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Eccentric

Sustainable mobility solutions in Ruse

www.civitas.eu/eccentric
Park & Ride system in the peripheral district

Summer 2019

● Reduce traffic from peripheral district to city centre
● Less congestion and more public space
● Park&Ride system making access to the city centre easier

Location: Ruse, Bulgaria
Organisations involved: Municipality of Ruse, Club “Sustainable Development of Civil Society”
What is the solution?

This measure describes the implementation of a Park&Ride strategy in the Druzhba district, in the City of Ruse. Druzhba is Ruse's ‘living lab' (or demonstration/pilot area) in CIVITAS ECCENTRIC, and one of the entrances to the city centre with high volumes of traffic. This district is currently affected by high traffic volumes, and public space has deteriorated greatly due to the high number of cars parked on the streets occupying various public areas.

The ultimate goal of the measure is to promote a modal shift towards public transport, and other active modes of mobility, by reducing the needs (of commuters and other users) to individually occupy cars for their regular trips to the city centre. The development of a Park&Ride facility will allow easy connection with public transport services and will relieve road congestion along the routes regularly taken from Druzhba to the city centre. The measure will also help reduce the number of cars parked on the streets and public spaces in the city centre.

How does it work?

Implementation of this measure includes the following steps:

- Selection of a suitable location for the Park&Ride station.
- Design of the parking lot (41 parking spaces, including eight for disabled people).
- A connection of the parking area with public transport services (trolley bus and/or bus services).
- Development and implementation of the Park&Ride system.
- Promotion and dissemination of the new service to potential users.

During the research and planning phase, a survey was carried out to help map out the mobility habits in the three neighbourhoods forming the Druzhba district. After processing the results, the Municipality identified the potential sites for locating the Park&Ride facilities, and the technical specifications for the realisation of the Park&Ride system were developed. A contractor was chosen, following a selection procedure. In the beginning of May, the facility was built. Once all the instruction and information signs, indicating the location of the parking lot and the conditions for its use are placed, it will be put into operation.

The payment for using the P&R service is done through sending SMS with the registration number of the vehicle to a short code. The user receives a SMS in response including a code that should be entered in a special device on the entrance of the P&R facility. The device issues a paper ticket with two ticket-coupons, which allows the user for a period of 24 hours to park their car in the parking lot and use the trolleybus transport from/to the Park & Ride facility.

Being situated in Druzhba, the success of the Park&Ride scheme strongly relies on the successful realisation of the following CIVITAS ECCENTRIC measures Ruse is implementing:

- ‘Providing Secure Pedestrian Crossings’ and ‘Safe pavements with cycle paths toward the city centre’, two measures which envisage the construction of safe crossings and pavements leading to the city centre.
- ‘Analysis of public transport demand and reorganisation of the network in Druzhba’: Achieving the goals of the new facility is also strongly reliant on the realisation of the measure under which the public transport (bus) lines in Druzhba will be reorganised in order to better serve the needs of residents, commuters and visitors to the city.
- ‘Introduction of ‘Good Night’ Line to Druzhba’: Introduction of the new bus night line servicing Druzhba and the city centre will complement further the services of the Park&Ride facility.
Expected results

- Benefits for people living/accessing the living lab area in terms of improved safety due to less car traffic.
- Higher quality public spaces - decreased number of improperly parked cars.
- Improved air quality (from fewer emissions from cars) in the city centre and along the routes to the city centre.
- Reduced traffic (from private cars) from the peripheral district to the city centre, by reducing congestion impacting the district.

Business model

The measure is funded by CIVITAS ECCENTRIC and has a total planned budget of €127,032 (€67,500 for the Municipality of Ruse and €21,814 for CSDCS).

Timeplan:

Research and planning phase: from September 2016 to April 2018.

Procurement and implementation: from April 2018 to May 2019.


Contact details

Nikola Kibritev
City of Ruse
Email: nikola.kibritev@gmail.com
Living lab area in Ruse: http://civitas.eu/eccentric/ruse
Information, training and awareness raising

Summer 2019

- Training and awareness raising to improve road safety and mobility in the city
- Reduced emissions from fewer cars
- Fewer road accidents involving pedestrians

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This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement no. 690699.

