



access 2 mountain

Sustainable Mobility and Tourism in Sensitive Areas of the Alps and the Carpathians

Outputs and results
Final brochure



**SOUTH EAST
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Transnational Cooperation Programme

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DEVELOPMENT FUND

"Transnational Cooperation is an indispensable prerequisite to address challenges in tourism and transport – as touristic and transport activities are transnational as well. Mountainous Areas are affected more strongly, so we set a focus to these sensitive regions within ACCESS2MOUNTAIN. Developing sustainable transport solutions is also about destroying boundaries and starting to cooperate."

Günther Lichtblau, Environment Agency Austria (Lead Partner)



Sustainable Mobility and Tourism in Sensitive Areas
of the Alps and the Carpathians

Preface



photo source: BMLFUW / photonews.at

Andr  Ruppachter

Austrian Federal Minister for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management

I have a clear objective: Austria is to be a country with a high quality of life. Pure air, diversity in nature, clean water and high-quality foodstuffs make Austria a liveable country and attract numerous guests. Tourism produces about 5% of the world's total CO₂ emissions. Tourism is, therefore, one of causes of climate change and, on the other hand, it is also affected by it. One of the major sources of emissions associated with tourism is transport, especially transport by car – as the car is the most frequently

used mode of transport for travelling to and departing from tourist destinations.

Air pollutants, noise and human interference with the natural landscape have a profound impact on the fauna and flora of sensitive regions such as mountain areas, and they have a major impact on human health.

Austria attaches particular importance to the protection of these sensitive areas. Therefore, and because mobility is by its very nature a transregional matter, a transnational approach is required. The Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management has initiated and supported transnational projects which are aimed at the implementation of environment-friendly and sustainable solutions in tourist regions, such as ACCESS₂MOUNTAIN, for several years.

With ACCESS₂MOUNTAIN, Austria also contributes to the achievement of objectives specified in the UNECE WHO Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme. The Ministry will continue to focus on this important thematic area, and projects and initiatives to support solutions for environment-friendly mobility in sensitive areas will be implemented also in the future, at national and international level.

Andr  Ruppachter

Austrian Federal Minister for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management

Preface



photo source: Andi Bruckner

Georg Rebernig

Managing Director of the Environment Agency Austria (Lead Partner)

Transport and mobility are the key challenges facing tourist regions today. All holiday resorts aim at attracting as many visitors as possible. However, rising numbers of tourists and their greater mobility have an impact on tourist areas. Especially where the car or plane is used to reach a holiday destination, but also for getting about locally once the destination has been reached, mobility is a source of noise and pollution and puts pressure on infrastructure and on the natural landscape.

Tourist regions, therefore, have to offer their visitors sustainable and environment-friendly transport solutions. The development and operation of regional rail systems, as well as buses and taxis, or scooter and cycle hire schemes (in combination with electro mobility) all help to reduce environmental pressures. At the same time, sustainable transport solutions enhance the economic benefits of tourist regions and lead to a higher level of interaction and integration between visitors and tourist regions.

Very good ideas are needed for sustainable transport and mobility solutions, along with efficient, intensive stakeholder participation and public relations in tourist regions, and the necessary funds for the development and operation of appropriate infrastructure. To achieve this, the Environment Agency Austria actively participates in projects such as ACCESS₂MOUNTAIN. During the 3 years of the project's implementation, sustainable solutions have been developed in eight regions of the Alps and the Carpathians, laying the foundation for future work in these areas. It is evident that innovative ideas, while successfully improving the state of the environment in these regions, have provided a valuable contribution to the increasing attractiveness of these areas.

Georg Rebernig

Managing Director of the Environment Agency Austria (Lead Partner)

"With more than 100 million visitors per year, the Alps are one of the most valued touristic destinations in the world. At the same time as the number of visits is further increasing, the time the tourists spend in the Alps, is decreasing. In other words: the number of travels to and from the different destinations in the Alps is growing and growing. Therefore, the challenge of the next years is to make the switch to sustainable modes of transport, particularly the use of public transport more attractive to the visitors. To achieve this we have to develop alternative solutions, tailor made to the needs of the tourists. Only through sustainable mobility, tourism in the Alps can be sustainable. The Alpine Convention offers the appropriate framework and instruments for this process. And projects like the ACCESS2MOUNTAIN are a good example of concrete implementation."

*Simona Vrecv,
Deputy Secretary-General of the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention*

"On behalf of the Carpathian Convention, I would like to express my gratitude for the outstanding contribution that the ACCESS2MOUNTAIN Project gave to the implementation of our Convention in the field of sustainable transport. The Project facilitated a strong exchange of experiences with the Alps and fostered a multi-stakeholder dialogue that contributed to the development of the Carpathian Convention Protocol on Sustainable Transport, which is expected to be adopted at the Forth Carpathian Convention Conference of the Parties (COP4) in Mikulov, September 2014. This result, together with the other project's achievements, shows that despite the different challenges in the field of sustainable transport in the Alps and Carpathians, transnational dialogue and cooperation can bring strong benefits and solutions to both regions."

*Harald Egerer,
UNEP Vienna – Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention*

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Tourism Mobility and the Environment



Tatra Railway
photo source: Gejza Legen

Sustainable tourism represents a major challenge for today's rural and urban environments – particularly in mountain regions. Underdeveloped and insufficient sustainable transport facilities, paired with growing motorization, are having a significant negative impact on ecologically sensitive areas.

Approximately 5 % of current global CO₂ emissions are caused by tourism. Of that 5%, transport accounts for 75%, and motor vehicles alone are responsible for 32%¹.

The European Commission considers mountain regions to be among the areas most sensitive to environmental change. Due to their territorial morphology and their diversity in landscape and wildlife, such regions are particularly vulnerable to and thus highly affected by the impact which transport and tourism have on the environment (e.g. noise and air pollution, barrier effects, etc.). Structural funds like the ERDF² aim to counterbalance these handicaps and thus promote the full integration of mountain areas.

It is up to the individual member states and regions to take advantage of funding opportunities promoting a shift to more environmentally friendly modes of transport. Such funding helps regions implement measures to reduce traffic loads, to improve conditions for public transport, especially railways, to develop flexible transport systems capable of covering the "last mile", and, not least, to rediscover non-motorized mobility.



