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DREAM_PACE

Implementing an experimental DRT service in a new regulatory framework - Guidelines

Split-Dalmatia County

Final Version

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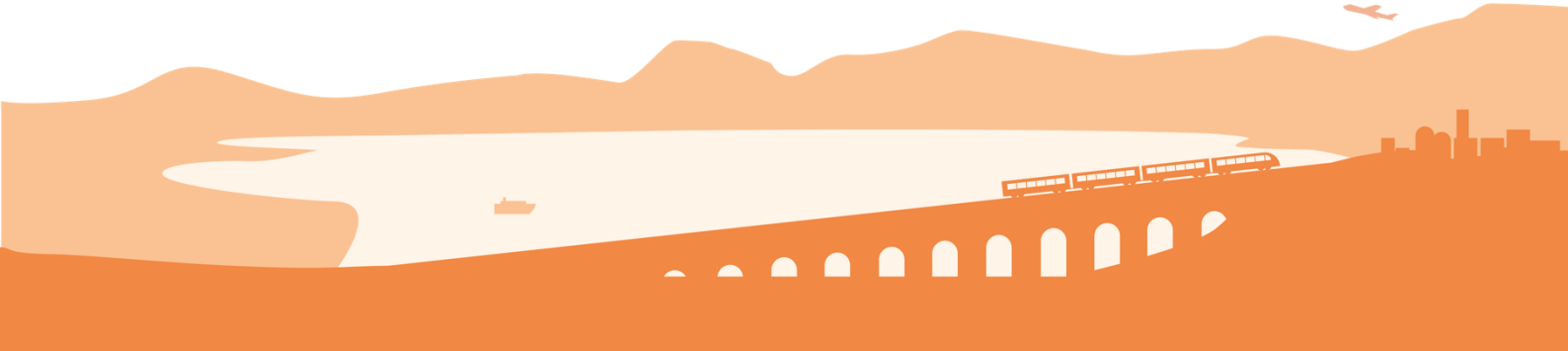

Authors and log change of the document

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2	Redmint	Gabriele Grea	Review	2
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Contents

1. Summary

The document defines guidelines for introducing a DRT (Demand Responsive Transport) in a public transport (PT) system, with the aim of improving mobility and accessibility in less well-connected areas. The focus is on analysing system functionality, user acceptance, and identifying challenges and opportunities for further development through the collection of quantitative and qualitative data.

In the section on the solution components, the area of implementation (cities/municipalities), target user groups, the current state of public transport, and main issues such as infrequent routes and poor connectivity are described. The objectives of DRT are also defined, along with the implementation process (including public procurement), technological aspects (applications, platforms, dispatch systems), operational model, and integration with existing lines. The need to define KPI indicators (e.g., number of users, waiting time, satisfaction, vehicle occupancy) is emphasized, as well as performance evaluation, risks, and long-term sustainability and the possibility of scaling the model.

In the section on target groups and stakeholders, residents, the working population, local government units, and key stakeholders such as public authorities, transport operators, technology providers, companies, and associations are included. The importance of their involvement through workshops and training, as well as achieving a high level of system acceptance, is highlighted.

The pilot management and implementation section describes the planned testing activities, responsibilities, timeline, and KPIs for each phase, along with continuous monitoring of progress and evaluation of results.

In the public procurement section, the elements of the tender documentation are defined, including bidder requirements, technical and organizational capacity, contract duration, selection criteria, and potential implementation risks.

Finally, the outcomes and lessons learned should summarize the achieved results, implemented systems, and key insights that can be applied in future projects or in scaling the DRT model to other areas.

2. Introduction

This document describes the guidelines for the implementation, development, and testing of a DRT solution in a selected deployment area, with a particular focus on improving the accessibility and efficiency of public transport in less connected and rural regions. Given existing challenges such as low demand, infrequent fixed routes, and a fragmented transport network, DRT represents a flexible and innovative model that enables transport to be adapted to the actual needs of users.

The document includes a description of the implementation area, target user groups and key stakeholders, as well as the technological and operational aspects of the DRT system. Special emphasis is placed on the implementation plan, including public procurement procedures, selection of service providers, and definition of digital platforms and systems required for service management.

It also defines the components that will be tested within the pilot project, along with evaluation methods, key performance indicators (KPIs), and an approach to monitoring user satisfaction. The document further considers potential implementation challenges, as well as long-term sustainability and the potential for scaling the DRT model to other areas.