Location: Ruse, Bulgaria

Organisations involved: Club “Sustainable Development of Civil Society” (CSDCS)
Municipality of Ruse
What is the solution?

A large share of the people living in the Druzhba district uses private cars and taxi services to reach the city centre, thus causing congestion, traffic accidents, air pollution and noise. There are few sidewalks and safe crosswalks at the main boulevard to the city centre. Pedestrians, school children and senior citizens suffer from the growing road traffic and are very vulnerable to road accidents. Druzhba is Ruse's 'living lab' (or demonstration/pilot area) in the CIVITAS ECCENTRIC project and one of the entrances to the city centre with high volumes of traffic.

The main objective of this measure is to create awareness of the need for, and benefits of, sustainable mobility in the City of Ruse and its importance for increasing the quality of life of its residents. The aim is to encourage the various actors, stakeholders and users of public transport and mobility offers/services, to embrace sustainable mobility habits, making walking and cycling safer and a more desirable way of travelling in the peripheral district and in the city. A special focus on traffic safety will be made, with the aim of sensitising the general public, in order to reduce the risk of road accidents. In the long term, this measure aims to change the travel mode of people, from using cars to using more active modes of mobility, such as walking and cycling.

How does it work?

One training activity will be organised for public transport personnel, six workshops for the general public and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), three mobility conferences and a large media campaign for other stakeholders and the school community.

The new mobility measures being implemented in Ruse as part of the CIVITAS ECCENTRIC project will be largely discussed and promoted as part of this measure in order to change the manner of thinking of transport specialists, regarding sustainability, and the city's residents.

The research and planning phase of this measure was carried out between December 2016 February 2017 with the following carried out:

- Preparation of a comprehensive stakeholder list comprising of all the relevant stakeholders shaping the public opinion in the target region and the whole territory of the city.
- Assessment of the training needs of Ruse’s transport professionals via telephone interviews and the review of activities and documents of previous relevant projects.
- A well-attended opening event in February 2017, with a press conference ensuring broad media coverage.
- Contracted an expert organisation to carry out the training sessions planned.

Furthermore, the findings from the preparatory phase inspired the measure team to develop the concept of Mobility as a Right (MaaR). MaaR defines mobility in a context where accessibility, inclusion and equity are taken into account from the beginning of the design of any mobility solution. MaaR is designed to reach the most disadvantaged groups, regarding mobility, and peripheral urban areas, to find out the key ways to achieve an inclusive public transport service that can effectively meet the needs required.

The implementation phase of this measure is permanently ongoing because after each event (training events, roundtable discussions and conferences) CSDCS is performing evaluations by disseminating questionnaires to participants and assessing the results. Until the end of 2018 five training events have been performed - one for transport professionals and four dedicated to different target groups: Druzhba residents, school children, NGOs, university staff and doctoral students, as well as one Conference in October for discussing the social aspects of mobility. During the next two project years two more trainings and two conferences are planned for discussing the impact of the ECCENTRIC measures in Ruse.
Expected results

The measure is expected to:
- Increase the general awareness of sustainable mobility and road safety, in general, particularly though among school children and younger people. Existing and new sustainable mobility offers and services available in Ruse will also be promoted.
- The modal split is expected to improve. That is a decrease in the use of private cars and an increase in the use of public transport and other active modes of transport.
- Reduce the risks of road accidents involving pedestrians.
- Walking and cycling in Ruse will be both safer and more attractive.

Business model

The measure is funded in the framework of the CIVITAS ECCENTRIC project. In its implementation, CSDCS is cooperating closely with the Municipality of Ruse and other stakeholders organisations, such as local schools, cultural centres, and the University of Ruse. Local media support is also very important.

In terms of costs, the planned budget for this measure is €137,289. The time frame for carrying out the measure is four years, that is the duration of the CIVITAS ECCENTRIC project.

Find out more

More information about the events which have taken place is available at www.csdcs.org

Contact details

Professor Lucia Ilieva
Club “Sustainable Development of Civil Society” (CSDCS)
Email: mail@csdcs.org
Websites: www.csdcs.org
Living lab area in Ruse: http://civitas.eu/eccentric/ruse
Mobile app and internet portal for public transport

Summer 2019

- A modal shift to public transport by improving its accessibility via a mobile app
- Fewer cars, air pollution and congestion
- Better planning bringing mobility to all

This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement no. 690699.

