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DREAM_PACE

D3.3.2 Report on actions accompanying the development of pilot activities

Final Version

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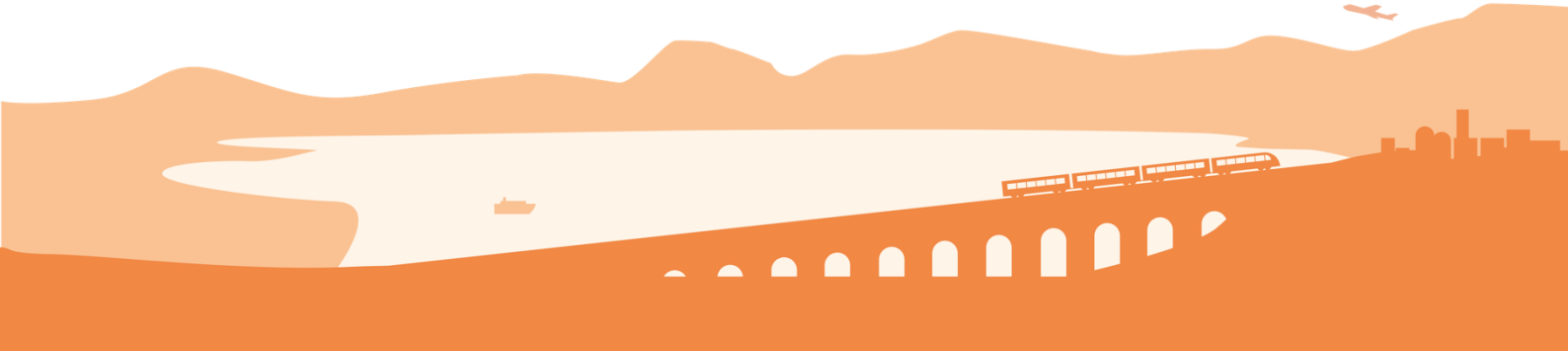

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Contents

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 aims at **developing innovative Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) concepts for peripheral and rural areas**, complementing regional mobility networks to improve connectivity, sustainability, inclusiveness.

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.

Within this framework, the creation of a DREAM_PACE Tech and Business Community has played a strategic role in supporting the development and implementation of pilot activities. The Community has brought together public authorities, transport operators, digital mobility providers, MaaS operators, researchers and other innovative stakeholders in order to facilitate knowledge exchange, operational co-design and validation of project outputs.

The first two DREAM_PACE Community workshops focused respectively on presenting the project framework and strategic challenges related to DRT, and on supporting the operational co-design of the pilot activities. The discussions addressed key topics such as integrated governance, MaaS integration, digital interoperability, flexible routing systems, multimodal integration, communication strategies, user experience, operational sizing and inclusiveness solutions. The interaction between pilot representatives, public authorities, transport operators and innovative mobility providers contributed significantly to refining the implementation approaches developed across the different pilot territories and strengthened the collaborative dimension of the project.

Additional follow-up interactions between DREAM_PACE pilot partners and Community members supported operational validation activities, governance discussions and feasibility assessments. The collaborative exchanges strengthened the scalability and transferability potential of the pilot solutions and facilitated the circulation of experiences and operational practices across different European contexts.

Further online Community events focused respectively on validating the DREAM_PACE DRT strategy and disseminating project outputs through the DRT4All.eu platform. These activities reinforced the role of the Community as a strategic ecosystem supporting not only pilot implementation but also the long-term transferability and exploitation of project methodologies and governance approaches.

The project also organised important physical dissemination and networking activities during Intermobility Future Ways 2024 in Rimini and Busworld Conference 2025 in Brussels. Coordinated by Redmint, these events enabled DREAM_PACE to engage with a broader European ecosystem of mobility stakeholders, transport operators and digital providers, increasing the visibility of the project and disseminating the lessons learned from the pilot experiences.

