



Assessment Sheet

1. Identification

1.1 Name	Making public transport more accessible and user friendly by improving the walkability of BSR cities
1.2 Short name	Walk & Ride
1.3 Programme priority	3. Climate-neutral societies
1.4 Programme objective	3.3 Smart green mobility
1.5 Project implementation	36 months

1.6 Project summary (imported from the application)
<p>When using public transport, about 95% of all travelers walk to stops and stations, spending about half of their total travel time as pedestrians. Although walking is a major component of public transport journeys, it is often overlooked in public infrastructure investments. This neglect leads to unsafe, impractical, and unattractive walking environments around stations and stops. Such conditions are increasingly problematic for children, the elderly, and travelers with specific needs. Studies show that attractive walking environments can increase acceptable walking distances by 70%, significantly expanding catchment areas. Creating walkable environments around stops and stations is a cost-effective way to increase public transport ridership and promote walking as a physically active mode of mobility.</p> <p>Municipalities, responsible for public spaces, can lead this change, supported by public transport operators. The challenge, however, is that these groups do not have the right tools to address walkability, and they often lack awareness about the potential of walking.</p> <p>Our solution is to provide them with the Walk&Ride Toolkit, a set of data-driven and quantitative tools to measure and improve walkability in cities. New and existing tools will be tested, validated, and tailored for the administrative context of the BSR. For example, we will introduce an agent-based simulation tool to analyze pedestrian flows, thus shifting focus from motorized transport.</p>

1.7 Financial resources (all amounts in Euro)	Planned project budget
ERDF co-financing	2,663,361.24 €
Own contribution EU partners	665,840.32 €



ERDF budget	3,329,201.56 €
NO co-financing	0.00 €
Own contribution NO partners	0.00 €
NO budget	0.00 €
Total Programme co-financing	2,663,361.24 €
Total own contribution	665,840.32 €
Total budget	3,329,201.56 €

1.8 Project partnership						
No.	Organisation		Partner budget	Programme co-financing	State aid relevance	Took part earlier
1	Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg	DE	765,900.00 €	612,720.00 €	No	Yes
	Regional public authority					
2	ETYD Studio	SE	525,368.32 €	420,294.65 €	Yes	No
	Small and medium enterprise					
3	HafenCity University Hamburg	DE	306,320.00 €	245,056.00 €	No	Yes
	Higher education and research institution					
4	Riga City Council	LV	248,783.00 €	199,026.40 €	No	Yes
	Local public authority					
5	Alytus city municipality	LT	219,283.00 €	175,426.40 €	No	Yes
	Local public authority					
6	Municipality of Gdańsk - Gdansk Roads and Green Areas Administration	PL	221,426.20 €	177,140.96 €	No	Yes
	Local public authority					
7	City of Rovaniemi	FI	305,487.00 €	244,389.60 €	No	No
	Local public authority					
8	City of Turku	FI	359,487.00 €	287,589.60 €	No	Yes
	Local public authority					
9	Middelfart Municipality	DK	377,147.04 €	301,717.63 €	No	Yes
	Local public authority					



1.9 Associated Organisations		
No.	Organisation	Country
1	City of Kyiv	Ukraine
	Local public authority	
2	State Capital Kiel	DE
	Local public authority	
3	Vestland County Council	NO
	Regional public authority	
4	City of Neumünster	DE
	Local public authority	
5	Sopot Municipality	PL
	Local public authority	
6	City of Schwerin	DE
	Local public authority	
7	Region Gotland	SE
	Regional public authority	
8	Hanseatic City of Lüneburg	DE
	Local public authority	
9	Trondheim Municipality	NO
	Local public authority	
10	Union of Baltic Cities (UBC)	PL
	Interest group	
11	International Association of Public Transport (UITP)	BE
	Interest group	
12	Foundation Walk21 Europe	NL
	NGO	
13	Footways London	United Kingdom
	NGO	
14	National Knowledge Network for Sustainable Mobility (NaKoMo)	DE
	Interest group	
15	European Passengers' Federation	BE
	NGO	
16	German Institute of Urban Affairs (DIfU)	DE
	Higher education and research institution	
17	Urban Design Group	