South Tyrol
photo source: Gejza Legen

"Sustainable tourism needs sustainable access and mobility: zero emissions, healthy and environmentally friendly, energy efficient and carbon neutral, comfortable and flexible from home door to hotel door."

Robert Thaler, Austrian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management; Head of Division Transport, Mobility, Human Settlement and Noise; Vice-Chairman of The PEP

1 UNWTO-UNEP-WMO 2008

2 European Regional Development Fund

ACCESS2MOUNTAIN and its Achievements

ACCESS2MOUNTAIN is a transnational project with 32 partners and observers from 17 countries located in the Alps and Carpathians. Funded by the South East Europe Programme, it aims to improve sustainable accessibility to and within sensitive mountain regions, for the benefit of both tourist traffic and local populations. Project activities aim to raise awareness, promote knowledge, provide regions with solutions for sustainable mobility development, to integrate peripheral regions through attractive offers to visitors, and improve the quality of the environment. It equally aims to strengthen policy dialogue at the transnational and EU levels, as well as between the Alpine and Carpathian regions and their respective conventions.

The ACCESS2MOUNTAIN consortium benefits from a mixed partnership structure encompassing tourist associations, regional development agencies, national parks, research institutions, universities, as well as ministries and other public institutions involved in the areas of transport, environment, and tourism. The project is closely linked to a number of very distinct territories where tourism is present to a greater or lesser degree. The project implements demonstration projects adapted to the needs of these pilot regions.

Concrete results and outputs

- 7 pilot regions committed to sustainable mobility management (incl. improved small-scale infrastructure and pre-investment measures) with the commitment to future cooperation in this field
- Decision support tool for regional mobility management
- Transnational exchange of best practices in the areas of regional railways and multimodal transport
- Policy dialogue at transnational level involving the Alpine and the Carpathian Convention, resulting in a contribution to the Transport Protocol of the Carpathian Convention
- Final common charter including policy recommendations for the promotion of environmentally and socially sustainable tourism and mobility at regional, national, and transnational/EU levels

Project Areas and Partners

The Alps are among the most ecologically sensitive areas in Europe and are the natural, cultural, economic and residential environment for nearly 14 million people. The Alps are also Europe's most important recreational area, with about 95 million long-stay visitors and an additional 60 million same-day visitors per year.³ Tourism, and in particular the motorized transport associated with it, is having an increasingly negative impact on the Alps.

The Carpathians are Europe's largest mountain range, a unique natural treasure of great beauty and ecological value and home to the headwaters of several major rivers. The range constitutes a major ecological, economic, cultural, recreational, and residential environment in the heart of Europe. It is home to about 18 million people and hosts approximately 31 million guests a year.⁴

Different regions, different challenges – the diversity of our pilot regions

- Vastly disparate levels of tourist traffic, from highly frequented areas such as South Tyrol to less popular ones where tourism is only slowly emerging, as in Maramureș.
- While some regions are making the transition to green mobility along a pre-existing network of robust transportation routes, in other regions there is little viable infrastructure, to serve as a precondition. The pilot regions are located in eight different countries across the Alps and Carpathians; that being said, the question is not always "how" a region can be made accessible, but "if".
- Eager for new development opportunities, these regions wish to promote sustainable growth scenarios implying a balance between emerging tourism and environmental protection. Protected landscapes are seen as an essential asset for tourism attractiveness and, at the same time, benefit the local economy.



Maramureș

photo source: Ioan Pop



Kosice Folkmarska

photo source: Gejza Legen



Bieszczady

photo source: Gejza Legen



Gesäuse

photo source: Andreas Hollinger



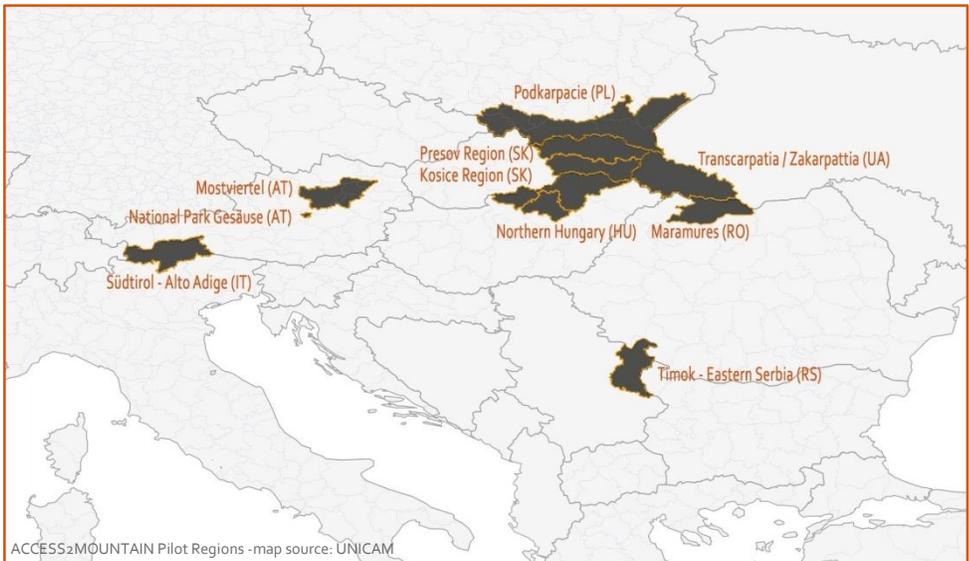
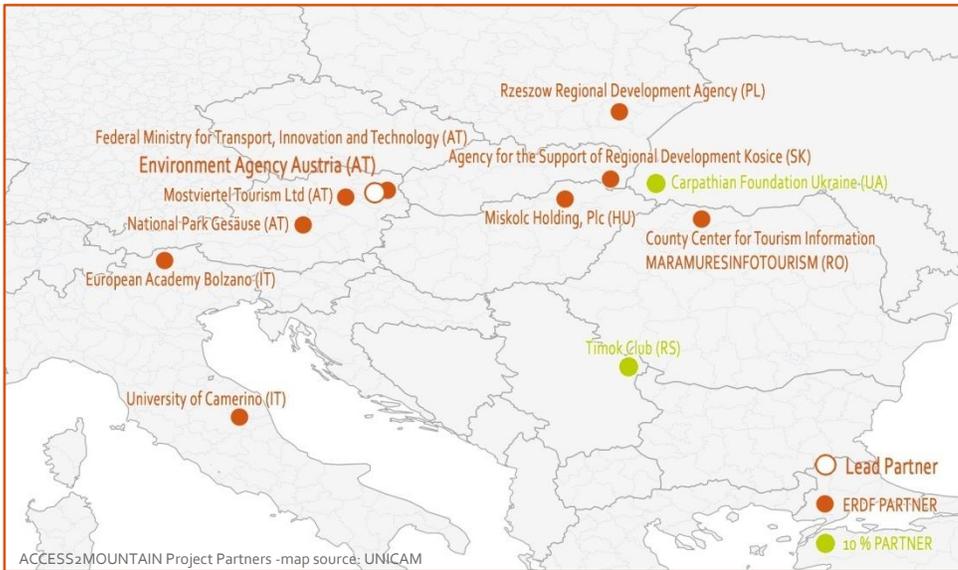
South Tyrol