Overall, the report highlights how the collaborative ecosystem established through DREAM_PACE became a key enabling factor for developing realistic, scalable and territorially adaptable DRT solutions. The interaction between project partners and the Tech and Business Community strengthened governance

innovation, operational experimentation and digital integration, supporting the transition toward more inclusive, sustainable and integrated mobility systems in Central Europe.

It is noted that this deliverable, although originally related to Reporting Period 5 (RP5) and scheduled for completion by 31 August 2025, was updated at the end of RP6 (28 February 2026). This extension was planned to ensure the document could serve as a comprehensive report describing all interactions and workshops carried out with the DREAM_PACE Tech and Business Community. Consequently, this final version also incorporates the outcomes and findings of the fourth online Community event held on 19 February 2026 (detailed in Chapter 3.4).

2. Introduction

The DREAM_PACE project aims to develop innovative DRT concepts for peripheral and rural areas, improving connectivity, sustainability, inclusiveness and integration with regional mobility networks. The project combines governance innovation, digitalisation, operational experimentation and participatory planning in order to strengthen the role of DRT as an integral component of public transport systems.

Within this framework, the DREAM_PACE Tech and Business Community was established as a collaborative platform involving public authorities, public transport operators, digital mobility providers, MaaS operators, researchers and innovative stakeholders active in the field of flexible mobility services. The Community accompanied the project's life, inclusing the implementation of pilot activities, through workshops, validation activities, operational exchanges and dissemination initiatives. Its role was to facilitate dialogue between project partners and external stakeholders, supporting the co-design and refinement of governance approaches, digital tools and operational solutions related to DRT implementation.

Throughout the project, the interaction between the pilots and the Community progressively evolved. The first phase focused on introducing the project structure and discussing the main strategic and operational challenges related to DRT development. The second phase concentrated on pilot implementation and operational co-design activities. Subsequent exchanges enabled targeted interactions between pilot partners and Community members interested in supporting specific activities. Further events focused on validating the DREAM_PACE DRT strategy and disseminating project outputs through European platforms and international events.

The collaborative ecosystem established through DREAM_PACE became an important enabling factor for strengthening the quality, scalability and transferability of the pilot solutions developed within the project.

3. Establishment and Evolution of the DREAM_PACE Tech and Business Community[1]

3.1. First Community workshop: Presentation of the project framework and main challenges

The first DREAM_PACE Tech and Business Community Workshop was organised online on 18 September 2023. The primary objective of the event was to present the DREAM_PACE project, introduce the six pilot territories and establish the foundations of the Tech and Business Community as a collaborative environment supporting the project activities.

The workshop introduced the overall structure of the project, including governance and planning activities, digital and operational innovations, MaaS integration approaches and the development of the "DRT 3.0" strategy within Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs). Participants discussed the role of DRT in improving accessibility and territorial cohesion in rural and peripheral areas, highlighting the need to integrate flexible transport systems with existing public transport networks.

The event formally launched the DREAM_PACE Tech and Business Community as "an open community, with the participation of important actors of the DRT digital ecosystem, fostering the debate on DRT governance, planning, digitalization and operational trends, facilitating the exchange of visions and practices".

The discussion focused on identifying common challenges affecting DRT implementation and integration. Participants stressed the importance of clearly defining project objectives and stakeholder expectations in order to avoid fragmented visions regarding the role of DRT services. The need for shared technical definitions and common methodological approaches was also highlighted, particularly concerning governance frameworks, digital integration and operational evaluation criteria.

Participants also emphasised the value of collaborative territorial approaches involving citizens, public authorities, operators and service providers in the planning and co-design of DRT solutions. Another important theme concerned the possibility of developing common indicators and methodologies to assess DRT efficiency and effectiveness from financial, environmental and user-oriented perspectives.