	Interest group	United Kingdom
18	Tampere Regional Transport Authority	FI
	Infrastructure and public service provider	
19	Urban Transport Authority of Gdansk	PL
	Infrastructure and public service provider	
20	DB InfraGO AG	DE
	Infrastructure and public service provider	
21	hvv Hamburg Transport Association Company	DE
	Infrastructure and public service provider	
22	The Finnish Transport Infrastructure Agency	FI
	Infrastructure and public service provider	
23	JSC "Kautra"	LT
	Infrastructure and public service provider	
24	Riga Municipal Public Transport Operator "Rīgas satiksme"	LV
	Infrastructure and public service provider	
25	Karlstad University	SE
	Higher education and research institution	
26	Riga Technical University	LV
	Higher education and research institution	
27	The Swedish National Road and Transport Research Institute (VTI)	SE
	Higher education and research institution	
28	Senate Coordinator for Equality of People with Disabilities of the City of Hamburg	DE
	Regional public authority	
29	Hamburg Working Group for Disabled People (LAG)	DE
	NGO	
30	Hamburg Ministry of Labour, Health, Social, Family Affairs and Integration	DE
	Regional public authority	
31	Logistics Initiative Hamburg	DE
	Sectoral agency	
32	Senate Chancellery of the City of Hamburg	DE
	Local public authority	
33	VR - Finnish National Railways	FI
	Infrastructure and public service provider	
34	Finnish Transport and Communications Agency Traficom	FI
	Infrastructure and public service provider	



35	Københavns Kommune	DK
	Local public authority	
36	Metropolitan Region Hamburg	DE
	Sectoral agency	
37	Movia Transport Company	DK
	Infrastructure and public service provider	

1.10 Project's contribution to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region	
planned	PA Transport

1.11 Horizontal principles	Project's impact
Sustainable development	positive
Non-discrimination including accessibility	positive
Equality between men and women	positive

1.12 Output
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Walk&Ride Toolkit” (data-driven tools & methods to improve walkability around public transport stops)

2. Admissibility check

OUTCOME OF ADMISSIBILITY CHECK
The project passed the admissibility check.

3. Final conclusion and requirements

FINAL CONCLUSION
<p>The proposal does not demonstrate sufficient quality to be approved.</p> <p>The proposal focuses on enhancing pedestrian components in connection to public transport and transit journeys. It plans to deliver a toolkit, aiming at capacity building with a focus on urban planners. The partnership involves seven municipalities representing the core target group with the addition of a university and an SME. The connection to the target group of public transport providers is only built via associated organisations. The work plan does not clearly explain the toolkit or how the Living Labs are based on it, which raises concerns about how the planned solutions will be put into practice. Furthermore, the additional value of the activities into existing tools for planning processes or initiatives and their potential for long-term impact could have been presented better.</p>



REQUIREMENTS FOR APPROVAL

As the project does not demonstrate sufficient quality, no requirements are listed.

Quality assessment

Scoring system: 5 (very good), 4 (good), 3 (sufficient), 2 (weak), 1 (insufficient)

I. Relevance of the proposal

SCORE

3

Thematic focus

- Does the challenge tackled by the project match the selected Programme objective and the focus of the call?

The proposal sufficiently matches the selected Programme objective and the focus of the given call.

The challenge addressed sufficiently matches the selected Programme objective as set out in the Programme Document (PD). The project deals with improving walkability around public transport and integrating walking into transport trip chains. It accentuates the untapped potential of pedestrian traffic to increase accessibility and public transport efficiency. The geographic scope covers municipalities of different sizes across diverse urban environments. The description of the challenge lacks focus regarding the specific barriers to improving walkability, especially in different urban contexts. Meanwhile, the proposal could have been more specific on the existing challenges and needs of the user groups or geographic areas. Nonetheless, there is undoubted potential in the topic of walking as a part of public transport and the connected integration of walking into the broader processes connected to advertising and increasing the use of public transportation.

The application partially and in more general terms addresses the focus of the call, i.e., the topic of climate change. It has the potential to improve public transport journeys and the overall experience. The application highlights the importance of integrating walking as a sustainable transport mode to reduce CO2 emissions and enhance mobility around stops. That way, it could play a role in making the Baltic Sea region more sustainable on a more general level and would suit the Programme objective to reach smarter and greener mobility. However, the proposal lacks specific targets related to reducing emissions and the actual impact of such measures remains vague. In relation to the mentioned examples in the announcement note, the application only partially describes that contribution in relation to e.g. aspects of more systemic approaches to planning processes or of mainstreaming a climate-conscious perspective through participatory and inclusive approaches. Meanwhile, the application does aim to integrate different aspects of urban planning and climate-consciousness.

Target groups



- Are the selected target groups relevant to tackle the identified challenge, e.g. regarding geographical coverage and types of sectors involved?
- Are the needs of the target groups clearly described?

The selected target groups are clearly relevant to tackling the identified challenge. The application sufficiently describes the needs of the target groups.