photo source: Gejza Legen

³ <http://www.alpconv.org>

⁴ Ruffini, F., Ptáček, P. (2009)

The ACCESS2MOUNTAIN Project Partners and Pilot Regions



Mostviertel hills
photo source: Mostviertel
Tourismus weinfranz.at



Tisa Valley Ukraine
photo source: Gejza Legen



Slopes of Liskovac mountain
in Djerdap National Park
photo source: Aleksandra Siljic



Miskolc landscape in front of Bükk mountain
photo source: Miskolc Holding Plc.

Regional Key Data

Regional Key Data	NUTS identification number:	Population	Surface	Gross domestic product (GDP) per inhab., in purchasing power standard (PPS) by Nuts3 relating to EU-27 average (100%)	Agricultural land	Settlement structure	Number of tourist establishments (NUT3 LEVEL)	Net occupancy rate of bed-places in hotels and similar acc. (NUT2 LEVEL)
Pilot regions								
Gesause National Park (Austria)	AT222 Liezen	650	110 km ²	105 %	3 %	No cities No towns 1 village	806	12,2 %
Kosice Region (Slovakia)	SK042 Kosickýkraj	791.569	6.755 km ²	58 %	51 %	1 city 16 towns 423 villages	295	26,8 %
Maramures (Romania)	RO114 Maramureş	513.776	6.304 km ²	32 %	49 %	1 city 6 towns 64 villages	372	27,2 %
Mostviertel (Austria)	AT121 Mostviertel-Eisenwurzen	260.683	3.355 km ²	94 %	64 %	No cities 9 towns 767 villages	309	9,4 %
Northern Hungary (Hungary)	HU311 Borsod HU312 Heves HU313 Nógrád	1.150.518	13.340 km ²	38 %	67 %	2 cities 37 towns 406 villages	444	23,4 %
Podkarpackie (Poland)	PL215 Now. PL216 Osw. PL225 Bieleski PL323 Krosn. PL324 Przemyski PL325 Rzeszowski	3.379.288	22.251 km ²	44 %	66 %	3 cities 36 towns 814 villages	1083	32,1 %
Presov Region (Slovakia)	SK031 Žilinskýkraj, SK041 Presovskýkraj	1.503.870	15.783 km ²	53 %	36 %	2 cities 34 towns 767 villages	1031	27,1 %
Transcarpathian Region (Ukraine)	-	1.254.000	12.800 km ²	No data	No data	1 city 40 towns 571 villages	146	No data
Autonomous Province of Bolzano - Südtirol (Italy)	IT140 Bolzano-Bozen	509.860	7.400 km ²	146 %	44 %	1 city 5 towns 116 villages	10266	61 %
Timok (Eastern Serbia)	-	250.500	7.131 km ²	No data	No data	No cities 4 towns 9 villages	No data	No data

Tab Source: Eurostat 2011 - Openstreet map 2012

The GSEISPUR (National Park Gesäuse)

This pilot region comprises parts of the GSEISPUR (Gesäuse National Park) and the Eisenwurz Nature Park in Styria, Austria. The focal points of local tourism vary by locale, with adventure sports on the Salza river, mountaineering in the Gesäuse mountains, and culture in Admont. Sustainable public transport currently exists in the form of a regional railway and bus lines to important regional centres. Over the years, however, cutbacks due to waning demand in such services have led to a growing number of locals and visitors who prefer to explore the region by car.

Project Activities and Outputs

An **integrative mobility platform** in the Gesäuse National Park, **GSEISPUR** offers flexible mobility for both local and visiting outdoorsmen from May to October. Since its launch in 2013, GSEISPUR consists of a shuttle service to/from the main railway station, a door-to-door taxi service and an e-scooter rental. Further sustainable mobility options are to be introduced over time, including a car sharing facility and "funmobility" products. In order to make services and tourism packages more generally accessible, a website and smart phone app with an order and dispatch system have been introduced.

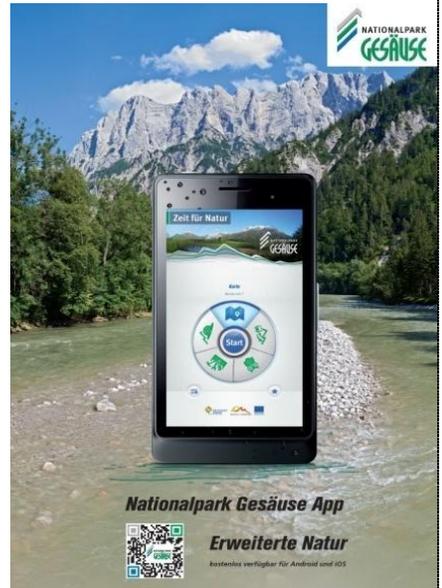


photo source: National Park Gesäuse

The response after just one season has been very positive.

Despite the initial lack of web and marketing support, 1638 passengers took advantage of the shuttle from June to October 2013, averaging nearly 3.5 passengers per trip. This is an important step forward in terms of economic and ecologic efficiency.