The workshop gathered representatives from PT authorities, operators and several digital mobility providers including Padam, Via, Shotl, Ioki, Nemi and Cityway. Their participation immediately demonstrated the importance of involving technology providers and innovative stakeholders in the strategic discussion surrounding DRT governance and operational development.

This first interaction therefore established the basis for the collaborative ecosystem that subsequently accompanied the pilot activities throughout the project.

3.2. Second Community workshop: Pilot-oriented Operational exchange and Co-Design

The second DREAM_PACE Tech and Business Community Workshop was organised online on 27 June 2024. While the first workshop had focused mainly on presenting the overall project framework, the second event

[1] It is noted that, for a complete single-point report, this chapter reports all the Tech and Business Community meetings held in the whole DREAM_PACE lifetime (including the first two meetings that were already reported in D3.3.1, which is not public).

concentrated specifically on the operational development of the pilot activities and on the practical governance, digital and organisational challenges emerging during implementation.

The workshop gathered project partners together with several innovative stakeholders and digital mobility providers, including Padam, Via, Ioki, Nemi, Spare and Cityway. The event functioned as an operational co-design environment where pilot representatives presented implementation progress, governance scenarios and open operational questions to the community.

The exchanges generated significant added value for the development of the pilots and strengthened the interaction between public authorities, transport operators and technology providers.

Bologna Pilot – Strategic Planning and MaaS Integration

The Bologna pilot focused on strategic planning activities related to the integration of DRT within public transport governance and MaaS ecosystems. The discussion addressed the identification of weak-demand areas, the integration of DRT into public transport planning processes and the implications of service flexibility for governance and service contracts.

The interaction with technology providers and innovative stakeholders supported the definition of planning parameters and contributed to the discussion on how flexible services can be incorporated into future public transport procurement and MaaS systems. Participants discussed the importance of collecting territorial data and defining evaluation criteria able to support planning decisions and governance integration.

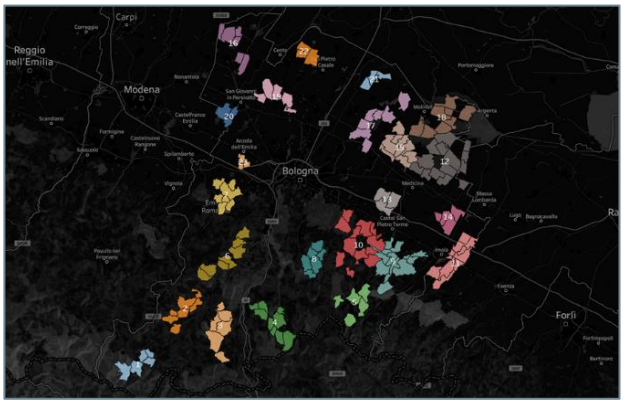

Figure 1: Zoning of low-demand areas in Bologna metropolitan area

These exchanges reinforced Bologna's collaborative planning approach based on scalable territorial evaluation frameworks and on the integration of DRT into procurement and planning procedures. The pilot also benefited from broader discussions regarding MaaS integration and governance innovation emerging from the interaction with mobility technology providers.

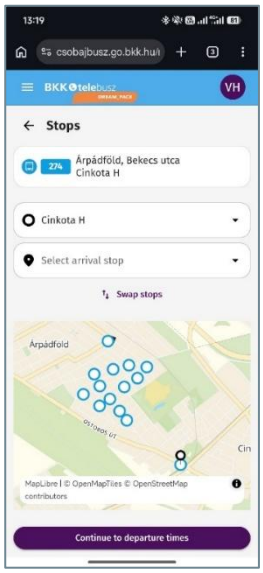

Figure 2: BudapestGO app

Budapest Pilot - Integration and Flexible Routing

The Budapest pilot focused on the development of a more flexible DRT system without fixed routes in newly developed peripheral neighbourhoods. The discussion addressed the challenges associated with automation, innovative IT-supported flexibility and potential future applications of autonomous mobility solutions.