3. Define the solution components to be tested

The implementation, development, and testing of a DRT solution in a selected deployment area should follow the following steps:

- The **main objectives of DRT in the selected area** should be described, along with the activities that will be carried out to implement the DRT solution. The objectives should focus on improving mobility and transport accessibility in the implementation areas. It is important to describe the implementation process, including the public procurement steps and the selection of the service provider that need to be undertaken. A brief overview of the current state of public transport in the implementation area can also be included, along with key issues (lack of connectivity, low demand, very infrequent daily fixed routes).
- A **detailed description of the implementation area** in which the case study of the DRT system will be applied (which cities and municipalities are included) must be elaborated, including target DRT service users. **Maps of the implementation area coverage** may be added, showing **possible routes and stops** (if existing fixed stops are used).
- The **technological aspects of DRT** should also be described, including which digital systems will be used (applications, platforms, dispatch systems) and the method of ride booking. It is necessary to emphasize the operational model of the service, working hours, the way rides are organized, and the possibilities for integration with existing routes.
- It is necessary to define **which components will be tested through the case study** and outline the activities and objectives of each component. It is important to emphasize the method of monitoring efficiency and user satisfaction (evaluation and testing). In the evaluation, performance indicators (KPIs) can be specified, such as number of users, waiting time, user satisfaction, vehicle occupancy, etc.
- **Potential challenges** can be briefly highlighted (**technical issues, financial sustainability, low user acceptance**), along with suggestions on how risks can be mitigated.
- It is also necessary to consider the **long-term sustainability of the system**, funding options, and the potential for scaling the DRT model to other rural and less connected areas.

4. Identify and engage target groups and stakeholders

For target **user groups**, it is necessary to include residents from the implementation area, the working-age population, local communities, and local self-government units. The focus should be on achieving a high level of user acceptance to confirm the justification of the DRT concept. Based on the results of the pilot phase, it is necessary to plan expansion and adaptation in other regions (counties), considering local specificities and the needs of target groups.

Regarding **stakeholders**, representatives of national, regional, and local authorities, transport service providers, digital solution providers, companies operating in the implementation area that employ many working-age residents, the public, and associations in the field of sustainable mobility should be included. In describing stakeholders, it is important to emphasize their role and the way they can be involved.

Workshops and training sessions can be organized with target groups and stakeholders to familiarize them with the implementation area, the objectives, and how their contributions can help improve the implementation of project activities.

5. Pilot management and testing implementation

5.1. Activities and reponsabilities

To ensure a structured approach, it is essential to define the specific tasks, as detailed in the following requirements:

- It is important to detail and **list all consecutive activities** planned for testing the solution components. For each activity, the expected results that need to be achieved should be specified.
- **KPIs** should be set as target values for validating the activity of the solution itself.
- **Regularly record progress** and any potential difficulties during implementation. Ensure that all team members understand the KPIs and how they are evaluated.
- **Use the results of the final report** as a basis for assessing the success of the DRT project and for planning the future expansion of the solution.

5.2. Focus on procurement

This section outlines the essential requirements and strategic considerations for the procurement of a DRT service:

- The **documentation for the public tender** for the DRT service consists of a project task description, bidder selection criteria, and application forms. The project task should provide information for bidders, including the area in which the DRT service is to be provided, the frequency of service provision, and the required features of the software supporting the DRT service. During the public procurement process, emphasis should be placed on the conditions for economic operators and on technical capacity requirements.
- Regarding the **conditions for economic operators**, bidders should be required to meet at least the basic criteria prescribed by law for providing DRT services under national legislation (these may include licenses allowing the provision of public transport services, the required level of technical and human resources, and relevant experience at an appropriate level of quality).
- In the area of **technical capacity**, bidders should provide specific vehicles and define the characteristics of the information system for managing the DRT service. This should include software for organizing and managing the DRT service, applications for drivers and users of the DRT service, as well as vehicle equipment.
- The **duration of the contract** must be clearly defined, and whether there is a period related to the testing of the service itself. It is also important to specify until when the tender procedure remains open.
- Finally, it is important to **define the selection criteria** used to choose the service provider (e.g., lowest price, average fleet age). During the tender process, potential risks should also be considered (delays in the public procurement procedure due to appeals, the possibility that no bids are submitted, and delays in contract negotiations).

6. Outcomes and lessons learned

It is important to **present and explain the results and provide a detailed exposition of the lessons learned** for future improvements and monitoring. Key insights and lessons learned should be summarized, and it should be shown what can be applied in future projects or in a broader context.

Regarding the results, it is necessary to **clearly describe what has been achieved, including implemented activities, concrete results** in terms of KPIs (e.g. number of users, implemented systems, produced documents), and **broader value** (e.g. applicability to other areas). It is important that each lesson learned is based on data, field observations, and survey results.

7. Conclusion

The implementation of a DRT system represents a significant step toward the modernization and improvement of public transport in areas with limited transport connectivity. Through a flexible operational model, digital solutions, and adaptation to the actual needs of users, DRT can significantly increase mobility accessibility, reduce waiting times, and improve the overall user experience.

The pilot phase and testing of individual components enable a detailed evaluation of system efficiency through clearly defined KPI indicators, such as number of users, response time, vehicle occupancy rate, and user satisfaction. Based on the obtained results, it is possible to identify key challenges, including technical and financial aspects, as well as the level of user acceptance.

The lessons learned from the pilot implementation will be crucial for optimizing the system and ensuring its long-term sustainability. It is particularly important to ensure proper public procurement planning, high-quality stakeholder cooperation, and continuous monitoring of system performance. In the long term, the DRT model has the potential for broader application in other rural and less connected regions, thereby contributing to the development of sustainable and inclusive mobility.