The next 3 years have several challenges in store: logistic and financial maintenance, enhancement of mobility services, and the increase of passenger frequency. The National Park also has long-term plans to develop a year-round flexible transport system in cooperation with local municipalities.



photo source: National Park Gesäuse

"...Never walk alone! Transnational cooperation helps to better understand the underlying challenges and find solutions which go above and beyond regional limitations."

David Osebik, National Park Gesäuse

"Ötscher:reich" - Mobility Management in the Heart of Nature (Mostviertel)

The Mostviertel region of Lower Austria, with its gently rolling landscape in the north and its rugged mountains in the south, offers a wide range of outdoor activities, catering to adventurers and families alike. Conscious of its responsibility to preserve its natural heritage, the Mostviertel has acknowledged sustainability as an essential principle of its development. Accordingly, several nature parks and a wilderness zones have been established and an annual conference on sustainable tourism takes place in the region every September.



photo source: Mostviertel Tourism weinfranz.at

ensure the development of new concepts for handling traffic peaks, especially during the coming Lower Austrian Regional Exhibition in 2015 in which the railway is to figure prominently.

Part of an **overall process of mobility concept development**, carried out in cooperation with local municipalities and other regional players: An improved ski bus system for the ski areas "Ötscher" and "Hochkar" was pilot-tested during the winter season 2012/2013 and followed by an evaluation and optimization process. Follow-up activities will present the new challenge of making new services more widely known, necessitating professional market strategies.

Project Activities and Outputs

Pilot testing and evaluating measures to **improve railway services and introduce multimodal links**: Measures tested included seat reservation systems for guests, organizing luggage and passenger transportation for cyclists visiting the town of Mariazell, and offering e-bike rental as part of new multimodal transport options.

Optimizing railway logistics: A working group with representatives from the Mariazell railway and local municipalities has been established to



photo source: Regionalmanagement Mostviertel

"This project has clearly shown that despite the different member states with their different historic and cultural backgrounds, the project partners are facing very similar challenges when it comes to small and narrow gauge railways. In this sense, the best practice collection proved very helpful, since many success factors can be applied by the different project partners as well."

Michael Gansch, Mostviertel Tourism GmbH

E-Mobility as a Mobility Alternative in Mountain Areas (South Tyrol)

In the heart of Italy's northernmost province South Tyrol, the Bolzano region combines Alpine and Mediterranean flair and landscapes. Boasting cultural diversity and a broad range of leisure time activities, the region attracts numerous visitors all year round. The regional capital of Bolzano is also known as the gate to the Dolomites, the impressive mountain range stretching across north-eastern Italy, which was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2009.



photo source: Gejza Legen



photo source: Gejza Legen



Project Activities and Outputs

In order to better integrate existing means of transportation (public transport, ski lifts, bikes etc.) with mobility and leisure offers for both visitors and locals, the project sought to analyze the **feasibility of innovative sustainable transport services in alpine tourism**. As a high frequency tourist area in the Dolomites, the municipality of Corvara and environs were considered an exemplary point of departure.

In close cooperation with municipalities and other regional stakeholders in tourism, transport, and environment, particular emphasis was given to the integration of **e-mountain bikes** in an overall concept for sustainable tourist mobility in the region. Partly covering UNESCO Natural Heritage territory, Corvara was viewed in relation to its surrounding environment, which, as the UNESCO title suggests, warrants continual efforts in implementing measures for sustainable tourism.

The analyses resulted in a **sustainable mobility concept** for the mid and long-term development of the region, including specific recommendations relating to Corvara's accessibility, local micro-mobility and awareness raising activities in Corvara and its environs.

"Mobility and environmental challenges do not stop at municipal, regional or national borders - that is why they should be met by joint efforts and actions."

Miriam L. Weiß, EURAC research

Joy on Two Wheels - Maramureș

Located in north western Romania, the Maramureș region is renowned for having preserved its idyllic peasant culture. In spite of its rural charm, access to and mobility within the area can be challenging due to underdeveloped infrastructure for rail, bike, or public transport. Progress is being made, however, as local authorities have begun prioritizing sustainable development in mobility, tourism, and protected natural and cultural heritage sites.



photo source: Daniel Andreica

Project Activities and Outputs

In preparation for the project, an in-depth **study on traffic flows, their environmental impact and potential transportation solutions** was carried out in and around Maramureș County. On this basis, it was possible to initiate awareness raising activities and secure stakeholder involvement, ultimately resulting in a **strategy and action plan** to improve sustainable mobility for the benefit of local tourism and the regional economy. The action plan entails further engaging the public and appealing to political decision makers in order to have a voice in further regional planning.



photo source: Rada Pavel

Initial steps toward producing visibility and raising awareness among locals and tourists about the advantages of sustainable mobility is of utmost importance. To this end, small-scale investments were implemented to **improve cycling infrastructure and multimodal links** (network of bike routes and guidance system, bike rental services at guesthouses, bike carriage facilities on minibuses and railway wagons).

In cooperation with the Romanian Ecotourism Association, five **visitor packages** for different target groups have been developed to integrate new mobility services into pre-existing ecotourism offers in the Maramureș region. Special attention has been given to the promotion of the newly created bike offer, including the distribution among tourists, locals and experts of brochures and videos with a fresh approach.

"The trails in Maramureș are an open invitation to cycling. Therefore we were pleased to offer better options to those who want to explore the region on two wheels."