Participants exchanged experiences concerning the feasibility of autonomous and highly flexible DRT services. The discussion highlighted that the success of these services strongly depends on user characteristics and territorial conditions. Stakeholders stressed the importance of carrying out studies on user groups and local environments in order to understand which operational models can be successful and economically sustainable.

Technology providers and experts also emphasised that innovative flexible systems involve significant costs and implementation risks. For this reason, the pilot benefited from recommendations regarding gradual testing, feasibility analyses and stakeholder engagement processes capable of supporting the development of reliable and accepted solutions.

The exchanges contributed to refining Budapest's implementation roadmap and supported the co-design activities planned with local stakeholders and residents.

Pavia-Oltrepò Pilot – Inclusiveness and Communication

The Pavia-Oltrepò pilot presentation focused on improving an existing DRT service through digital integration, communication strategies and inclusive booking solutions. The discussion concentrated particularly on how to improve accessibility for elderly users and for people not familiar with digital booking systems.

Figure 3: Exemplary transport means for DRT in Pavia-Oltrepò

The interaction with technology providers and operators generated several practical contributions regarding communication and user engagement. Stakeholders shared experiences concerning the use of totems, interactive devices and physical communication tools capable of supporting users without smartphones. Participants also discussed the effectiveness of communication campaigns accompanying the transition from fixed-route services to flexible DRT systems.

The discussion highlighted that communication and behavioural adaptation are fundamental elements in the success of DRT services. Participants stressed that targeted communication toward specific user groups is often more effective than generic campaigns and that physical information tools can sometimes generate better results than digital-only communication strategies. Experiences shared by community members also suggested that progressively explaining how traditional fixed services evolve into DRT systems significantly improves user acceptance.

The exchanges therefore reinforced the pilot's strategy to focus more strongly on communication and inclusiveness. The pilot consequently refined its operational approach by abandoning the hotspot hypothesis in rural contexts, reinforcing multimodal integration and introducing interactive screens aimed at improving accessibility and user understanding of the service.

East Tyrol Pilot – User Experience and Intermodal Integration

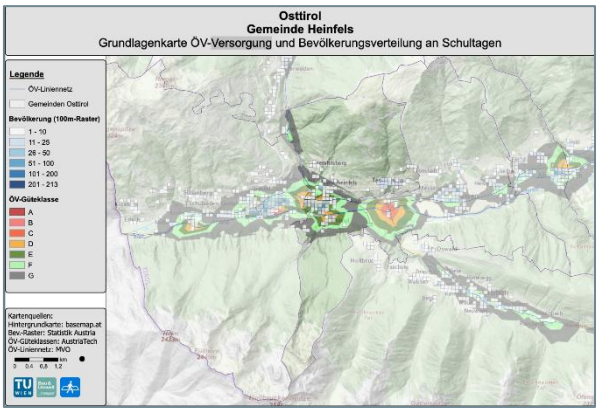

Figure 4: Example of mapping of PT offer and Settlement/Inhabitants, done for all 33 municipalities in East Tyrol

The East Tyrol pilot discussion focused on improving digital user experience, strengthening intermodal integration and collecting user feedback.

Participants discussed the difficulties associated with improving the user experience of DRT services and reflected on the most important digital features that should be integrated into mobility platforms. Technology providers and operators shared experiences concerning evaluation systems integrated into applications, direct passenger feedback mechanisms and participatory activities such as surveys, workshops and hackathons.

The discussion highlighted that digital interfaces alone are insufficient without direct user support and continuous interaction with passengers. Participants stressed that surveys and participatory workshops

remain essential alongside digital tools and that user guidance is necessary to support behavioural change and service acceptance.

The workshop also explored the potential role of AI chatbots and automated assistance systems. Technology providers shared experiences regarding chatbot experimentation and third-party service integration into mobility platforms.

