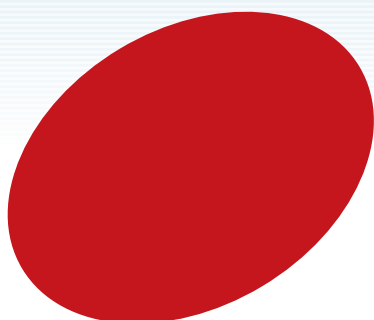


NICHES+ Champion City Burgos

Implementing travel training for
school children in public transport



The City and NICES+

The project

NICHES+ is a FP7 co-ordination action aiming to network key actors actively engaged in developing **innovative urban transport concepts** and to facilitate the co-ordination of their activities across Europe. The project duration is from 2008-2011.

Burgos is a **Champion City** within NICES+ that has already carried out a **first pilot training for school children in public transport**. This document provides a quick overview on this activity and the **implementation scenario** that supported its development by giving advice on how to realise a tailored travel training scheme in the specific context of the city. The implementation scenario also points towards strategies to further extend the travel training scheme in the mid- to long-run.

The City

Burgos is a medium-sized city (180,000 inhabitants) in the north-west of Spain. The **historic city centre** is well preserved and attracts many locals as well as tourists as the city is crossed by the Way of St James. Based on a **Civic Mobility and Accessibility Pact** from 2000, the City Council has been very active during the last years in enhancing sustainable mobility and accessibility for everybody living in or visiting the city. Working with children on mobility education is part of this strategy.



City of Burgos

Photo: Rupprecht Consult

The innovative concept

The City of Burgos works on establishing a permanent **travel training scheme for public transport that targets school children age 10-12**. The aim is to provide a comprehensive programme of mobility education for children, as a package with the already existing training schemes for walking and cycling.

Public transport travel training gives school children on the one hand a theoretical education how to **use the bus to get to school independently, safely and securely** or in their leisure time. On the other hand it includes practical training components that show children how to behave on the bus during a trip and how to navigate through the city.

Based on a **first pilot training scheme** in September 2010, the City is currently looking at options to continue and expand this activity.

Reference examples that assist with the development of a tailored training scheme are **Freiburg and Munich** in Germany. The public transport operators in both cities have developed successful schemes that point towards crucial factors for a successful implementation.



Travel Training for school children in Freiburg

Photo: VAG Freiburg

The Challenge

Most school children in Burgos have only a **little knowledge of how to use the bus**. The majority reach their schools by walking, but traffic congestion in front of schools, caused by parents that take their children to school in the car, is a common problem in the city.

The City of Burgos has already introduced **mobility education measures** that target children and young people. The workshops focus on walking and cycling to school. A training module on how to use the bus was still missing, but was needed to support children in secondary schools that do not live very close to their schools.

The City of Burgos faces the following **key challenges** in relation to young people's mobility:

- Need to raise **awareness** for environmentally friendly modes of transport and to give the bus a positive image (marketing aspect future clients);
- Enable **independent and safe mobility** by foot, bicycle and public transport;
- Achieve a positive influence on **parents' and teachers' mobility** (children as multipliers).

"Travel training for children is crucial as they are the transport users of the future. Nowadays many pupils of 12-14 years old have never used public transport."

Diego Fernandez, Deputy Mayor, City of Burgos, Spain



Heavy traffic in front of a school in Burgos
Photo: SMT

The Vision

The vision of the City of Burgos is to provide a **comprehensive set of mobility education opportunities** that covers all relevant modes.

Children and teenagers should be enabled and encouraged to use **sustainable transport modes** in a safe and independent way. Finally, the hope is also that young people that are aware of sustainable transport choices and have experienced how to use them will also do so when they have grown-up.

For the **field of public transport training**, the following objectives have been defined:

- To carry out a **survey** among children on bus use and perception (completed in spring 2010);
- To introduce as a new element of mobility education **travel training for public transport with the target group of school children aged 10-12** (first pilot training carried out in September 2010);
- To provide an **accessibility plan** "from home to the bus stops" (planned in mid-term perspective – not confirmed yet).

The Good Examples

Munich Mobi-Race scheme, Germany

Mobi-Race is an initiative that aims at enabling **pupils between 10- 13 years** to independently use public transport in Munich and to create awareness for environmentally friendly travel options.

Advantages and disadvantages of different mobility options are explained and compared. Mobi-Race can be described as a kind of **playful travel training** for children, consisting of school lessons and active parts like a city rally by means of public transport. 2010 is the sixth year of the initiative. The Munich public transport operator MVG is the initiator of the scheme.