The selected target groups cover local public authorities and infrastructure and public service providers. Even with this selective focus, no other type of organisations seems to be missing to address the challenge. In parallel, the geographical coverage of the target groups seems to be appropriate for the proposed challenge. The involvement of municipalities across different parts of the BSR covers different urban contexts and environments. Meanwhile, some of those references remain rather general.

Especially on the level of the involved authorities, the defined field of responsibility and economic sector of the selected target groups seems to be relevant to tackling the identified challenge. The particular departments and other stakeholders at local level, e.g. from planning and transport, are clearly described. For the level of infrastructure and public service providers, the descriptions seem to cut a little short.

The described needs of the target groups around their role in a functioning mobility system and mainly regarding a better integration of walking into planning processes seem to be relevant to the identified challenges related to better integrate walking into public transport. Beyond that general notion, the application could have identified these needs more specifically.

Transnational value

- Does the application clearly explain the need for transnational cooperation to address the identified challenge?

The application sufficiently explains the need for transnational cooperation to address the identified challenge.

The challenge described in the application in the context of improving walkability around public transport stops and integrating walking into transport trip chains is of high initial transnational value. The choice of involved countries, including Germany, Sweden, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Finland and Denmark is partially explained as they seem to face similar issues with pedestrian infrastructure impacting public transport accessibility. The geographical coverage seems to tackle the identified challenge well as it opens a chance to consider different urban contexts and regulatory environments across the BSR. This would allow a broad base for the implementation. Such a wider approach could gather momentum to combine the different expertise and experiences in the different regions. However, differing specific needs on local or regional level and the respective vagueness in actual transnational solutions might affect the joint application and finding a joint solution towards this. In parts, the respective descriptions could have more clearly highlighted the specific contexts or requirements of the countries as well as the connected notions of what different levels of knowledge there are.



Project objective

- Is the planned project objective in line with the needs of the target groups?

The planned project objective is sufficiently in line with the needs of the target groups.

It is sufficiently explained how the project aims to address the needs of the selected target groups. The stated project objective is to improve walkability around public transport stops and integrate walking into transport trip chains by providing walkability tools for local authorities. This objective is based on the logic that improving pedestrian access to stations can enhance public transport usage and reduce CO2 emissions. The project recognises the untapped potential of walking as a critical part of public transport journeys, highlighting the overall importance of pedestrian traffic. The focus on integrating walking with public transport seems to be well-aligned with the needs of cities of different sizes, which might create broader appeal.

However, while the project addresses public authorities more clearly, the other important dimension of transport providers seems less pronounced, which could limit the application's overall impact. The objectives are not always clearly defined, with the descriptions remaining towards broader goals and potentials rather than specific or actionable steps. In this context, the objective seems to lack focus on the identified challenges e.g. of inter-departmental collaboration within cities or the coordination with transport companies. Additionally, the application could have been more specific regarding the walkable areas in their cities, rather than more generally focussing on providing a tool. Furthermore, the emphasis on training municipalities seems to limit a more balanced focus on more practical goals beyond the level of those. In parts, it could have been clearer how the project objective addresses the specific needs of both target groups on such a practical level. Yet, it is mainly clear from the application how the project intends to support the selected target groups on a more general level. The application's description of how it intends to build capacity among target groups could have been more specific, particularly regarding the tools' direct application and how the target groups would transfer and use them in practice.

Contribution to the policies and strategies

- Does the project plan to contribute to the implementation of the Action Plan of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR)?
- Does the project plan to contribute to achieving specific goals or implementing actions of other strategic documents relevant to the Programme area?

The proposal seems to strongly contribute to policies and strategies relevant to the Programme area.

The application clearly describes how the project plans to contribute to the implementation of the Action Plan of the EUSBSR. It contributes to the Policy Areas Transport and Spatial Planning. Even if not relating this to the named actions for the two policy areas, the application presents relevance, e.g. under the aspect of connectivity or e.g. efforts in the broader context of public transport and respective accessibility. Connected to this, also certain aspects of connectivity and access could be related to PA Spatial Planning, too. The application also adds the dimension of integrating these aspects and connecting them towards more climate-neutral transport.



The project clearly plans to contribute to achieving specific goals or implementing actions of other strategic documents relevant to the Programme area. The project plans to contribute to the following strategic documents:

- The European Green Deal
- The New European Bauhaus
- The Urban Agenda for the EU

Additional value

- Is it clearly explained how the project plans to build on the outcomes of other projects?
- Does the application demonstrate additional value to implemented and running projects, in particular to the projects of Interreg Baltic Sea Region?
- Is cooperation with other projects planned?

The proposal demonstrates low additional value to current or already completed projects relevant to the Baltic Sea region.