These exchanges directly contributed to East Tyrol's digital enhancement strategy, which subsequently included the development of user-feedback mechanisms, integration of third-party services and experimentation with AI-supported digital assistance tools.

Split-Dalmatia County Pilot – Experimental DRT Service in Croatia

Figure 5: Figure 3: Exemplary transport means for DRT in Split-Dalmatia County

The Split-Dalmatia County (SDC) pilot represented one of the most innovative components of DREAM_PACE, as it aimed to implement the first experimental DRT service in Croatia under the recently introduced national regulatory framework.

The workshop discussion focused on governance and procurement challenges, operational flexibility, simulations, service sizing and the integration between fixed-route and flexible services. Technology providers and operators shared operational experiences regarding feasibility studies, progressive implementation strategies and the balance between simulations and real-world testing.

Participants stressed that reliable data collection and understanding of territorial conditions are essential prerequisites for developing realistic simulations and effective operational models. The discussion also highlighted that gradual implementation strategies are often preferable to large-scale deployments introduced immediately without progressive adaptation phases.

Community members shared experiences regarding no-show management and discussed booking reliability mechanisms capable of improving operational efficiency. Participants also reflected on the coexistence of flexible and fixed-route services within the same territory and on the importance of progressively scaling services based on observed demand.

These exchanges contributed directly to refining the operational variants and governance scenarios developed within the Split-Dalmatia pilot.

Stuttgart Region Pilot – Governance and Targeted Services

The Stuttgart Region pilot discussion focused on governance approaches, persona-based planning methodologies and the operational sizing of DRT systems.

Participants discussed how DRT services should complement existing public transport rather than replace conventional services entirely. Stakeholders shared experiences regarding integrated mobility platforms, coordination between operators and multimodal transfer management, particularly in relation to delayed train services.

The discussion also highlighted the importance of appropriately sizing operational areas. Participants suggested that smaller service zones often perform better than larger ones in low-demand contexts and reflected on differentiated operational approaches for specific user groups such as elderly passengers and students.

Figure 6: Participants to Stuttgart region LL meetings

Technology providers and operators also discussed differentiated service models combining address-to-address services for elderly users with stop-to-stop services for other categories of passengers. These exchanges strengthened the project's understanding of how DRT systems can improve territorial accessibility while maintaining operational and economic sustainability.

3.3. Follow-Up interactions between Pilots and Community members

Following the second workshop, several targeted interactions were developed between pilot partners and members of the Tech and Business Community interested in supporting specific pilot activities.

These exchanges involved digital mobility providers, MaaS operators, technology companies, researchers and transport operators. The interactions focused on operational validation activities, feasibility assessments, governance and tendering issues, multimodal integration and communication strategies.

The contribution of innovative stakeholders proved particularly valuable in refining digital integration approaches, operational flexibility scenarios, planning methodologies and service monitoring strategies. The collaborative exchanges also strengthened the transferability and scalability potential of the pilot solutions by allowing partners to compare experiences and operational practices emerging from different European contexts.

3.4. Third and fourth online Community workshops: Validation of the DREAM_PACE DRT strategy and presentation of outputs on DRT4All.eu website

The third online Tech and Business Community event was held on 1 July 2025 and focused on the validation of the DREAM_PACE DRT strategy and was coordinated by project partner Rupprecht.

The workshop represented an important step in connecting pilot experiences with the broader strategic framework developed within DREAM_PACE. The discussion focused on governance integration, digitalisation approaches, operational flexibility, MaaS integration and accessibility objectives within Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans.

The interaction enabled project partners and external stakeholders to discuss the transferability of pilot experiences and to validate strategic recommendations emerging from the project. The event reinforced the role of the Tech and Business Community as a collaborative platform supporting not only pilot implementation but also the strategic consolidation of the DREAM_PACE "DRT 3.0" framework.

The fourth online community event was held online on 19 February 2026 and coordinated by Redmint and TU Berlin.

