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Newsletter

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BENEFIT – Public transport instead of private cars!

The project assists public and private companies as well as their employees to switch from the private car to public transport. The aim is to conserve 2.3 million litres of fuel and 5.600 tons of CO₂ respectively per year by the end of the 36 months project time (start: September 2008) by using awareness raising activities and highlighting the advantages of public transport. BENEFIT concentrates on the new member states Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Slovenia as well as on the two Mediterranean countries Italy and Spain. 7 cities from these countries are project partners: Brno, Zilina, Bistrita, Sofia, Maribor, Bologna and Palma de Mallorca. The coordinator of the project is Austrian Mobility Research (Graz).

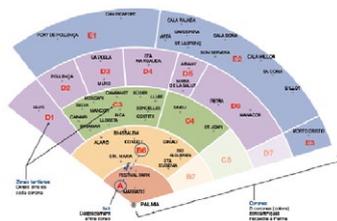
Contact: Susanne Loch, Graz, E-mail: loch@fgm.at, <http://www.fgm.at>



Public bicycle service in Palma's University Campus

A new bicycle service has been launched in Palma de Mallorca. The target area is the University Campus as well as its neighbour high-technology business cluster (Parc Bit). Its aim is to improve accessibility within the Campus since the metro stop is located in the periphery of the area. This service guarantees the connection between faculties and other facilities. Further, this service connects the metro stop and Parc Bit. The bicycle system is free of charge for public transport users (metro, interurban busses). In the first stage one hundred bicycles have been established. In order to complement these activities, new bicycle lanes and parking facilities have been designed and built around the campus and Parc Bit area.

Contact: Raul Medina Granados, Palma de Mallorca, E-mail: rmedina@cinesi.es, <http://www.cinesi.es>



Introduction of an integrated ticket in Mallorca

Last year began the implementation of a new integrated fare system in Mallorca. Its main goal is promoting public transport by reducing its fares, improving coordination and making its use more flexible and simple. In the future, it will be possible to commute all over the island with public transport. by using a common ticket based on contactless technology: the Intermodal Card. Combined these measures have required an important effort regarding reorganisation of services, drawing up a new fare map, designing a new fare policy and introducing new technological equipments for managing the system, mainly telematic procedures for data transmission and localisation (GPRS and GPS).

Contact: Antoni Bosch Oliver, Palma de Mallorca, E-mail: abosch@consorcidetransports.com, <http://www.consorcidetransports.com>



Municipality and MULICA

The City of Žilina has agreed on a collaboration between BENEFIT and NGO MULICA. This society cooperates with the non-profit sector, expert institutions, the municipality and commercial sector in an endeavour to gather and publish information about the sustainable development of transport in the City. Through community projects, ecological events, cultural performances they communicate with politicians and the general public. From 16th to 22nd of September MULICA will organize the third European Mobility Week in Žilina.

Contact: Katarína Wecková, Žilina, E-mail: weckova@zilina.sk, <http://www.zilina.sk>



Travel survey has been started

The local transport operator has started a cooperation with the University of Žilina on the basis of a travel survey involving its students and employees. The Department of Road and Urban Transport of the University of Žilina has chosen the methodology for conducting the travel survey. Specialists made a questionnaire and students started to ask their colleagues and employees from two faculties about their travel behaviour. They are asking them to suggest for possible improvements of urban transport in Žilina, what kind of changes they would appreciate and what would convince them to use urban transport instead of private cars.

Contact: Šimko Ján, Žilina, E-mail: jan.simko@dpmz.sk, <http://www.dpmz.sk>



Preparation of the action plan

In early March KORDIS (coordinator of the public transport system in Southern Moravia) prepared an action plan for all intended activities in BENEFIT. Two target areas were selected, for implementation of the actions. In a first step traffic flows and passenger opinions are described and measured. Secondly a special help line for passengers was installed. To complement these activities specific leaflets and display boards will be distributed and placed in large companies. Currently, KORDIS is searching for a flexible tent, which can be put up in front of companies to distribute leaflets and to forward information about public transport close to the target group.

Contact: Kvetoslav Havlik, Brno, E-mail: khavlik@kordis-jmk.cz, <http://www.idsjmk.cz>



Blue zone enlarged in Sofia

In March the blue zone in Sofia has been enlarged with 700 new parking places along 15 streets in the central area of the Bulgarian capital. Nowadays, the places in this chargeable zone total up to 7000. This decision has been taken as a response to pressure from citizens' organizations and the transport syndicate by the Transport Commission of the Sofia Municipality. The blue zone enlargement was discussed during the stakeholder meetings in the context of BENEFIT. Finally the central area's pavements in Sofia are accessible for pedestrians. In the past they were entirely occupied by cars.

Contact: Lucia Ilieva, Sofia, E-mail: mail@csdcs.org, <http://www.csdcs.org>



Night Transport in the Bulgarian capital

The deputy-mayor of Sofia, Mr. Tzvetkov, suggested the organization of a night transport service in Sofia. New bus lines will be introduced between the central part and the biggest neighbourhoods of the city. This proposal will be discussed in the Municipal Transport Commission within the next two weeks, because „we need time to provide night lines with funding and busses“ - said Mr. Tzvetkov.

Contact: Madlena Vladimirova, Sofia, E-mail: mail@csdcs.org, www.csdcs.org



Information on public transport opportunities in schools

ATC (public transport operator in Bologna city and province) participated at 2 open days in secondary schools to inform on public transport opportunities. During these days potential students for the following year and their parents visited the school to get to know programmes and facilities. The schools involved were Liceo "Righi" and the Technical Institute "Belluzzi". ATC took this opportunity to distribute informative material concerning public transport service and special season tickets for students as well as personal assistance to student to find the best solution to travel from home to school. It was the first step of a cooperation ATC established with schools' headmasters in order to increase awareness on sustainable mobility among young people.

Contact: Armandi Mirco, Cocchi Daniela, Bologna, E-mail: daniela.cocchi@atc.bo.it, <http://www.atc.bo.it>



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PROJECT COORDINATION:

Austrian Mobility Research – FGM-AMOR

Jörg Kastelic, Schönaugasse 8a, 8010 Graz, Austria

E-mail: kastelic@fgm.at

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