Rada Pavel, MaramureșInfoTurism

"Bike and Ride" - Multimodal Corridor Development (Košice-Miskolc)



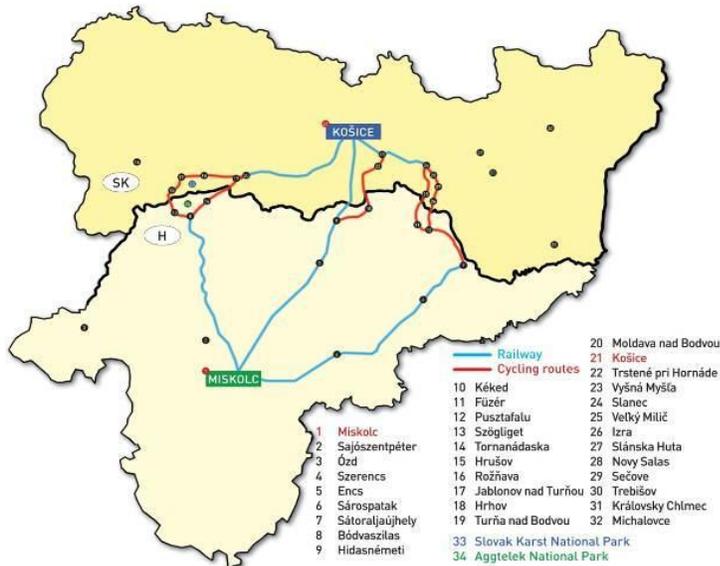
Miskolc – Diósgyőr Castle

photo source: Miskolc Holding Plc.

Northern Hungary is a unique region with diverse landscapes, medieval castles, exquisite wines and fruit brandies, and is home to several World Heritage sites. The regional capital Miskolc is located at the confluence of different geographical regions, including the foothills of the Bükk Mountains, the valley of the river Sajó and the streams Szinva and Hejő. The region is characterized by a high level of geographic diversity in general, comprising some areas of the Great Hungarian Plain and the Northern Hungarian Mountains.

The **area around Košice** is situated in the southeast of Slovakia and borders Ukraine to the East and Hungary to the South. As a national park listed also among the UNESCO International Biosphere Reserve, it is marked by deep gorges, long canyons, wild ravines and roaring waterfalls, and flanks the Slovak Karst Mountains to the Southwest.

Both regions share a tradition of industrialization on their peripheries and a low inflow of investments. The progressive deflection of the centre of economic gravity to western and metropolitan areas of Hungary and Slovakia has had a negative impact on the Košice -Miskolc region. Since heavy industry is declining, the border railway connections - primarily used for freight transport - have lost their meaning and railway stations have fallen into neglect. Motivation to join the project came from the wish to establish a basis for the joint development of cross-border tourist routes between the neighbouring territories of Northern Hungary and the Košice region and for improving accessibility within both regions.



Multimodal Corridors
map source: Miskolc Holding Plc.

Project Activities and Outputs

A **feasibility study** analyses the framework conditions in the cross-border region of Northern Hungary-Košice in terms of multimodal transport and proposes measures within three cross-border multimodal corridors in the area between the cities of Košice and Miskolc. The study outlines key recommendations for action plan developers. The elaboration of a joint action plan is to be continued after project completion.

The activities carried out during the project, including feasibility study and stakeholder involvement, helped to foster stakeholder commitment to current and future (cross-border) cooperation in the field of sustainable transport and tourism.

Concurrent with the process of the feasibility study development, **small-scale pilot investments** were implemented to set first visible signs towards the improvement of bike infrastructure and to test possible multimodal connections (e.g. by combining bike and train routes). The introduction of bikes racks, guidance systems for multimodal connections, rest areas, and interactive info boards helped to raise awareness among the local population.

Results of a **regional inventory and analysis of existing, operating and abandoned railways** in the Košice-Northern Hungary region, and their potential use for the development of sustainable tourism in the region were also taken into account in the feasibility assessment. It has been shown that there is great potential in developing cross-border tourism products by involving and revitalizing historic railways. The existing historic railway lines could be perceived as magnets for tourists.

photo source: Gejza Legen



"Transnational cooperation has given us examples of functioning sustainable tourism offers in other countries, inspired us to prepare useful small scale investments and helped to foster cooperation with cross-border partner."

Henrieta Kiralvargova, Agency for the Support of Regional Development Košice

"The ACCESS2MOUNTAIN project means for Miskolc Holding Plc a cross-border and cross cultural cooperation that supports sustainable development along both sides of the borders. This is definitely a value adding factor, strengthening further the partnership of Miskolc and Kosice".

Judit Fodor – Miskolc Holding Plc

Getting on Track - Rzeszow

Situated in the southeast of Poland, the Podkarpackie region borders the Ukraine to the east and Slovakia to the south. The regional capital Rzeszow is situated on the Wislok River, where the northern borders of the Carpathian Mountains and the Sandomierska Basin meet. The region is home to numerous national parks and reserves, including part of the UNESCO East Carpathian Biosphere Reserve.

In spite of its natural capital and the wide range of recreational activities it offers, the scarcely populated Podkarpackie Region does not yet belong to the widely known tourist destinations in Europe.



map source: Rzeszow Regional Development Agency

Project Activities and Outputs

The project aims to identify new possibilities for soft mobility in the region and to improve accessibility to tourist attractions, especially from the perspective of cross-border cooperation between Poland and Slovakia. The integration of railways between the two countries was one of the key challenges. To this purpose, a study was carried out to identify the possibilities for combining narrow gauge railways, standard gauge railway lines, and alternative transport routes on the Polish-Slovak border in an integrated system of multimodal transport. The

study revealed that, thanks to existing infrastructure, the development of such a system would not entail excessive costs. A promotional campaign should aim for the introduction of a shared tariff policy for carriers in order to facilitate cross-border travel. The analysis also calls for increased cooperation and partnerships between carriers and local authorities.

The analysis process is an important basis for the realization of specific measures in the near future, such as the implementation of a transnational ticketing system as described.

Further activities to be developed in the wake of the project include, among other things, the development of cross-border visitor packages and a map for tourists integrating points of interest and transport offers.



photo source: Rzeszow Regional Development Agency

"ACCESS2MOUNTAIN has given us the opportunity to see how much cross-border collaboration matters. It's worth fighting for sustainable tourism in the name of future generations – let's do it together!"

Michal Rzucidlo, Rzeszow Regional Development Agency

Timok Club



photo source: Aleksandra Siljic

The Timok Club, one of two 10% partners⁵ in the project, is a non-profit and non-political citizens' association with the mission of securing the sustainable and environmentally friendly development of the Timok region in Eastern Serbia.