Location: Ruse, Bulgaria

Organisations involved: Municipality of Ruse
Club “Sustainable Development of Civil Society”
What is the solution?

The Mobility as a Service for all (MaaS) concept is very new to the City of Ruse. Currently, the only service related to MaaS is the developed internet portal and mobile app providing information about the public transport services in the city (such as timetables and route information of bus and trolleybus lines). In this measure, the City of Ruse will develop an app that will support people in buying and validating public transport tickets, and also support them to navigate through the system, in general.

Ruse's residents (and visitors) are unable to plan well their time and travel schedules when using public transport, as there is no service available which provides up-to-date information on timetables, or live information about delays, for instance. This creates confusion for users about the routes/lines resulting in them not knowing how to get from one place to another using public transport.

This measure will improve a recent app to help the people of Ruse better plan their time and travel schedules when using public transport. It will provide additional functionalities to the existing ones (timetables, routes and journey planning, etc). The aim of the measure is to facilitate tickets purchased through mobile devices - a service in high demand by an increasing amount of people. In this measure, a better web service and a mobile application for public transport will be developed, implemented and marketed.

How does it work?

The City of Ruse has developed an internet portal and a mobile app which provide information to the general public about the timetables and routes of public transport lines. These modern solutions will allow people to easily plan their journeys around the city, and make the public transport a more desirable way to travel. However, the younger population and visitors to the city are looking for further functionalities and demand additional options to be able to buy and validate tickets, remotely, for public transport.

Introduction of the new payment and validation ticket system should also improve the reliability of Ruse’s public transport service. There are problems with Ruse's current electronic-ticketing system, causing it to malfunction, leaving public transport users unable to pay with their e-cards. This discourages its use and generally impacts negatively on the reliability of the service, as a whole.

In this measure Ruse will develop and implement a unified system to enable the purchase and validation of transport tickets via mobile devices (smartphone/tablet). This will be usable for the city’s trolleybus network. The mobile app shall be available for more than one smart operating system (Andriod or iOS, as a minimum), and shall ensure the distribution, sale, validation and checking of tickets in trolleybuses operating across Ruse. The electronic charging system shall be a combination of technical devices, a software application and a link to a command centre (Public Transport Control and Management Centre, Ruse). The app’s interface will provide information in Bulgarian and English. Payment shall be made available through debit and/or credit cards. Cashless payment options shall also be available (Paypal, as a minimum). The mobile app will also enable the collection of user feedback in the form of a Passenger Assessment of the service ‘charging and/or self-scanning via a mobile device’.
Expected results

- The long-term aim of this measure is that public transport in Ruse becomes one of the preferred modes of transport for people living in Ruse and its visitors.
- In the mid-term, the measure seeks to increase the reliability of public transport, whilst the short-term objective is to provide citizens with a tool to help them with their planning.
- In terms of numbers, public transport use should increase by 10%, and service reliability should improve by 15%.
- Implementation of this measure should also bring about a decrease in the use of private cars in Druzhba by 20%, leading to a 10% reduction in emissions of private cars and taxi vehicles.

Business model

The total costs budgeted for this measure are estimated at €82,852 and it can be implemented in four months. Of this amount, €52,000 will be spent solely on the development of the app by an expert company. This measure is funded wholly through CIVITAS ECCENTRIC.

Implementation of the measure in Ruse is currently complicated by the requirements issued by the Bulgarian state agency for e-government.

Contact details

Nikolay Simeonov
City of Ruse
Email: n.g.simeonov@gmail.com
Living lab area in Ruse: http://civitas.eu/eccentric/ruse
Providing secure pedestrian crossings

Summer 2019

- Safer pedestrian crossings and streets
- Improved accessibility of public transport
- Walking as a safe mode of transport

This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement no. 690699.

Location: Ruse, Bulgaria

Organisations involved: Municipality of Ruse
Club “Sustainable Development of Civil Society”
What is the solution?

The existing pedestrian crossings in the peripheral district of Druzhba, in Ruse, are not secure enough and present a high risk for accidents, leading to injuries and fatalities. Most people with disabilities avoid walking on streets, in general, or around the city due to the lack of basic infrastructure. Druzhba is Ruse's ‘living lab’ (or demonstration/pilot area) in CIVITAS ECCENTRIC, and one of the entrances to the city centre with high volumes of traffic.