The application does not clearly explain how outcomes of other projects will be and have been taken into consideration. The project takes into consideration and aims to build on the outcomes of a number of projects from different backgrounds: As examples, it refers to the “GreenSAM” and “BATS” projects from the current and recent funding period in the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme. It also refers to another initiative under Interreg North Sea as well as one more research-oriented and one Pan-European Programme initiative. With other projects named and a reference to their outcomes and potential learnings listed, it is generally explained how the project will build on the results of these initiatives.

Meanwhile, the application demonstrates low additional value to implemented and running projects financed by Interreg BSR or other Programmes and initiatives. There have been a variety of related initiatives and it seems that somewhat parallel activities were carried out and comparable outputs were produced in the mentioned projects or e.g. other related initiatives like “CITIES.MULTIMODAL” or “HUPMOBILE” previously financed by Interreg BSR and other Programmes. The application mentions that other projects dealing with multimodality in the Programme would have had other thematic and activity-related accents. Yet, even if highlighting “walkability” in the current application, a breadth of other projects has supported public planning and specifically urban planners in different related areas in a number of projects already. Except for the “design-oriented” elements which are likely to address more specific aspects in the different municipalities, the integration of knowledge about active mobility in cities has been covered by a variety of existing outputs. The project does not clearly plan to cooperate with other projects but intends to make use of some of the outcomes of those or share data with initiatives like BATS that are still ongoing.

II. Partnership

SCORE

3

Partnership

- Does the partnership have the necessary competence to implement the planned activities and to achieve the planned objective?



- Are the selected target groups involved as partners?
- Are the roles of all partners in project implementation clearly explained?
- Is the involvement of the partners planned in accordance with the requirements of the Programme?
- Are the involvement and responsibilities of the partners in the project planned in a balanced way?
- Are the roles of the associated organisations clearly explained?
- Do the partners have sufficient human and financial capacity?

The partnership seems to have sufficient potential to realise the planned activities and to achieve the planned objective.

The partnership seems to possess sufficient competences for implementing the planned project. The partnership consists mainly of six local public authorities and one regional public authority, which as the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg also represents a municipality. Beyond this, one Small and Medium Enterprise and one university are added to that. The involvement of the latter two could have been justified better. Meanwhile, on a general level, the partnership does not seem to lack specific competences and would potentially possess the main experience and expertise to implement the planned activities oriented at involving those public authorities. The main concern is the composition of adding the important second central target group of infrastructure and public service providers as associated organisation only. They remain without a budget and with limited obligation.

The project's selected target groups are partly involved in the partnership. The target group local public authorities is clearly involved as partners. Beyond Hamburg as the Lead Partner, this includes e.g. Riga City Council, Middelfart Municipality or the City of Turku. There are overall seven cities in the core partnership and 13 more local and regional authorities involved as associated organisations.

With strengths on the administrative level, the target group of infrastructure and public service providers is missing in the core partnership. Instead, the application brings together an impressive ten associated organisations belonging to that type of partner. Adding to this, it includes a number of outstanding interest groups, NGOs or e.g. some sectoral agencies from the field as associated organisations. At the same time, even though the project gathered an impressive number of associated organisations representing relevant organisations, their participation does not compensate for the lack of infrastructure and public service providers. According to the goals and expected impact of the project, their more formal involvement would have been essential.

The roles and tasks of the partners in the project implementation are mainly clearly explained. Saying so, the roles of partners 2 and 3 as the only non-municipalities in the partnership could have been better described. It is not completely clear how they will add to the project implementation on a practical level. The role of PP2 is described as the project's "knowledge partner", which – as an architecture and urban planning studio – would mainly work on the methodology and intended toolkit of the project as well as in evaluation, it seems. Its service-oriented role raises some doubts about the planned overall approach of the project as well as the role and actual input of the practical municipality representatives. There are also some unspecific references to PP2's "network in Northern Europe." Somewhat in parallel, the practical



input of PP3, HafenCity University Hamburg, with similar more theoretical elements and with a focus on data and methodology elements could have been explained clearer.

The involvement of the partners is planned in accordance with the requirements of the Programme.

The involvement and responsibilities of the partners in the project are not planned in a balanced way. For example, there seem to be imbalances in the roles of the partners (e.g. involvement of the partners from different countries in the implementation of activities). The imbalances are partly justified. First of all, the partners from the transport level (i.e. infrastructure and public service providers) are not directly involved in the partnership. As mentioned above, for the tool development, the “less practical” partners 2 and 3 will most likely be central, with the more practical input or dimension of this not completely clear. A final imbalance would be the overall stronger emphasis and input of organisations from Finland and Germany. With the exception of PP9 co-leading work package (WP) 2, all elements and groups of activities in WP 2 and 1 are planned to be led by partners 1, 2 and 3. The responsibility for all elements beyond communication and transfer in work package 3 would therefore remain with two German partners, i.e. the Lead Partner together with a university from the same city and the support of a Swedish SME. The responsibilities in the final transfer work package would then be spread further among the partnership.