In spite of its natural treasures, the Timok region of Eastern Serbia is one of the least developed regions in the country. Thanks to existing rail infrastructure, the region has much potential for multimodal transport development. Its use is, however, quite modest and does not accommodate tourism to any satisfactory or sustainable extent, especially in remote areas. Car traffic still prevails, accounting for the largest share of transportation in the region. In order to promote alternative, sustainable transportation, especially in valuable natural areas, significant investments in infrastructure reconstruction and environmental protection are needed.

In an analysis, regional transport systems and traffic flows, and existing and potential capacities in the region were investigated and their deficiencies analyzed, which is an important basis for future measures to be taken.

Carpathian Foundation Ukraine

The Carpathian Foundation Ukraine (CFUA) is the second 10% partner in ACCESS2MOUNTAIN and one of five member organizations of the cross-border Carpathian Foundation Network promoting good relations, social stability, and economic progress in four provinces of Western Ukraine.

Due to a growing number of tourism-related projects, the Ukrainian Carpathians have recently become a popular tourist destination. Important issues remain however. Public transport infrastructure is underdeveloped. Eco-friendly modes of transport, such as narrow gauge railways have become a thing of the past, while large capacity tourist coaches and ecologically friendly motors remain inaccessibly expensive.

The CFUA supports the ACCESS2MOUNTAIN partnership in building a trans-European network, drawing public attention to the issues raised by the project, learning from European experience and disseminating best practices in the Carpathian region, demonstrating the benefits of ecologically friendly modes of transport to regional authorities.



photo source: Gejza Legen

Learning from Best Practice: Regional and narrow gauge railways in Tourism

The analysis of almost 30 renowned regional and narrow gauge railways operating in mountain regions was aimed to identify core factors of success in developing and maintaining a high level of service for different target groups including tourists.

Professional market presence and high quality of services

It is evident that the most successful railways (Rhaetische Bahn, Vinschgerbahn, Usedomer Bäderbahn, Zillertalbahn, Harzer Schmalspurbahnen...) have become high quality brand names themselves. As successful transport systems they influence the image of their region positively. This does not happen automatically but is achieved by a variety of elements that are adapted to each other strategically, thereunder:

- infrastructure adapted to the needs of passengers (stations, rail network);
- rolling stock suitable for the requirements of passengers (barrier-free access, heavy and bulky luggage carriage);
- marketing, easy access to tickets and information.

Support by all relevant partners

(regional and community policy, tourist associations and population)

The success of regional railways has almost always been dependent on the support from the region, the provinces, municipalities, tourist associations and, of course, the population. Developments therefore require the commitments of several actors in charge since a successful and sustainable railway operation neither is concern of individual persons nor single communities along the track. It is important to gain:

- sufficient support on all political levels (in terms of financing, integration of regional railways in regional and national traffic concepts, coordination with land-use planning);
- cooperation with tourist-stakeholders (railway companies and tourism recognize that they can succeed together with interesting packages for different target groups in tourism. Improvements of the information to regional railways in regional tourist websites and also in printed media would be helpful in some cases).

The full best practice collection and other related publications are available on the project website.

O. Knoll: Analyse von Regionalbahnen: Erfolgsfaktoren und Empfehlungen. Vienna, 2012.

Knoll, O., Lung, E. & Baumgartner, A.: Regional and Narrow Gauge Railways – Good practice and Recommendations. Vienna, 2012.

Rzeszow Regional Development Agency: Final Synthesis on regional and narrow gauge railways. ACCESS2MOUNTAIN pilot activities. Rzeszow, 2014.



photo source: Gejza Legen



photo source: Gejza Legen



Stations of the Vinschger Bahn renovated with considerable municipal contributions.
photo source: Otfried Knoll



Settlement development based on the accessibility by public transport (Linz Solar City, Austria)
photo source: Ernst Lung

Low floor wagons for barrier-free access
photo source: STA, Südtiroler Transportstrukturen AG



"The analysis of regional railways proves that most of them are successful on the tourist market and provide also sustainable mobility for the inhabitants in their regions. As experienced partnership, we should show all relevant stakeholders, that measures for sustainable mobility need not to be expensive."

Ernst Lung, Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology

Read more: "Regional and narrow gauge railways – good practice and recommendations" Federal Ministry For Transport, Innovation And Technology, based on the report of O. Knoll: Analyse von Regionalbahnen: Erfolgsfaktoren und Empfehlungen. Vienna, 2012. Knoll, O., Lung, E. & Baumgartner, A.: Regional and Narrow Gauge Railways – Good practice and Recommendations. Vienna, 2012 details please see <http://www.access2mountain.eu/en/activities/Railway.html>

Learning from Best Practice: Multimodal Mobility in Tourism

In order to learn how to successfully implement multimodal mobility concepts in mountainous areas, 51 existing best practice examples were analyzed. The collection presents examples in six categories⁶ depicting different strategic focuses:

- **Accessibility by public transport**

How to get to and around environmentally sensitive destinations using different modes of transport.

- **Regional and local soft mobility offers**

How users of public transport can get around in the region with a feeling of being well informed and looked after for a car-free holiday.

- **Intermodality**

How public and tourist transport are coordinated and synchronized to provide intermodal links between railway stations and the final destination/accommodation.

- **Pricing and ticketing**

How to combine transport and tourism sights through a coordinated pricing and ticketing system and attractive special offers.

- **Cooperation and coordination in transport and tourism**

How to improve the system of integrated/all-inclusive packages, providing a combination of public transport and tourist offers at destinations.

- **Information/marketing and awareness raising activities**

How to inform tourists and motivate them to choose existing public transport over private motor vehicles.



photo source: Mostviertel Tourismus weinfranz.at

Read more: The full best practice collection and other related publications are available on the project website.

Weiß, M., Favilli, F., Seidel, D. & A. Vinci: Good-practice collection for multimodal transport. Bolzano, 2012

Hostnikar, S. et al.: Final Synthesis in the field of multimodal transport in tourism.