The workshop focused on presenting and discussing the main outputs developed within DREAM_PACE and published through the DRT4All.eu platform[2]. The event aimed to facilitate dissemination, transferability and replication of the methodologies, governance approaches and operational lessons developed within the project.

The interaction with community members and external stakeholders focused particularly on the practical applicability of the project outputs, including planning methodologies, digital integration approaches, operational flexibility models and governance solutions for integrating DRT into regional mobility ecosystems.

The DRT4All platform therefore became an important instrument supporting the long-term exploitation and dissemination of DREAM_PACE results.

[2] DRT4all is a dedicated online repository and dissemination platform designed to remain active beyond the project's formal end. The platform consolidates access to DREAM_PACE results and provides a structured entry point to the Solutions Toolbox, alongside a blog section intended to continue featuring contributions and updates linked to DRT implementation and broader European initiatives.

4. Further Communiy events: phyisical networking and dissemination

4.1. Intermobility Future Ways 2024 - Rimini (Italy)

An important in-person dissemination and networking activity was organised in Rimini, Italy, within the framework of Intermobility Future Ways 2024 (19-21 November 2024).

The event was coordinated by Redmint and involved several members of the DREAM_PACE Tech and Business Community. DREAM_PACE contributed to the workshop entitled: “Demand Responsive Transit: vantaggi e sfide di un servizio più flessibile”.

The workshop discussed governance approaches, operational innovation, digitalisation and MaaS integration, using the experiences developed within DREAM_PACE as a basis for broader reflections concerning flexible mobility systems. The event involved public authorities, technology providers, transport operators, researchers and MaaS stakeholders, strengthening the dissemination of project approaches toward a wider national and European audience.

The event also generated important synergies between DREAM_PACE and the broader debate on shared mobility, governance innovation and sustainable transport planning.

Figure 7: DREAM_PACE Tech and Business Community moments at Intermobility Futur Ways 2024

4.2. Busworld Conference 2025 - Brussels (BE)

A second important physical dissemination event was organised in Brussels within the framework of the Busworld Conference 2025 (6-9 October 2025).

The event was coordinated by Redmint and hosted members of the DREAM_PACE Tech and Business Community, focusing on digital mobility solutions, DRT operational innovation and integration between flexible transport systems and public transport networks.

The participation in Busworld enabled the presentation of DREAM_PACE pilot experiences to an international audience and facilitated networking with European mobility stakeholders, technology providers and

transport operators. The event also strengthened opportunities for exchange of practices and dissemination of project methodologies and lessons learned beyond the direct project partnership.

busworld
EUROPE 2025
CONGRESS
BRUSSELS, BELGIUM 6-9 OCT 2025
in collaboration with

Figure 8: DREAM_PACE Tech and Business Community moments at Busworld Conference 2025

5. Conclusions

Throughout the project, the DREAM_PACE Tech and Business Community played a fundamental role in accompanying the implementation and refinement of pilot activities.

The interactions progressively evolved from strategic discussions concerning the overall project framework to highly operational exchanges focused on pilot implementation, governance validation and dissemination of project outputs. The involvement of digital mobility providers, MaaS operators and innovative stakeholders significantly strengthened the project's capacity to develop realistic, scalable and transferable DRT solutions.

The workshops and collaborative exchanges generated important contributions regarding governance integration, MaaS development, operational flexibility, user engagement, communication strategies, inclusiveness tools and service monitoring approaches. Technology providers and innovative stakeholders contributed not only technological expertise, but also operational experiences and practical lessons learned from DRT implementations across Europe.

The physical dissemination events organised in Rimini and Brussels further strengthened the visibility of DREAM_PACE within the European ecosystem of innovative mobility services and contributed to consolidating a collaborative network around the future development of integrated and inclusive DRT systems.

The collaborative ecosystem established through DREAM_PACE therefore became an essential enabling factor supporting the successful implementation of the pilots and the long-term transferability of the project outputs.

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