The roles and tasks of associated organisations are clearly explained. Their involvement would certainly bring additional value to the proposal. At the same time, the respective plans and ambitions of the project even seem somewhat over-ambitious, also by adding a connection to Ukraine or Brussels and the UK. As mentioned, it also remains open if the involvement of the transport sector completely via associated organisations would be close enough to assure the target group’s important input to the project. The associated organisations are planned to be involved at all levels of implementation, also due to the different types of the 37 additional organisations listed and described. For example, they represent the following types of organisations: additional local and regional public authorities, NGOs, interest groups and public service providers. At the same time, also due to not clearly explaining their actual participation, the involvement of associated organisations would compensate for some of the shortcomings in the partnership, but will also not even out all of them.

It seems that there are no evident risks in relation to the project partners (private partners in particular).

III. Work plan

SCORE

2

Preparing, piloting and evaluating, transferring solutions

- Do the planned solutions address the identified specific challenge?
- Is there a clear approach on how the project plans to develop or adapt solutions?
- Does the project plan pilots to validate the usefulness of the solutions?
- Does the project evaluate and adjust solutions?
- Does the application present a realistic plan how to communicate and transfer the ready solutions?
- Does the project encourage active and continuous use of the solutions after the project end?

The overall quality of the work plan presented in the application is weak.



It seems that the planned solutions would only partly address the identified challenge of improving walkability around public transport stops and integrating walking into transport trip chains. While the project acknowledges the importance of walkability, the proposed approach does not seem fully aligned with making tangible improvements to pedestrian infrastructure.

The project plans to develop the “Walk&Ride Toolkit.” This intends to include exemplary elements like a modelling tool for pedestrian flow simulations, GIS analysis of catchment areas, participatory “Walkability Walkshops” and a “Design Workshop Kit.” The toolkit aims to provide urban planners and public authorities with data-driven tools to analyse and improve walkability around public transport stops. However, the toolkit remains partly undefined, with what seem somewhat exemplary tools mentioned, these are still to be confirmed and tailored to the target groups' needs once implementation would start. While the toolkit could have potential, the intended tools seem to have a strong notion and accent on data collection and analysis. This data orientation risks limiting the practical application in improving pedestrian environments and enhancing public transport connectivity. The work plan is focused on activities that do not seem to adequately address practical improvements to “walkability” or connectivity. With many elements seeming data-driven in nature, the practical dimension of improving the infrastructure and pedestrian experience could have been more nuanced. This approach risks not sufficiently contributing to solving the identified challenge of enhancing urban walkability and its integration with public transport. Such focus on analytical elements may not fully address the more practical needs of the target groups.

Overall, although the project plans to undertake activities related to improving connections between walking and public transport, it is only partly clear how these activities contribute to addressing the specific challenge beyond general capacity-building and the described more informational elements. Even with the clear potential of the topic, the testing and work plan descriptions seem to miss articulating a long-term impact, as the focus on more methodological aspects might be more dominant than specifically sustainable solutions for target groups also beyond the partnership.

There is a partly clear approach as to how the project plans to develop and adapt the solutions. The work plan is mainly sufficiently described at first sight. Yet, it seems that the approach is only partly realistic for driving a hands-on improvement beyond more general potentials also in the long run. The broad overall partnership, with diverse interests and backgrounds, could be challenged to reach specific goals due to the breadth of objectives and more local priorities. This would potentially especially be the case regarding the integration of the varying associated organisations. Even if the Lead Partner intends to hire an extra “AO Manager”, the task seems severe, especially with the current level of specific planning. Overall, the core partnership of seven municipalities and two “knowledge partners” equipped with a budget could face challenges in realising this. Project management, though allocated at 15% of the budget, seems demanding given the complexity of the partnership and the tasks.

The application follows the three pre-defined work packages. In the meantime, there are doubts about certain aspects of the implementation in different parts of the application. One such aspect is the Living Labs and how these would provide practical testing. With several questions open on the exact nature of the toolbox, also the initial building element for the living labs remains partially open. In addition, it seems that the temporary character of those elements and – again – a somewhat very ambitious planning raises additional doubts about how the different elements will connect and produce practical outcomes or learning in a transnational context.