This measure analyses the crosswalks in the peripheral neighbourhood and secures them with LEDs, raised paths, etc. Additionally, cameras for video surveillance will be installed at junctions in the district.

How does it work?

The following activities have been implemented during the measure’s research and planning phase:

- Planning and research activities on innovative solutions for securing pedestrian crossings.
- Meetings with experts in the field.
- Analysis of the crossings available in the district and research into best practice for improved designs with safety and security in mind.
- Identifying the best locations for implementation of the new pedestrian crossings – close to focal points of pedestrian traffic – shopping areas, schools, main roads and streets leading to the city centre.
- Dissemination of the measure idea in order to appraise citizens’ reaction.
- Development of technical specifications.

Ruse Municipality performed a contract selection procedure (launched in April 2018) and signed a contract for designing secure pedestrian crossings. Afterwards, contracts for the pilot implementation of two secure crossings were signed. They are expected to be ready during summer 2019.

Expected results

The longer terms aim of this measure is to reduce the number of road accidents involving pedestrians and to make walking a safer and more desirable way of travelling in the district and the city. The shorter-term goal is to build safe infrastructure for pedestrians, including people with disabilities.

Expected impacts are an:

- Increase in the share of walking in the modal split in Druzhba - currently at 44%.
- A decrease in the number of accidents.
- Increase in the use of public transport by people with disabilities living in the district.

Business model

The measure is funded through CIVITAS ECCENTRIC. The planned total budget for the measure is €123,000, including €71,000 for design and construction of the crossings, and €16,000 for equipment costs.

Ruse Municipality will construct at least two innovative, secure, pedestrian crossings as pilots in Druzhba. Ruse plans to construct additional crossings, like those piloted, in the next years, should the demonstration and monitoring phase of the pilots show that these are well-accepted by residents of the district.
In fact, Ruse is ready to upscale the measure to the whole city and construct such innovative secure pedestrian crossings in other neighbourhoods, if those constructed via CIVITAS ECCENTRIC turn out to be a success, and the community requires more solutions like this.

Ruse has collected feedback from people living in the district during meetings and through the Mayor’s social media channels. The information received was taken into consideration when choosing the exact spots for positioning the new crosswalks.

**Contact details**

Nikolay Simeonov  
City of Ruse  
Email: n.g.simeonov@gmail.com  
Living lab area in Ruse: [http://civitas.eu/eccentric/ruse](http://civitas.eu/eccentric/ruse)
Safe pavements with cycle paths toward the city centre

Summer 2019

- Safer walking and cycling
- Design for non-motorised transport
- Promoting active modes of transport

This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement no. 690699.

Location: Ruse, Bulgaria

Organisations involved:
- Municipality of Ruse
- Club “Sustainable Development of Civil Society”
What is the solution?

The poor state of the pavements (or footpaths) and cycling lanes in Ruse’s Druzhba district generates a high risk of road accidents involving pedestrians and cyclists, as these often result in people opting for using roads when they head towards the city centre. Currently, the footpaths on both sides of the main roads, connecting Druzhba with the central areas of the city, are either incomplete or are in a very bad state of disrepair, and are unsafe for walking or cycling.

How does it work?

In this measure, the Municipality of Ruse and the non-governmental organisation (NGO) CSDCS (Club “Sustainable Development of Civil Society”), carry out research of good practice and innovative solutions on designs of safe pavements (which are to be shared with cyclists) in Druzhba connecting it to the city centre. Following their construction (and securing them with appropriate facilities) they will be promoted to the public. Pavements will be constructed along parts of the main roads only, as this is a pilot case.

Information about the measure and its promotion to various stakeholders and the general public is being undertaken via the Information, Training and Awareness Raising measure Ruse is implementing in parallel to this one. More specifically, this will be done via three training seminars organised by CSDCS - for professionals working in transport (in February 2018), for Druzhba residents (in May 2018), and locally-based NGOs (in September);

Design of the safe pavements and cycling paths was contracted out by Ruse during 2018. The construction of the pavements will be realised in the summer of 2019.

