (Austria) tested models for governance and planning of a coordinated DRT network enhancing accessibility in peripheral and rural regions in two specific use-cases. A strategic focus on stakeholder engagement was of central importance in both testing regions, involving a structured stakeholder approach that engaged a variety of key stakeholders in rural regions, such as public and local authorities, citizens, DRT-users and non-users, local (private) companies and DRT-implementers, and so on. Thanks to this, the pilot workplan ensured that governance, operational, and technical aspects are validated through meaningful participation.

Adding to this, a particular attention was given to ensuring citizen participation and the inclusion of public opinion in a set of participative processes. For instance, in the Stuttgart region, users and non-users of DRT in the testing area in Calw, located in the larger region of Stuttgart, were questioned and their voices made visible for public authorities and decision-makers on middle- and high-level policy levels. At the same time, relevant decision-makers and DRT implementers were encouraged to improve interregional cooperation and communication as a crucial component for better DRT governance on the state-level. Similarly, in East Tyrol the workplan focused on developing a blueprint for sustainable mobility by filling existing gaps in public transport services with tailored DRT solutions. The framework emphasizes a rigorous analysis of the current mobility landscape and the involvement of local stakeholders – ranging from municipalities and regional authorities to digital service providers – to ensure that the testing activities reflect local needs and implementation conditions.

Overall, the testing periods demonstrate how the quality of sustainable rural public mobility can usefully be upgraded through meaningful DRT services that cater to local and context-specific conditions. At the same time, broader conclusions and blueprints can also be drawn, enabling different regions to learn from each other. With regards to governance, cooperation and participation testing element, especially supra-regional cooperation and exchange networks have shown to be tremendously useful in enabling fruitful exchange and consequently the transfer of knowledge and progressive learnings across regions and should therefore be fostered and supported. The importance of strong cooperation across municipalities marks a central finding of both testing regions, strengthening collaboration, local ownership, and long-term planning capacity. Inter-regional workshops demonstrated that shared learning and networking strengthen collective capacity for action and sustainable service development. In short, bringing together different actors in meaningful participative processes is essential. Operationally, success depends on reliable booking systems, the reduction of no-shows, and clear target group communication. Both telephone and digital booking options are needed to ensure accessibility. Growth and marketing must be carefully managed to avoid overcapacity, and long-term financing - secured by federal or EU support - is critical for stability. Financially, long-term, targeted funding is essential for a sustainable DRT. Hereby, public-private partnerships may be worth exploring further. A strong public transport backbone complemented by flexible DRT creates resilient rural mobility. Governance, participation, evidence-based planning, and digital inclusion are key. Overall,



the pilot highlights that evidence-based, participatory, and cooperative approaches—supported by digital inclusion and sustainable funding—are the foundation for resilient and people-centered rural mobility.

Altogether, the results achieved through this deliverable represent a consolidated reference point for the next steps of the DREAM\_PACE project. The deliverable, together with the other pilot final reports (D1.3.3, D2.3.3, and D2.4.3), represents a crucial reference point for the timeline of the DREAM\_PACE project, as it describes the outcomes and lessons learned of the pilot activity, and provides the ground for the delivery of the corresponding solution that will be described in D1.2.4 “Co-designed solutions blueprint of coordinated DRT implemented /tested through pilot activities”, consisting in a joint design of a modular governance and planning model blueprint, dedicated to the coordination of DRT to enhance accessibility in peripheral and rural regions.



## 6. References

- 1) DREAM\_PACE Application Form, Version 3.0. 2025.
- 2) DREAM\_PACE D1.2.2 “Living labs meetings documentation on the co-design process for governance / planning in pilot areas”. 2025.
- 3) DREAM\_PACE D1.1.1 “Report on governance and planning for public transport, mobility innovations and DRT in CE Regions”. 2023.
- 4) DREAM\_PACE D1.1.2 “State of the art report on governance structures and planning processes for DRT in the pilot areas”. 2024.
- 5) DREAM\_PACE D1.1.3 “Development scenarios for DRT innovative governance and planning approaches”. 2024.
- 6) DREAM\_PACE D1.4.1 “Detailed workplan for pilot 2.1 local testing actions”. 2025
- 7) DREAM\_PACE D1.4.2 “Report on the progress of pilot 2.1 local testing activities”. 2025.
- 8) DREAM\_PACE D2.2.2 “Living labs meetings documentation on the co-design process for governance /planning in pilot areas”. 2025.
- 9) DREAM\_PACE D3.1.1 “Methodological background for the design of DRT integrated solutions”. 2023.
- 10) DREAM\_PACE D3.1.2 “DRT strategy draft and setup of the consultation process”. 2025.
- 11) DREAM\_PACE D3.2.1 “Action plan drafts in the six pilot regions”. 2025.
- 12) DREAM\_PACE D3.3.1 “Report on set up and development of community and measures to animate the debate on DRT trends”. 2025.
- 13) DREAM\_PACE D3.3.2 “Report on actions accompanying the development of pilot activities”. 2025.



## 7. Annex: Pilot 1.2 local and project media releases communicating the results of testing actions, and public presentations summary (from 1 July 2025 ahead)

The Annex collects the local and project media releases that have been used to communicate the results of pilot 1.2 testing actions, and the public presentations summary.

### 7.1. Stuttgart

Since 1 July 2025, no outputs have been generated.

### 7.2. East Tyrol


Social Media post (LinkedIn) from 21 August 2025 on upcoming publication of blueprint:



**Regionsmanagement Osttirol**  
Gepostet von Jakob Britz · 21. August ·

Der letzte Living-Lab Workshop des Mobilitätsprojekts [Dream\\_pace](#) in Osttirol ging vor kurzem erfolgreich über die Bühne 🎉

Eine eloquente Runde aus Experten, Betreibern und StakeholderInnen aus der Region diskutierte die gesammelten Outcomes aus dem Projekt und legte die nächsten Schritte im Sinne einer nachhaltigen Mobilität in unserer Region fest, die mit Hilfe von bedarfsorientierten Angeboten wie dem Regioflink des [Verkehrsverbund Tirol](#) und dem [Postbus AG](#) Shuttle vorangetrieben werden kann.

Die Inhalte für die regionale Mobilitätsblaupause sind also vervollständigt und werden nun aufbereitet und zusammengefasst. Seid gespannt, wir können zuversichtlich nach vorne blicken 🚀



[Insights und Anzeigen ansehen](#)

[Beitrag bewerben](#)

👍 5

1 Mal geteilt