Already at the stage of planning the “baseline scenarios” in group of activities (GoA) 1.1, the respective descriptions seem somewhat artificial and with a danger of reaching rather broadly. A number of questions remain open and especially the focus on three partners (as mentioned under partnership) raises additional concern about the practical realisation and value for the partnership. Even if intending to double-check on this in work package (WP) 1, it seems to also partially remain in doubt if the toolkit will be addressing the target groups’ needs.

As mentioned, the project intends to use piloting elements. The extent to which those would validate the usefulness of the solutions on a more practical level remains a partial question. Intending to work with a living lab approach and the toolbox elements, central aspects of this are up to the relevance and actual development only decided once the implementation starts. At this stage, a number of elements remain somewhat vague or even abstract. Adding to this, there are a number of questions regarding the relevance for the target group of what seems a more data-driven approach and connected accents on methodology.

The project seems to intend to evaluate and adjust solutions and describes this in various parts. At the same time, especially the level of how this would be jointly done by the partnership or showing respective clear responsibilities, remains somewhat incomplete at this stage. This is connected to the overall concerns about how much the implementation would focus on that transnational cooperation. When describing the respective plans, the application seems to be more specific on the local level than the practical organisation of a joint approach. The description repeats notions of assuring this, but does not seem to present a clear plan.

At first sight, the project would sufficiently plan to share information about the project and its solution in general terms. Yet, the project seems to insufficiently plan to communicate and especially transfer the ready solutions. Communication as such is already planned in group of activities (GoA) 3.3. Beyond, even if intending an institutionalisation within and a transfer beyond the partnership, the application and transfer of the solution especially to other organisations and contexts is not clearly planned. Beyond a number of partner-focusing broader activities in GoA 3.1, especially the activities beyond the partnership in GoA 3.2 seem to be focusing on less practical elements. Even with transfer in mind, the appeal of these activities seems to remain limited.

Beyond the doubts about the practical value, the planned timeline seems partially realistic to prepare, pilot, evaluate, adjust, communicate and transfer solutions on a technical level. Again, also here, if selected for funding, the project would need to revise certain elements like the multiple delivery of some of its deliverables or regarding the logic of different aspects. As another aspect of timing, the application seems to plan a rather short period for the crucial piloting and – against that – seems to intend a very long period for communication.

Connected to the challenges in transfer and remaining vague in the exact outcomes and value of the solution, the project overall seems to miss to encourage active and continuous use of the solutions after the project end. While mentioning a number of potential takeaways for different target groups, the application seems to throughout miss making a point of a more outcome and value.



Target groups

- Is the involvement of the target groups well planned in each work package?

The involvement of the target groups is weakly planned in the work plan.

In the preparation/piloting and evaluating/transfer of the solutions, the involvement of the target groups is sufficiently and partially weakly planned. While the involvement of the municipalities in the core partnership seems to be more specific, especially the active integration of the second target group of infrastructure and public service providers seems less convincing at this stage. Saying so, especially with interesting local plans (as e.g. in GoA 2.2), the more explicit integration of joint needs also of the central target group of local public authorities could have been planned more specifically in the work plan.

The application refers to a lot of intentions for the involvement of the public transport operators, too. Based on the partnership construction, this has to reach beyond the core partnership. Meanwhile, as mentioned, especially the connection to those service providers should have been described more specifically. The application intends for the associated organisations to play active roles e.g. in piloting. Yet, with some of those descriptions of their involvement remaining slightly generic and with no budget foreseen for those entities, there are some doubts about the realisation of this. With some potential regarding communication aspects, the application still does not seem to clearly plan the relevant processes and especially the transfer activities to help the target groups in learning and using the solution, particularly beyond its core partnership and some of its associated organisations.

Transnational cooperation

- Does the project plan to implement activities and outputs in a transnational setting?

The project does not clearly plan to implement activities and outputs in a transnational setting.

The preparation/piloting and evaluating/transfer of the solutions is weakly planned transnationally. The intention for joint implementation in a transnational setting is clearly mentioned. There are e.g. elements of joint evaluation and respective interactions or methodology considerations listed in different parts of the application. At the same time, the respective planning does not seem to confirm this specifically.

In the meantime, also the Living lab approach to be used in piloting elements has initial potential. Yet, again the actual planning e.g. of GoA 2.2 seems to more accentuate the individual plans on a local level. Many of the plans for Work Package 2 and the overall project do sound interesting from a transnational perspective, but the actual plans do not seem to illustrate this. Looking at the planning, there seems to be an imbalance between that goal and its realisation in the project. While the project aims to gather partners to share experiences from the living labs, a clear indication of true joint piloting seems to be missing. Each municipality appears to pilot elements individually and then meet to discuss, but this falls short of a collaborative effort. Although learning will occur, the extent to which the project is a unified effort is unclear from the current level of description in the work plan. Even with the initial potential and intentions for transnational cooperation, it does not seem confirmed that the partnership would be able to pool and



transfer this. The work plan seems to show a stronger focus on local actions, with many activities and outcomes more suited towards individual partners' regional contexts.

