

ACCESS 2 MOUNTAIN Newsletter No.4

April 2013

Third project year approaching

After a few pilot projects for the tourist winter season (e.g. ski transfers in the Mostviertel region) and intense preparatory work involving the elaboration of feasibility studies as well the purchase of equipment and small infrastructure, the pilot regions are now looking forward to the spring and summer season when they will take visible action.

Besides **infrastructure improvements**, a couple of **new visitor packages - in combination with new sustainable mobility services** - are intended to convince tourists to change their usual car-oriented travel behaviour. The upcoming fifth partner meeting in Maramures (RO) on 14-15 May 2013 will provide another opportunity to exchange experiences and discuss further steps towards the **final implementation year** (5/2013 - 4/2014).



WG Transport Meeting

On 26-27 February 2013, a further meeting of the **Carpathian Convention Working Group on Sustainable Industry, Energy, Transport and Infrastructure** was held in Vienna, at the Vienna International Centre.

The meeting was organised by the Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (supported by UNEP Vienna) in strong collaboration with the European Academy Bolzano (EURAC) and its Vienna Office.

It was intended as a follow-up meeting to the last meeting of the WG and discussions held in Kosice (18 - 19 October 2012) with the specific objective to foster the development of the draft text **Protocol on Sustainable Transport and Infrastructure to the Carpathian Convention**. The WG made good progress in further negotiating the draft text. The meeting benefited from the results gained during the implementation of the ACCESS2MOUNTAIN project.

The next meeting of the WG is scheduled for June 2013 with the aim of further elaborating the draft text of the Protocol. It is envisaged to have the final draft text of the Protocol ready by the end of 2013 with a view of presenting it to the fourth **Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 4)** to the Carpathian Convention which will be held in the Czech Republic on 24-26 September 2014.





hay cart in Maramures © www.somewheredifferent.com



Maramures wooden church © Gabriel Motica



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Maramures: land of scenic villages and rolling hills

Maramures, located in **northwestern Romania**, has often been described as a remote region renowned for having preserved its idyllic peasant culture. Being cut off from Transylvania by the Carpathian Mountains, the land of Maramures has not been touched by fiction about Dracula, but has instead its own legendary heroes and fascinating stories.

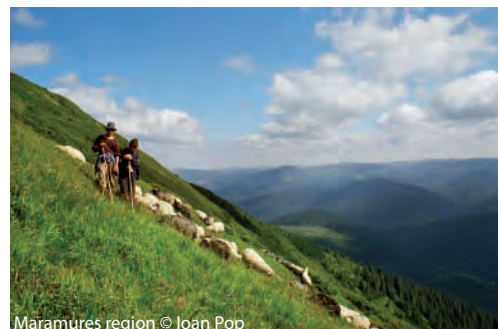
As a tourist attraction, the region can show off its old wooden churches, rural charm, mountain landscape, a unique Merry Cemetery and a still functional **forestry and tourist train**. However, gaining access to the area and getting around can be a real effort. There are only slow (and not very many direct) trains to Maramures. The public transport network is underdeveloped and the cycling infrastructure is still in its very early stages.

Therefore, **MaramureşInfoTurism** joined the ACCESS2MOUNTAIN project with the aim to improve the current situation. The main project activities include: conducting a study on traffic flows, setting up a strategy for sustainable mobility (including visitor packages) and developing the bike infrastructure. As host of the **fifth partner meeting**, MaramureşInfoTurism will offer participants the opportunity to become acquainted with a largely unknown corner of Europe.

The sustainability model for mobility management...

The ACCESS2MOUNTAIN sustainability model has been fine-tuned even further during the last few months. Thanks to a detailed territorial framework analysis carried out in the model regions, which also included the results of a **SWOT analysis**, UNICAM assessed dimensions such as land use, elevation, morphology, bioclimatic features as well as demographic information. Special attention was placed on classifying and mapping the identified landscape types. Distance and travel times between relevant destinations were calculated for each region as well as so-called “shortest path trees” in order to estimate **alternative impact scenarios** (for different transport modes). Specific indicators were used to describe perceived environment, health and landscape quality.