Prepared for: CJIT Maramureş (ed.). Baia Mare, 2014

6 Molitor, R. et al. (2008)



Alpine Valley Coach:
support for public coach services to and in rural alpine regions. The bus frequency was adjusted to meet the tourists' increasing demand.
photo source: Moosalp - Moorlandschaft © Peter Salzmann, Viège

Dolomiti Express:
Cooperation between cabin lifts and railway operators to facilitate arrivals by public transport.
photo source: <http://www.valdisole.net/IT/Dolomiti-Express>



Alpine Pearl Pfelders: Innovative mobility ideas/transport offers to ensure that guests experience a stress-free holiday in the Texelgruppe Nature Park.
photo source: <http://www.alpine-pearls.com>



Conclusions for Regional Multimodal Mobility Projects



Mountain hiking trail and railway system
photo source: Mostviertel Tourismus weinfranz.at

It takes several steps to realize a potential project idea. Analyzing framework conditions, considering possible limitations of authority and financial constraints, and creating a **roadmap** for all further action is necessary to reach the desired target state. That also means defining milestones, work packages, budget plans and various co-financing sources, including a concept for stakeholder involvement, target group specific promotion, and public awareness building. Importantly, a monitoring and evaluation method should also be chosen right from the start. A clear conceptual design is also indispensable for success. In the case of

ACCESS₂MOUNTAIN, the following aspects were considered:

- **Learning from Best Practice**

Best practice collections focused on multimodal transport and on regional railways and allowed the pilot regions to become familiar with case studies of similar and/or dissimilar framework conditions and learn about core success factors for regional tourism and mobility concepts. Though 100% transferability is rare, best practice examples provide project ideas and know-how about operations or technologies.

- **Feasibility Studies are a Good Starting point**

Testing the viability of a project idea at an early stage can save great amounts of time and money. Feasibility makes it possible to weigh the pros and cons of multiple scenarios and thereby provide quality information for decision-making. Risk factors are singled out in advance, allowing their mitigation at an early stage. In ACCESS₂MOUNTAIN, feasibility studies have proved to be a valuable preparatory step in giving a basis for future action plans, and making the case with the authorities.

- **Mountain Areas require Flexibility**

Restrictions due to topography or socio-economic factors like low population density are frequent reasons for a lack of regular public transport. The main challenge presented by peripheral mountain regions is managing the varying demand from low to high seasons. One solution may be a flexible, demand-responsive system. This would also appear necessary to overcome the "last-mile" bottleneck on the last leg of the journey, i.e. the distance between the regional railway station and accommodations, the "final destination". To make a real positive impact in the mobility behaviour of tourists, destinations must offer and advertise their door-to-door accessibility.



Bike racks system
photo source: Unicorn Records

Conclusions for Awareness Raising & Stakeholder Involvement

Various communication measures, at various levels and among different target groups, have been aimed at raising awareness about sustainable mobility and tourism and promoting regional ACCESS₂MOUNTAIN products. Project partners have made use of local media to spread the word and taken advantage of any and every opportunity to gather support for their projects, both at tourism fairs and scientific workshops.

In our experience, the following strategies are essential when it comes to addressing stakeholders and/or the public:

- **Alliances and Confidence-Building for Strong Stakeholder Commitment**

Establish contact with and sell your project to players in the fields of tourism, transport, and environment (tourist entrepreneurs, transport authorities, protected area management, local politicians etc.) who might have a vested interest in the policy or project, and whose involvement could have a positive financial or political impact.

Gather support and arouse interest by highlighting, in addition to environmental advantages, the added value in terms of economic and personal benefit, improving local quality of life and political reputation.

Follow an integrative, inter-sector approach by involving relevant key players in tourism, transport and environment. This will help to mitigate possible conflicts later on and pave the way for future cooperation in sustainability projects. Institutionalize the cooperation once the relevant players are on board. Establish working groups with regular meetings or formalize the cooperation, giving more weight to the commitment of each member. An institutionalized cooperation is a good starting point for joint action plan development.



Press Conference
photo source: Gejza Legen



Maramures Cooperation with WWF Romania
photo source: CJIT Maramures



Partner Meetings
photo source: Gejza Legen



- **Public Awareness – Informing Your Potential Customers**

An important part of persuading visitors to use local public transport means highlighting its advantages. A well-devised concept should offer visitors a comfortable travel alternative in which they do not have to worry about individual transportation. Persuasion can be achieved with the help of attractive offers including visitor packages, integrative guest cards, etc. as opposed to more conventional forms of travel. Public accessibility to a particular destination is not enough; it is essential to provide on-site mobility services within the area as well.

Tourists are not the sole target group. It is important to adapt new mobility services to the needs of the local population as well, and to ensure the operation of mobility services (e.g. shuttles) in the off-season. Highlight personal benefits from the use of public transport –reduced mobility costs, improved air quality, more self-dependence for elderly people and children – all of which result in a better quality of life.

Demonstrate it: Role models have an important role to play, such as stakeholders who "live the idea". In our project, small-scale infrastructure projects have, from the very beginning, proved to be decisive for creating visible outputs and give a



Walkable Ecological Footprint
photo source: National ParkGesäuse



InformationDay primary school
photo source: Miskolc Holding

demonstration of the added value of such projects. Let people experience their new mobility options.

Give the floor to the locals: Our projects are not a one-sided move to win over the local population. Open-mindedness about other people’s concerns and ideas is fundamental. Get specific target groups involved at an early stage in order to account for their specific needs.

Simplify it: Adapting to your audience is crucial in order to connect with them and influence their attitudes and mobility behaviour (e.g. children are an important target group).

Simplify new mobility products: no detailed talk of schedules, stops, etc.; keep descriptions to a minimum. Let the designs speak for themselves.

Designed to be recognized: Brand recognition is a fundamental part of catching people’s attention. As such, it should be taken into account early on in the process, i.e. during budget allocations.



photos source: National ParkGesäuse (above); Rada Pavel

Decision Support System (DSS) for Regional Mobility Management

Applying scientific models, the University of Camerino has developed a user-friendly tool to support regional practitioners and policy makers during the decision-making process for the sustainable development of their regional transport systems.

Best practices provide decision-makers with options for improving regional transport systems. Application, however, requires these practices to be integrated into a strategic vision. DSS supports decision-makers in building a strategic vision by allowing them to choose from alternative scenarios.

Based on the refined strategic vision that results, decision-makers are able to draft various project proposals which subsequently become the object of analytical evaluation.

In short, DSS...