The initiative is carried out in co-operation with the local NGO Green City.

Contact in Munich

Florian Paul, MVG, Munich public transport operator, e-mail: paul.florian@swm.de



Mobi-Race rally for school children in Munich

Photo: MVG Foto, Kerstin Groh

For **further details on the Munich and Freiburg cases** see the NICHES+ website section on travel training (www.niches-transport.org).

Travel training for school children in Freiburg, Germany

The Freiburg public transport operator VAG developed a **comprehensive package of measures** for the mobility education of children and young people.

A particular focus is on the **age group that changes from primary to secondary school** and becomes more independent (in Germany around 10 years old). These children often use public transport for the first time to get to school or leisure activities.

The aim of these activities is to **encourage independent and safe use of public transport** (bus and tram) in the Freiburg region and to gain and keep the customers of the future. Teachers and VAG co-operate closely in showing the children how to plan a trip and how to make it safely on their own.

Activities include the provision of a “teacher suitcase”, a “bus-and tram school” at the depot of VAG, a city rally by bus and tram in the city, a “climate lesson”, the tailored website “Zitty Sörfer” for children and a lot of fun stuff such as board games or a mascot. The measure is very successful and meets increasing demand.

Contact in Freiburg

Ute Vasen, VAG, Freiburg local transport operator, e-mail: ute.vasen@vagfr.de



Demonstrating dangers at a bus stop, Freiburg

Photo: VAG Freiburg

The user needs

The target group for the travel training scheme in Burgos are **school children between 10-12 years old**.

To better understand bus use and perception among school children, a **survey** was carried out in 2010. The results point to **some aspects that are important to consider in a training scheme** for Burgos:

- Nearly half of the children are walking, 26% already use the bus on the way to school;
- A key target group for a travel training for public transport are the 25% children that are taken to school by car;
- Key issues that cause problems when using the bus are reading the timetables, maps, and the layout of bus stops.

The training wants to teach the children how to **use public transport independently**, how to behave in critical situations and to understand the environmental and social impact of different means of transport. Finally the training should be fun and work with playful elements.



Demonstrating the effects of an emergency braking in the bus, Freiburg
Photo: VAG Freiburg



Learning to read a public transport map, MobiRace in Munich

Photo: MVG Photo, Kerstin Groh

The key stakeholders for implementation

The “**Asociación plan estratégico ciudad de Burgos**” (**APEBU**), an office that deals with projects for the city council, manages and coordinates the actions around the travel training in cooperation with the **mobility department** of the city. The city council sets the strategic framework and provides funds for the activity.

The **private marketing company Anuncian Tormenta** has been subcontracted to elaborate the training material (e.g. leaflet, quiz) and to carry out the actual training in cooperation with the **teachers**.

Furthermore other Council Departments are involved. The **municipal transport company** (part of Council) makes available the buses needed for the trainings.

The responsible **City Councillor** also has a key role in supporting the project by giving political back-up.

The Transferability Potential

The transferability to Burgos

The good practice cases of travel training schemes for school children in Munich and Freiburg have been the key references for the transferability analysis that supported the development of a tailored approach for Burgos.

The transferability of the scheme is considered to be relatively easy.

Supportive factors are:

- **Favourable strategic context.** Burgos already has some years of tradition in promoting sustainable urban mobility in a comprehensive approach. The experience with “walking bus” schemes and travel training for cycling for children need to be particularly highlighted;
- **Well qualified staff and previous experiences** in mobility education. Staff members at Burgos City Council and the co-operation partner Anuncian Tormenta are already experienced in mobility education (walking bus and cycling training);
- Clearly defined target group and **awareness** for children as future bus users;
- **Funding for developing a pilot scheme** has already been provided. A challenge is the follow-up funding (see below), even if travel training is a low cost measure;

While there are no severe constraints some aspects require **special attention**:

- **Funding in mid- to long-run:** There is no guarantee that after the first scheme a follow-up funding will be available (due to the current economic crisis in Spain);
- **Step-by-step introduction:** Related to the funding question is the aspect of extending the scheme step-by-step over time;
- **Cooperation with teachers and parents.**



Many schools are well connected to the Burgos bus network

Photo: Rupprecht Consult

The general transferability of travel training for school children

Travel training for school children is a measure that **can easily be transferred across Europe**. The implementation is not very costly, can be done in a relatively short time and works with a small project team.

The concept is a **valuable complement to other activities** to enable and encourage the use of public transport and could become a mainstream measure all over Europe.