The result is a flexible tool that can be used systematically to **support policy decisions** at different geographic scales. As it includes, among others, the expected number of visitors in the region and possible modal splits, the overall impact of tourist and transport flows on the attractiveness of the regional landscape can be visualised.



Maramures region © Ioan Pop



cycling in Maramures © Andrei Racasan



regional data modelling © UNICAM



landscape types © UNICAM



e-scooter rental © Nationalpark Gesäuse



steam train in Vaser valley © Gabriel Motica



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...a flexible tool for user-friendly application

The first **training session** on how to use the model for project partners, policy makers and practitioners will be held in Maramures in the framework of the fifth partner meeting, where the software and its use will be presented – together with some simulations - in order to show the tool's high level of flexibility and practicability.

Multimodal mobility solutions

To provide you with more detailed information on the activities undertaken, let us begin with **Maramures (RO)** and its brand new bicycle rental system, embedded in a professional network of associated tourism products. Let us move on to **Košice (SK)** and **Miskolc (HU)** and their challenging tasks, namely the creation of cross-border intermodal routes - ready to be built now after the completion of a hands-on study. Then let us go to **South Tyrol (IT)** where a vision for soft-mobility development has been adopted in one of the most popular tourist destinations of the Alps. Finally let us proceed to Austria where the **Mostviertel (AT)** has organised extensions of bus service links between skiing resorts and perfect transport services for hikers, and let us look at the National Park **Gesäuse (AT)** with its integrative mobility platform which provides a shuttle and taxi service for full mobility without timetables and interruptions.

Regional railways investigations continue

The RARR-PL is conducting an analysis of **railway transport connections**, including small and narrow gauge railways, as well as alternative forms of transport **between Poland and Slovakia**. The study results will be available this summer (2013).

In collaboration with Mostviertel and regional stakeholders, the BMVIT has developed a model for **managing peak demand for narrow gauge railways**. This model will be implemented at the Mariazell railway during the Lower Austria Regional Exhibition in 2015, where 50,000 additional rail passengers are expected.

The finalized first part of the **inventory of regional railways in Eastern Slovakia** presents the examples of the Tatra Electric Railway and the Children's railway in Košice. The study is being continued.

Meanwhile, visible action is being taken by Miskolc Holding who are providing covered **cycle racks at railway stations** - to be followed by further measures to facilitate the combined use of bike and train as transport options.



bike rental in Vaser valley © Rada Pavel



mobility platform © Nationalpark Gesäuse



Mostviertel ski transfer © Karl Reiner



postalgic train ride © Nationalpark Gesäuse



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Project Partners

- Lead partner U-AT - Environment Agency Austria, AT
- ERDF partner bmvit- Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology, AT
- ERDF partner Gesäuse - National Park Gesäuse, AT
- ERDF partner Mostviertel - Mostviertel-Tourism Ltd., AT
- ERDF partner Miskolc Holding - Miskolc Holding Local Government Asset Management Corporation, HU
- ERDF partner UNICAM - University of Camerino, IT
- ERDF partner EURAC research – European Academy of Bozen/Bolzano, IT
- ERDF partner CJIT Maramures - County Center for Tourism Information, RO
- ERDF partner ARR-KE - Agency for the Support of Regional Development Kosice, SK
- 20% ERDF partner RARR-PL - Rzeszow Regional Development Agency, PL
- 10% partner TIMOK -Timok Club, RS
- 10% partner CFUA - Carpathian Foundation Ukraine, UA

The project enjoys widespread support at transnational, national and regional level: the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention, Focal Points of the Carpathian Convention, European Federation of Museum and Tourist Railways, Ministries of Environment (AT, IT), Ministries of Transport(SI, PL) and other observers at the regional level of the project partners.

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Upcoming Highlight(s)

- 14th-15th May 2013:
5th Partner meeting in Maramures/RO
- May 2013: Start of the regional mobility platform GSEISPUR in the Gesäuse-Region
- 4th-5th June 2013: WG Transport Meeting
- 9th-10th September 2013: Conference on Sustainability in Mostviertel/AT
- 22nd September 2013: Soft Mobility Day in the National Park Gesäuse

For more events, links and downloads visit

www.access2mountain.eu



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