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challenges, while Jorge Barceló of the ONCE Foundation, described the main travel needs of blind and partially sighted users and local solutions provided in Barcelona.



### Breakout group: Discussing the self assessment tool

Key factors for success when designing and developing accessible urban transport services were presented by Francesc Aragall, Mediate Expert. Maite Peris Colom, of Transports Metropolitan de Barcelona spoke about delivering accessibility in Barcelona. A regional overview of public transport accessibility policy and planning was provided by Manuel Villalante i Llauredó, Director General of Surface Transport in Catalunya. All the presentations are available at <http://www.mediate-project.eu/index.php?id=42>.

Our thanks go to Transports Metropolitans de Barcelona for their hospitality!

## Project news

### 1. Third Working Group meeting

The third and final Mediate Working Group meeting was held in Barcelona, March 2010. External stakeholders participated - end users representing people with reduced mobility, staff from public transport authorities and international experts in the field of accessibility. The meeting was hosted by Transports Metropolitans de Barcelona, the main public transport managing company in the metropolitan area of Barcelona.

The Working Group discussed the development of the Mediate self assessment tool, which is intended to evaluate and improve the accessibility of public transport (more on this below). The tool has two main components: policy modules, each with a series of assessment questions, and levels of development. Breakout sessions were held to work through the modules using examples based on prior given information and participants' own experience. Participants gave valuable feedback which is being used to refine the tool.

There were also some very interesting presentations from stakeholders. Peter Rayner, of the National Pensioners Convention (on behalf of the End User Platform), provided an end user view of Mediate achievements and future

This is the third in a series of six monthly project newsletters. Anyone wishing to receive the newsletter should contact [info@mediate-project.eu](mailto:info@mediate-project.eu) or register via the website: [www.mediate-project.eu](http://www.mediate-project.eu). The project website provides more information about our objectives, work programmes and outputs, as well as project partners and stakeholder involvement. Please also let us know if you have any problems with accessing the content of this newsletter.



Question time at third Working Group meeting

## 2. Accessibility indicators

A set of common indicators has now been finalised describing accessibility of urban public transport. A report on the indicators is available from the Mediate website at <http://www.mediate-project.eu/index.php?id=11>.

Key indicators and detailed sub-indicators have been identified based on a literature review and substantial input from local authorities, public transport operators, end users and accessibility experts. The indicators reflect major areas for the provision of public transport accessibility. Each indicator is presented with an explanation and a scale for assessment.

### Areas covered by the indicators

- *Policy indicators*
  - Policy and investment
  - Service operations and standards
- *Performance indicators*
  - Information and ticketing systems
  - Vehicles and built environment
  - Seamless travel

The accessibility indicators are intended for use by public authorities to assess local public transport systems, but may also be used by individual operators and end user organisations. The indicators serve to highlight different aspects of accessibility within a city, pointing out strengths and weaknesses of the public transport system, rather than a comparison between cities. This may contribute to a harmonising understanding of accessibility issues, and the need for improvements, throughout Europe.

We would like to thank the Mediate Working Group of public transport authorities, End User Platform and Experts, and colleagues from the Access2All EU project for their valuable contributions to the review of the indicators report.

The accessibility indicators provide a sound basis for the further work of Mediate, including data collection and the development of the self-assessment tool. In spring 2010, a questionnaire was designed to collect data on, and validate, the indicators. This was sent to the public transport authorities represented on the Working Group. Nearly two thirds of Working Group members responded to the questionnaire, with returns from authorities across Europe. Both quantitative and qualitative data have been provided, which are now being analysed. A report will be produced on the data collection and analysis.

## 3. Good practice guide

The Good Practice Guide is now in its final stages of production and will be completed by the end of July. Contributions have been received from across Europe including from Mediate partner cities and organisations.

The Guide will showcase accessibility improvements in small, medium sized and large cities. Examples range from large infrastructure projects to more localised and innovative ways of providing accessible transport.

The guide will appear on the Aptie and Mediate websites and will be formally launched at the end of project conference in London on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of November 2010.

## 4. Self-assessment tool

In recent months, the Mediate project partners have been working on the self assessment tool and all draft elements are now ready to be tested. The input from the working group has proved to be very valuable for defining the assessment questions for each level of development.

Work is currently ongoing in preparation for the evaluation and validation process. The city of Lisbon has expressed its commitment to be one of the locations for the self assessment and validation process, probably in September 2010 during European Mobility Week. This ensures that accessibility will be an integral part of the Lisbon transport policy. The city is strongly committed to improve public transport as a whole and in particular its accessibility for people with mobility impairments.

Lisbon is confident that the self assessment tool will not only provide them with useful recommendations, but also boost the participation of end user groups in the transport policy process.

The results of the self assessment and tool validation will be presented at the Final Conference in London.

## 5. What' coming up?

### Mediate Final Conference

**When:** 18-19 November 2010

**Where:** The British Library  
96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB

**What:** Defining & Evaluating Transport Accessibility - A European Perspective

This Conference will present the findings of Mediate. It will also showcase the results of a parallel 7th Framework Project Access2All and will draw on good practice examples from other recent projects.