NICHES+ transferability workshop with participants from Burgos, Munich and Freiburg

Photo: Rupprecht Consult

The measure justification

A travel training scheme for public transport, targeted at school children, can be well justified as it provides **high added value for children, parents and teachers**.

Children are enabled to **use the bus system independently**. The training addresses safety and security issues and the children learn about using public transport as a **sustainable transport option**. Public transport receives a positive connotation. This is an important **marketing element**, keeping in mind that today's children are tomorrows' potential customers.

Also **parents and teachers** may be influenced to use the bus more often when they are involved in the training activities or hear from the children about it (Munich experience).

The implementable measure

The following provides recommendations for a tailored travel training scheme in Burgos that were developed at an expert workshop in Burgos early in 2010:

- **Determination of key training contents**, based on needs assessment. The most pronounced training needs are the reading of timetables and bus maps (difficult to understand), safety and security when using the bus, independent mobility by bus in the network, environmental performance of different transport modes and addressing the image problem of public transport.
- **Involvement of teachers, CEFIE** (Centro de formación profesores – in charge of continuing education for teachers) and **bus drivers** when designing the training scheme. They may become important allies in promoting a training scheme and can contribute with their experiences to an adequate training offer (training content and pedagogic aspects).

- **Elaboration of training material.** Development of an attractively designed brochure for pupils (example Munich) that includes basic information on how to use the bus (using “stories” instead of pure facts), games and quizzes, illustrations and exercises that can be solved in teams. Involvement of a professional marketing agency.
- **Involving and informing parents.** Need to approach parents early (e.g. info evening or via leaflet) to inform about the training scheme and achieve their agreement.
- **Lessons in school.** Involvement of teachers, bus drivers and mobility experts. Games and quizzes to learn basic knowledge about public transport, using the brochure as working material. Focus on aspects that are needed to independently use the bus. (Examples: Freiburg and Munich).
- **Bus school** (Freiburg example): showing in a protected surrounding (e.g. bus depot) potential dangers at bus stops and when using the bus. Dealing with decent behaviour and safety when being on the bus and at stops. Teaching respect for public belongings. Bus school requires involvement of a bus driver.
- **Rally in the real bus network.** Small groups of pupils that receive free bus tickets, shadowed by teachers and training staff. Playful element to practice and test the acquired knowledge. The winning team of the rally receives a prize.
- **PR & Communication.** Contact to local media to promote training scheme.

The Burgos team has already implemented a **pilot travel training** scheme, which took-up many of these recommendations (details see further below).

The Implementable Measure

The finances

Travel training is a **low cost measure**. Nevertheless it is necessary to specify the resources needed and where they will come from.

In Burgos a budget of 3,500 EUR has been made available for the pilot training in the year 2010, allocated to the following tasks and materials:

- Subcontracting of Anuncian Tormenta: 2,500 EUR;
- Printing costs for marketing material: 1,000 EUR.

For the mid- to long-run the budget has not been secured yet.

The timing

Travel training can be **implemented relatively quickly**. The preparatory work in Burgos needed only a few months.

The long-term perspective

Due to the economic crisis and budgetary constraints, the **financing of the activity after the pilot training** is not secured yet. It was suggested to look into opportunities such as sponsorship (e.g. local banks) to secure the travel training in the mid- to long-run.

The **pilot training with the SUPER BUS** campaign was a success and chances are good that the scheme will be continued, probably in cooperation with private sponsors.

The informal feedback from the school children and teachers was very positive. For a continuous scheme it would be recommended to include a **simple survey** after the training that evaluates the impact of the activity, e.g. changes in attitude towards using the bus.

The Munich experience with the MobiRace activity can provide an example of how this could look.

It would be desirable to make mobility education on all sustainable modes a continuous topic in the City of Burgos. The very valuable experiences for the mobility workshops with children on the topics of walking have been complemented by the bus training. This makes a **comprehensive package for mobility education** that includes all modes. The added value of such trainings cannot be quantified at the moment, but it can be assumed that working with children on the topic of sustainable urban transport also increases the chances of keeping them as users of alternative transport modes when they have grown-up. This is an important argument which might help to activate funding and to make mobility education a continuous cornerstone of urban transport policy.



Walking and cycling workshops for children are already well established in Burgos

Photos: Burgos City Council

The first pilot bus training in Burgos, September 2010

An expert workshop in March 2010 to share the Freiburg and Munich experience on travel training for school children in public transport was an important input for the local team in Burgos to design a first pilot project that was tailored to the local context. The decision was to go ahead quickly and to aim at a **first training event in September 2010**. The European Mobility Week provided the frame for this activity.