On another level, the application also shows an over-ambitious approach, with its broad partnership reaching very broadly. A more focused scope could have led towards more practical and achievable outcomes with less need for alignment or watching different needs. It remains open if bringing these ends together is actually realistic and/or intended. Apart from questioning transnational implementation, this could also lead to challenges in joint progress.

Output and result indicators

- Does the project contribute to the output and result indicators defined by the Programme?
- Are the targets set by the project realistic?

The project contributes to the following output and result indicators defined by the Programme.

The project plans a contribution to the following indicators:

RCO 84 – Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects

RCO 116 – Jointly developed solutions

RCO 87 - Organisations cooperating across borders

RCR 104 - Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations

PSR 1 - Organisations with increased institutional capacity due to their participation in cooperation activities across borders

The set targets seem to be mainly realistic. The contribution to result indicator PSR 1 could have been better described and would potentially need to be recalculated if the application were selected for approval by the MC.

IV. Durability

SCORE

2

Durability of the outputs

- Is the use of the developed solutions well planned by partners and other organisations in different countries, also beyond the project end?
- Does the developed durability concept include institutional and financial support to keep the outputs functional after the project end?

The use of the developed solutions in different countries, also after the project end, is weakly planned in the application.

It seems that the solution will only partly be used by the target groups beyond the implementation phase in their daily work. It is planned that the toolkit would be used mainly by the municipalities in the partnership, focusing on the planners in the different municipalities. The respective commitment from the partnership cities is not fully evident. While they will test the tool, the application seems to rather see



them “consider” integrating it into their work; leaving uncertainty about their long-term engagement. Additionally, the uptake by other organisations, despite the large number of associated organisations, is even less clear; raising further concerns about the sustainability and broader use of the solution beyond the project.

One of the central means of transfer, the so-called institutionalisation in GoA 3.1, would focus on reaching stakeholders in the partner municipalities. The connected institutionalisation plans would indeed relate only to the seven authorities in the partnership. Such a more formal introduction does not seem planned beyond the partnership. Instead, the other two groups of activities in Work Package 3 focus on more general communication (GoA 3.3) and other “roll-out” means like town twinning or masterclasses (GoA 3.2). This and other hints at “capacity building measures” beyond the more internal institutionalisation remain more general though. Even if also hinting e.g. to “walkability masterclasses”, the clear practical value of those remains in doubt. Instead, this and other elements remain short in description or even slightly artificial. The ideas under GoA 3.2 do have appeal, but due to only sketching different elements like the mentioned masterclasses or also multiplier measures and town-twinning aspects, the respective descriptions do not seem to develop that potential.

It is not completely clear from the application that the solution will be used also after the end of the project to improve e.g. the integration of pedestrians in public transport journeys. Beyond the partnership and the potentials of the associated organisations, it is not clearly explained how the toolbox will be taken up by the target groups. Overall, due to their better integration in the project, the appeal for municipalities seems stronger than that for transport stakeholders. An actual introduction into practice by relevant organisations in different countries does not seem clearly planned. Overall, even if focusing on this specific group, the uptake by planners does not seem assured beyond the partnership. Together with the open questions on the toolbox and the connection between the intended piloting, this would lead to concerns about the value of the outcome of the project.

The durability concept is not clearly described. It includes limited references to institutional and financial support to keep the outputs functional after the project end. Adding to this, also the long-term ownership and hosting of the toolbox seem not yet decided. Rather than planning this, the application refers to the vague formulation of “one of our multipliers (AO 10 to AO 16)” hosting it, with limited further planning and description provided. Actually, it seems likely that the respective responsibility would go to an associated organisation from the Netherlands (AO 12). Beyond other general intentions also to a respective working group, the partners themselves do not seem to provide a clear plan to keep the solution functional after the project. Even if including a strong set of associated organisations, there seem to be only limited activities planned to obtain the approval of the solution and outcomes by the relevant organisations or the intention for related clear plans on further funding, implementation or maintenance.

V. Budget

SCORE

2

Budget adequacy

- Is the budget appropriate in relation to the planned activities, outputs, results, and involvement of partners?



The planned budget seems to be weakly in line with the planned activities, outputs, results and involvement of partners.