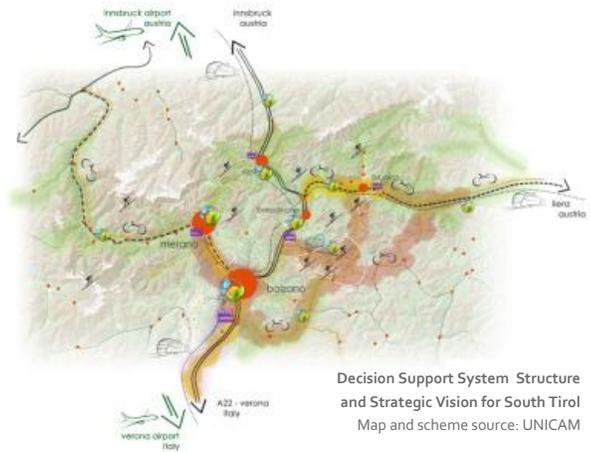
- analyzes the existing transport system and evaluates conflicts between landscape characteristics and transport modes.
- defines, through the proposal of alternative scenarios, guidelines and orientation for drafting strategic visions that relate to the reorganization of the transport system.
- identifies different project proposals for improving the transport system.
- evaluates the different proposals in order to define the more sustainable solution.

Steps to an individual most sustainable solution

source: UNICAM



DSS is based on "system dynamics" (SD), a mathematical modelling approach geared toward a holistic understanding of the behaviour of complex systems, and designing and analyzing policies. For pilot application in ACCESS2MOUNTAIN, the calculation involved an extensive database building on information gathered from the pilot regions and the results of the SWOT-analysis performed for each of the regions in terms of transport, tourism and environment.



Decision Support System Structure and Strategic Vision for South Tyrol
Map and scheme source: UNICAM

"It is not enough to do, it is better to do together!"

Transnational cooperation allows to interpolate studies, know-how and the best experiences through a process of growth of collective knowledge"

UNICAM working group

Policy Dialogue and Recommendations

Apart from providing pilot regions with political support at the national level, ministries and other political partners have been participating in a policy dialogue geared toward the political anchoring of sustainable mobility and tourism at the EU and transnational level as well.

In order to have an impact, a cooperation with the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions seemed obvious from the start. The ACCESS2MOUNTAIN participation on the part of numerous ministries from the various Alpine and Carpathian countries as (observing) partners has greatly facilitated the involvement of the national representatives from the Alpine and Carpathian Conventions.



Project Meeting
photo source: Gejza Legen

Towards a Transport Protocol for the Carpathian Convention

A multi-level policy dialogue with the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention (AC) and the Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (ISCC) aimed to offer recommendations for the development of the Transport Protocol of the Carpathian Convention. Coordinated by EURAC research in cooperation with the Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (ISCC), ACCESS2MOUNTAIN project partners, including the *Environment Agency Austria* (lead partner), the *Austrian Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation, and Technology*, and other partners in tourism and transport, have attended relevant meetings of the Carpathian Convention (CC) working group and provided their input as practitioners and experts.

These joint efforts have resulted in a synchronized draft of the transport protocol text, ready for its submission and adoption at the forthcoming 4th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP4) in September 2014. An adoption of the protocol text at the upcoming COP4 would be of singular strategic importance for the future development of sustainable transport in the Carpathian region.

Two European regional mountain agreements are aiming to promote sustainable development in the Alps and Carpathians and protect the interests of people living within these mountain areas: the Alpine Convention with its member countries Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Slovenia and Switzerland, and the Carpathian Convention including the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, the Slovak Republic and Ukraine. Both recognize that sustainable tourism, growing together with sustainable mobility services, is a key-element for regional economic development and a source of income and wellbeing.

Meeting of the CC Working Group on Sustainable Transport
 18 October 2012, Košice
 in combination with the ACCESS2MOUNTAIN Midterm Conference
 photo source: Geizja Legen



Midterm Conference Handshake

From left to right:
 Ladislav Olexa (Kosice Self-governing Region),
 Robert Thaler (Austrian Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry and Environment),
 Józef Janusz Mroczka (Rzeszow Regional Development Agency),
 Günther Lichtblau (Environment Agency Austria)
 photo source: Geizja Legen



Meeting of the CC Working Group on Sustainable
 Transport, 1-2 October 2013, Vienna
 photo source: Geizja Legen



Policy dialogue at the Scientific Workshop on Mountain Mobility
 (SWOMM)
 11 December 2013, Vienna
 photo source: Geizja Legen



photo source: Gejza Legen

The ACCESS2MOUNTAIN Charter

From its three years of experience in implementing sustainable tourism and mobility at both the regional and transnational level, the ACCESS2MOUNTAIN partnership has developed a clear policy statement.

Its recommendations are geared primarily toward policy makers at every level and are summarized in a common charter, officially adopted at the closing conference.

For the full text of the ACCESS2MOUNTAIN Charter please visit our website (www.access2mountain.eu).

photo source: Gejza Legen



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Alpine Convention <http://www.alpconv.org>

Project partners

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U-AT - Environment Agency Austria (Austria)

BMVIT - Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology (Austria)

GESÄUSE - National Park Gesäuse (Austria)

MOSTVIERTEL - Mostviertel Tourism Ltd (Austria)

NORDA -Regional Development Agency of North Hungary Non-Profit Ltd., (Hungary) -until June 2012 -

MISKOLC HOLDING -Miskolc Holding Local Government Asset Management Corporation (Hungary) - from June 2012-

UNICAM - University of Camerino (Italy)

EURAC research - European Academy Bolzano (Italy)

CJIT Maramures - County Center for Tourism Information MARAMURESINFOTOURISM (Romania)

ARR-KE - Agency for the Support of Regional Development Kosice (Slovakia)

RARR-PL - Rzeszow Regional Development Agency (Poland)

TIMOK - Timok Club (Serbia)

CFUA - Carpathian Foundation Ukraine (Ukraine)



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Report prepared on behalf of Miskolc Holding for the ACCESS2MOUNTAIN project consortium. Vienna, 2014.

Read more about sustainable mobility and tourism and ACCESS2MOUNTAIN at:

www.access2mountain.eu

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