The marketing specialists from Anuncian Tormenta elaborated a playful approach to the travel training, making the **superhero “SUPERBUS”** the key figure in the game. The company elaborated highly professional training material, including posters, leaflets with instructions on the safe use of buses and a quiz.

The focus of the training was on **school children between 10-12 years old**, when children usually change from primary to secondary schools. This often relates to a wider range of activities that require moving around in the city. The pilot project worked with a primary school and a secondary school in Burgos. The children liked the character of “SUPERBUS” a lot and had much fun in the school lessons on day one of the training.



SUPERBUS class

Photo: Anuncian Tormenta



SUPERBUS poster

Photo: Anuncian Tormenta

Susana Ferrero from Anuncian Tormenta ran the lessons together with the teachers. The classes were split-up into teams that competed in a **quiz around bus use**. The teams had to answer general questions about the bus, and particularly the bus lines and stops in Burgos.

The **winning team of the competition** received bus cards (electronic ticket) charged with 5 EUR each for use on the Burgos bus network. The other teams also received bus cards, charged with 0,60 EUR each.

The bus card was used on the second day of the training, which was a **practice ride on the bus network**. The task for the children was to take different buses from their school to the city centre and again back to the school. While the task was to find the way without help, the school children were accompanied by teachers and Anuncian Tormenta staff in case of problems or questions. The training showed the children how to read a timetable, how to take the bus, but also how to behave inside the vehicle.

The first pilot training was a success. About 100 children participated in the activity and gave very positive feedback.

The Lessons Learnt

Travel Training for school children on public transport is an **effective measure** to enable and encourage children to use public transport. This includes also a marketing effect with a view to the “**customers of the future**”.

The low costs of implementing a training scheme and the comparably simple set-up make the concept **highly transferable across Europe**.

The experience from Burgos shows that it is possible to set-up a locally tailored training scheme **relatively quickly**. The look at other successful examples from forerunner cities helps to design an effective scheme.

A challenge is however to **secure funding for travel training schemes in the mid- to long-run**, especially in countries where public budgets are under pressure. Showing the success and added value of travel training schemes with local decision makers is therefore of crucial importance. The potential of new forms of funding such as sponsorship still needs to be better exploited.

Finally, travel training for public transport that is targeting school children should be part of a **comprehensive mobility education approach** on sustainable transport means as already demonstrated in Burgos.



Trainees in Burgos

Photo: Anuncian Tormenta

Check list

The following check-list summarises **key aspects for implementing travel training for public transport with the target group school children** and intends to give the reader advice on whether the concept is suitable for their own context.

Check list	
City size	No restrictions
Key conditions for implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated will and motivated team to work with children on mobility issues • Back-up from decision makers in public transport operator organisation and/or local authority • Close communication with teachers in developing and fine-tuning the training concept • Kick-off funding to get a scheme started and long-term commitment to keep it running
Resources	Comparably cheap measure that can be developed in stages from a small scheme to wider activities. Mainly staff costs plus moderate costs for marketing material.
Implementation time	Depending on scheme, planning time and preparation of training materials can take a few months up to a year. Quick implementation. Building on experiences of existing schemes helps to speed-up implementation process.
Stakeholders involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport operators and local authorities • Schools and teachers • Parents • Marketing agency (involve at least for layout of material)
Undesirable secondary effects	None



SUPERBUS quiz in classroom

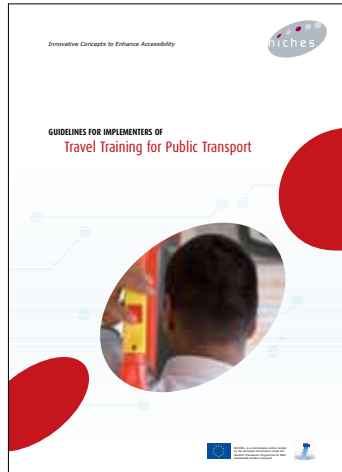


SUPERBUS leaflet with instruction on bus use



Practice ride with bus

All photos: Anuncian Tormenta



For further details on how to implement travel training for school children and other target groups please see the **NICHES+ Guidelines for implementers** (available from www.niches-transport.org).

The more detailed **full version of the Implementation Scenario** for Travel Training for Public Transport in Burgos is also available on the NICHES+ website

Photo on title page

Anuncian Tormenta (left picture, showing first travel training in Burgos); Rupprecht Consult (right picture, showing city view from castle hill)

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