Discussion will focus on key policy issues affecting public transport providers, local authorities and disabled and older people as public transport users.

**More information:** [www.mediate-project.eu](http://www.mediate-project.eu).

### User viewpoint from Oslo

Petter Skjelsbaek works for the Agency for Road and Transport, in the City of Oslo, Norway. He is a member of the Mediate Working Group.

“In my daily work, I work with street design. Accessibility for all is the most important premise for what we do, and it is very important to us to use standardized designs and solutions. To obtain accessibility for all, the whole travel chain has to be accessible. But for us as public authorities it is difficult to know where the best place to start is.

For me, the participation in the Mediate Working Group has been a great place to meet other European professionals in my field of work. I have realised that though organization, culture and the way to do things may vary from place to place, many of us face similar challenges to obtain accessibility for all. Having the possibility to discuss familiar challenges with people from other countries and other cities has been very instructive.

It has been especially interesting to listen to, and discuss the challenges regarding blind and partially sighted people and shared space, and the use of guidelines in general. Mediate has had knowledgeable professionals from both the user and planning perspectives, who have provided in-depth discussion about a very relevant topic for me.

I am very happy that I had the opportunity to participate in this project. I hope I also can contribute to the project and discussions in a way that other participants can gain as much knowledge from the project as I have.”

### Spotlight on good practice: Burgos

#### Accessible public transport in Burgos

The project is to develop a public transport system that is 100% accessible, focusing in particular on older and disabled people. It is run by the City of Burgos, Spain, with input from the Strategic City Plan (an association belonging to the city, which promotes public transport) and the Castilla and Leon Institute of Technology which is in charge of evaluation and technical aspects.

The project covers the whole city and includes 100% of the buses, which are now accessible (including ramp access, audio and visual information) and 80% of the bus stops (real time information). New bus lines have been developed, and timetables and frequencies increased to make public transport a more attractive option. There was no legal requirement to introduce this scheme; it was an initiative from the City Council in response to requests from local associations of disabled people.

#### Key objectives

The key objectives of the scheme are universal accessibility and the comfort and safety of users, and to inform all passengers about the facilities now available to use public transport and make them aware that it is a more sustainable form of transport.

#### Status of the scheme

The scheme has been running for 18 months so far. The intention is to develop further bus lines and to improve the infrastructure for intermodal interchange.

#### Qualitative evidence of success

The Spanish organisation of Blind, Partially Sighted and Disabled People has named the public transport system in Burgos as one of the best in Spain in terms of accessibility. 90% of citizens report that they are happy with the improvements that have been introduced (ramps, audible and visual information, real time information, driver training etc). 8% of people had no opinion (mainly because they do not use public transport) and 2% wanted further improvements.

#### Quantitative measures and key performance indicators

The indicators have included the number of additional passengers, the results of surveys and meetings with stakeholders. There has been an increase of between 2% and 3% in the number of

disabled people using public transport. The figure would have been higher if it had not coincided with an offer from ONCE (the Spanish Blind and Partially Sighted People's Organisation) at the same time to buy cars for disabled people! The special door to door service run by the Red Cross is now only carrying 20 people per day.

One change that has been made as a result of the indicators and feedback has been more training for bus drivers. The main complaints were about the lack of disability awareness among the drivers, not about the system itself.

### Planning

The main improvements that have been implemented were proposed by the mobility group which advises the City Council. The Council started by drawing up a plan of action which was then implemented over 18 months. Bus stop accessibility was the final step in implementation because it also involved the Civil Engineering and Infrastructure Departments. Organisations of disabled and older people were engaged in the project from the very beginning of the process through meetings and consultation. This methodology has been assessed by the authority as an ad hoc approach to quality management.



**Burgos: Accessible bus**

### Success criteria

The first criterion of success was the opinion of disabled and older people and the increase in bus use – so far more than 8%.

### Funding

The capital and start up costs amounted to € 6 million. The annual operating costs are € 2 million.

The improvements to date have been co-financed by the City and the European Commission through the CIVITAS initiative. Some funding has also come from ONCE.

### Further information

Contact: José María Diez, Strategic Plan City of Burgos, E-mail: [proyectos@burgosciudad21.org](mailto:proyectos@burgosciudad21.org)

**More best-practices on the APTIE portal!**

The APTIE portal ('accessible public transport in Europe') is a one-stop shop enabling a visitor to find information on or references to a wide range of matters related to accessibility in public transport, including relevant projects, legislation and good practice. It can be accessed at <http://www.aptie.eu>.

If you have any documents or references which could be relevant, please contact us at [info@mediate-project.eu](mailto:info@mediate-project.eu). You can also suggest relevant websites via the portal.

### → Mediate partners:



### → About Mediate:

Mediate (MEthodology for Describing the Accessibility of Transport in Europe) is supported by the EU under the Seventh Framework Programme. This two year project will establish a common European methodology for measuring accessibility to urban public transport. This will contribute to the provision of inclusive transport systems with better and easier access for all citizens.