The planned partner budgets seem partly adequate considering their involvement and responsibilities in the project.

The budget for the lead partner and some project partners (PP2, PP3, PP7, PP8, PP9) planned is more than the usual average level for the Programme. This can be only partly explained by their roles in the project. The budget of the application is slightly dominated by two German partners who consume 32% (EUR 1.1 million) of the total project budget.

The budget of the lead partner (Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, Germany) accounts for 23% of the total project budget. The partner plans high-value costs for the external project and financial management (EUR 209,000) and at the same time uses more staff resources than the majority of other partners (1.5 full-time positions p.a. compared to 1). Assuming that approximately 30% of staff costs could be allocated for management (EUR 129,000) and summarising them together with external services, EUR 338,000 (42%) of the budget of this partner is allocated to the management of the project. This seems excessive for a project composed of nine partners.

PP2 (ETVD Studio, Sweden) has 16% of the project budget. However, their role and their competencies remain unclear. It is not clear how the partner is related to the transport sector and the problem addressed by the project (transport mobility). Moreover, PP2 planned even more staff costs (1.6 full-time positions) as the lead partner (1.5 full-time positions), however, such high involvement does not seem to be justified.

The planned shares of management and work packages do not seem to be adequate considering their importance for the planned outputs/solutions and results.

15% of the budget is allocated to management. Like the management share of the LP budget, the total budget planned for the project management does not seem to be adequate considering the number of partners (9) and groups of activities (9). Further, the shares allocated to the work packages do not seem adequate as the Work Plan is insufficiently detailed and activities and solutions are only poorly described.

The planned total budget does not seem adequate considering the planned outputs and results. The project plans to realise one output/solution (toolkit), but the exact type and content of this outcome remain uncertain. The transfer activities seem to stay within the partnership without involving other target groups. The toolkit shall be hosted by an associated organisation that is outside the programme area (Dutch AO12). Long-lasting and established results of the project do not seem to be available. Therefore, it has to be concluded that the application does not propose a realistic, durable, transnational solution/output for which the requested budget is adequate.

Eligibility

- Are the cost category specifications (external services, equipment, infrastructure and work) precise, clear and justified?
- Are there any indications of ineligible costs in the work plan and/or ineligible project partner structures?
- Have the relevant rules for productive investments/infrastructure been followed?
- Have the State aid rules been followed?



The relevant eligibility rules seem to be partly followed.

The cost categories specifications (external services, equipment, infrastructure and works) are partly precise, clear and justified.

PP8, City of Turku planned external services for 'applying the concept of guiding and sign-posting to mobility with the help of ext. service provider' (EUR 50,000.00, 13,90% of the budget of this partner). However, the exact services remain unclear and thus the high value of the service cannot be justified.

PP2, ETYD Studio planned some costs for Software licenses (piloting, evaluation). However, it is not clear what kind of software is planned to be bought, the duration of licenses, etc., and the market price for them.

Certain equipment items planned by PP4, PP6 and PP8 lack further details and their relevance to the project activities remains unclear (e.g. multifunctional mobile landscape elements (tactical urbanism), temporary movable solutions to bridge level differences (Living Lab tactical urbanism), living lab temporary guiding structures (e.g. Weatherproof signs)).

The planned expenditure in these categories is partly eligible from the financial point of view. The relevance and specification of conferences, planned in the budget are not clear for PP1, PP2, and PP4.

The above-mentioned cost items in question will need to be further explained and justified during the contracting phase in case of project approval.

There are indications of possible ineligible costs in the work plan/activities. It is mentioned under activity A2.3 that the solution (toolkit) will be hosted by AO12 – an NGO from the Netherlands.

There are no indications of ineligible project partner structures (e.g. umbrella partnership, hidden partner organisations).

Productive or infrastructure investments are not planned in the project. However, in the budget, there are planned costs that could potentially be investments (e.g. Parklets (3 pcs, Living Lab tactical urbanism)). It shall be clarified in case of approval.

The State aid rules relevant to the application stage have been followed.

The basis for the State aid assessment is the ex-ante assessment of State aid risks associated with the types of project partners and their activities. Furthermore, the MA/JS carried out a partner and plausibility check in accordance with the rules of the Programme Manual.

As part of this procedure, the MA/JS looked at the State aid relevance of project partners no. 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 with a low risk of implementing State aid relevant activities to ensure that these partners indeed comply with the State aid rules.

Further, the MA/JS carried out plausibility checks for project partners no. 3 with medium to high risk for implementing State aid relevant activities as requested in the application.

The MA/JS concluded that the project partners listed as State aid relevant in section 1.8 of the Assessment sheet carry out State aid relevant activities.