Expected results

This measure aims to achieve the following:
- Decrease the number of road accidents involving pedestrians by 10%, in the long run.
- Increase the share of walking by 10% and cycling in the modal split by 15%, by making walking and cycling a safer and more desirable way of travelling in the district in focus and the city in the medium term.
- Create a safe infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists in the short term.
- Decrease the use of private cars and taxi services.
- Improve air quality in the district and in the city.

Business model

The measure is funded by CIVITAS ECCENTRIC and has a total planned budget of 127,032 euro.

As mentioned already, parts of the areas in need of safer pavements will be built in this measure. Following the demonstration, monitoring and evaluation phases, the measure will be upscaled to the remainder of the area. In fact, Ruse is ready to upscale the measure to the whole city and constructing such pavements in other neighbourhoods, if those constructed via CIVITAS ECCENTRIC turn out to be a success, and the community requires more solutions like this one.

Ruse has collected feedback from people living in Druzhba during meetings and through the Mayor’s social media channels. The information received was taken into consideration when choosing the sections of the main roads where the new pavements and cycling lanes would be built - close to focal points of pedestrian and cyclist traffic.
Contact details

Nikola Kibritev
City of Ruse
Email: nikola.kibritev@gmail.com
Living lab area in Ruse: http://civitas.eu/eccentric/ruse
Analysis of public transport demand and reorganisation of the network in Druzhba

Summer 2019

- Public transport service tailored to demand
- Less car use, cleaner air
- Increased connectivity for outskirts

This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement no. 690699.

Location: Ruse, Bulgaria

Organisations involved: Municipality of Ruse
Club “Sustainable Development of Civil Society”
What is the solution?

The public transport service connecting the peripheral district Druzhba with the centre of Ruse and its industrial zones (around the city centre) is rather slow and unreliable. A large share of the people living in the peripheral districts, like Druzhba, use their own cars or taxi services to travel to the city centre or to work.

This measure will provide demand-oriented, fast, regular and reliable public transport services to and from the city centre to the district of Druzhba. Implementation of the measure will involve redefining and reorganising public transport lines (trolleybus and bus), in order to improve the balance between demand and supply of public transport services. The analysis of public transport demand will provide data for passenger flows and will enable local transport planners to establish a new transport scheme for the targeted area with appropriate timetables in order to meet the needs of more passengers. Finally, the new transport scheme will be promoted.

Druzhba is Ruse's ‘living lab’ (or demonstration/pilot area) in CIVITAS ECCENTRIC, and one of the entrances to the city centre with high volumes of traffic.

How does it work?

Activities carried out so far - mostly during the research and planning phase:

- Planning and research activities for the reorganising the public transport lines concerned.
- Meetings with experts in the field.
- Development of technical specifications.
- The result of the research and planning phase is the technical specifications developed for updating Ruse’s Municipal Transport Scheme. The analysis made by the Ruse implementation team led to the decision of upscaling the measure to encompass the whole territory of the municipality. Only this way can the Druzhba district be better connected by public transport to the rest of the city. Thus, reorganisation of the public transport lines in Druzhba is financed by the CIVITAS ECCENTRIC project, while the Municipality is financing the work being carried out for the rest of the territory.
- Following a process of public procurement (launched in August 2017), Ruse contracted an external company to update the Municipal Transport Scheme. The contract has a maximum of 12 months to deliver the final results of the service, including:
  - Collection and analysis of baseline information on the current state of play
  - Preparation of an updated transport scheme for Ruse
  - Organising and conducting discussions with relevant stakeholders and public discussion of the proposal for updating the transport scheme
- Information about the measure and its promotion to various stakeholders, and the general public, is being undertaken via the Information, Training and Awareness Raising measure Ruse is implementing in parallel to this one.

Currently the update of the Municipal Transport Scheme is in its final stage. Public consultations with various stakeholders are to be carried out during the summer of 2019. The new transport scheme is to be accepted by the Municipal Council by September 2019.
Expected results

This measure implemented by the City of Ruse aims at increasing the use of public transport by 20% in the outskirts of the city in the long term, to create a new transport system in order to provide demand-oriented, fast, regular and reliable public transport services in the medium term and to collect relevant data about Public Transport demand on short term. It also aims at decreasing the use of private cars by 20% and the associated emissions produced by these cars.

Business model

The measure is financed as follows:

- 121,975 euro from CIVITAS ECCENTRIC
- 115,000 euro from the Municipality of Ruse

Contact details

Nikolay Simeonov
City of Ruse
Email: n.g.simeonov@gmail.com
Living lab area in Ruse: [http://civitas.eu/eccentric/ruse](http://civitas.eu/eccentric/ruse)
Introduction of ‘Good Night’ Line to Druzba

Summer 2019

- Convenient public transport increasing overall usability
- Reductions in air pollution at night
- Accessible cities for all, also at night

Location: Ruse, Bulgaria

Organisations involved:
- Municipality of Ruse
- Club “Sustainable Development of Civil Society”
What is the solution?

In Ruse, there is currently no option for people to use public transport to or from the district of Druzhba after 21.00. Most people either opt for using their own cars or rely on taxi services. For many people, taxis are not a feasible option - leaving them feeling isolated and discriminated against.

This measure will provide public transport service during the nights in Druzhba. The measure’s implementation will consist of the creation of the new ‘Good Night’ bus line; and the promotion of the new service. The main output is the creation of a new nightline bus service, which fulfils people’s need for safe public transport.

Druzhba is Ruse’s ‘living lab’ (or demonstration/pilot area) in CIVITAS ECCENTRIC, and one of the entrances to the city centre with high volumes of traffic.

How does it work?

The following activities have been implemented during the measure’s research and planning phase:

- Planning and research activities concerning the conditions and procedures for establishing a ‘Good Night’ line to service people travelling to and from Druzhba to the city centre.
- Research on the options available for purchasing or leasing vehicles to operate the nightline. This led to the decision of contracting the service to the locally-based public transport operator who will use their own vehicles (trolleybuses).
- Meetings with experts in the field.

Information about the measure and its promotion to the general public is being undertaken via the Information, Training and Awareness Raising measure Ruse is implementing in parallel to this one. The events have been held as follows: for professionals in transport (in February 2017); for Druzhba residents (in May 2017); and for locally-based NGOs (in September 2017). The trolleybus that will perform the courses was specially branded. In order to promote the “Good Night” Line, information brochures and posters have been developed that contain a detailed timetable of the routes and are available in all vehicles of the trolleybus public transport operator Municipal Transport Ruse EAD.

The “Good Night” Line was launched in the beginning of May and operates from 00:30 to 03:10. The new line has two routes. The main route connects Druzhba district with the Central Bus/Railway Station, passing through the main boulevards and streets of the city. The second one connects the starting point of the main route with the trolleybus depot.

The current route of the “Good Night” Line will be included in the new Municipal Transport Scheme. The plan is for it to run from 00:30 to 03:10 for a year and after that, depending on the demand of the nightline service, the present route will be preserved or modified, or other routes will be developed.

The introduction of the new night line of PT for the Druzhba district will complement the services of the new Park&Ride facility, currently being set up in Druzhba as part of CIVITAS ECCENTRIC.

The main challenges faced while developing and implementing this measure thus far have been:

- Finding the best solution for the vehicles to be used for operating the new line, and
- Identifying an appropriate solution to award the operation of the service.
Expected results

- The main aim behind this measure is to turn public transport into the preferred mode of choice for those living in the peripheral districts, such as Druzhba. In the mid and short terms, the measure is expected to impact on the use of the service during the night - an option which was not possible prior to CIVITAS ECCENTRIC.
- In terms of environmental sustainability, this measure is expected to result in less use of cars (private vehicles and taxis) thereby contributing to better air quality in the city centre and in Druzhba.
- A 20% reduction in the use of cars during the night is expected.

Business model

The measure is funded by CIVITAS ECCENTRIC and has a total planned budget of €96,669.

The implementation of the measure is strongly dependent on the adoption of the new Municipal Public Transport Scheme, as the scheme defines the actual route of the new nightline. The process for updating the transport scheme takes around 12 months and the subcontracting procedure for the start of the operation of the nightline should take one to two months, in addition.

Contact details

Nikola Kibritev
City of Ruse
Email: nikola.kibritev@gmail.com
Living lab area in Ruse: http://civitas.eu/eccentric/ruse