



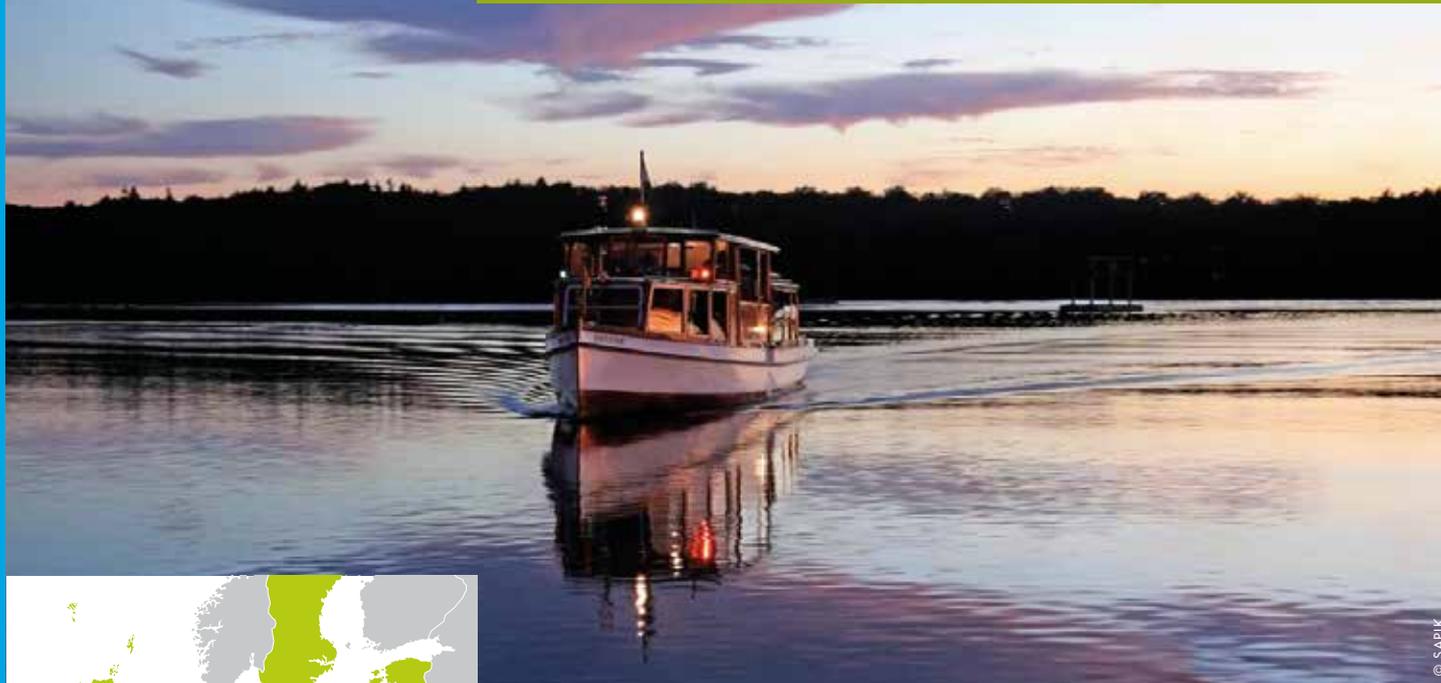
CIVITAS
Cleaner and better transport in cities
RENAISSANCE

CASE STUDY



DEVELOPMENT OF WATER BORNE PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEM

COLLECTIVE PASSENGER TRANSPORT



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SZCZECINEK

Szczecinek is situated on the edge of a lake, providing an opportunity to introduce water-borne transport. The introduction of a mobility service that promotes water transport as a new and energy-efficient transport mode was developed as a way to promote a less car-dependent lifestyle.

Municipal context

Szczecinek is a sub-regional centre in Middle Pomerania (in North Eastern Poland). Its stunning location between two lakes with a beautiful park spanning its shore draws countless tourists. The surrounding forests are well-known for their exceptional beauty.

The city sees the growing tourism sector as the central pillar of the city's development. That is why Szczecinek is planning investments in sports and recreation across the city.

Szczecinek joined the CIVITAS RENAISSANCE project to collaborate with other historic European cities faced with the challenge to ensure sustainable development without harming the environment. A set of 10 integrated

measures was implemented to improve the public transport service through the integration of public transport modes, the introduction of alternative transport modes and cleaner buses, as well as better communication with customers.

A central part of the city's urban transport strategy was the revival of a mode of transport that has been used by residents and tourists in the 19th century already: water transport. A more flexible and attractive service of water trams and water taxis as part of an integrated public transport system is aimed to attract more passengers to public transport and avert an increase in individual car trips. Missing links in the bike path network were closed to create the conditions for the development of cycling in the city. Bike and rickshaw rental points are combined with other modes of public transport.

MUNICIPAL PROFILE

LOCATION
Szczecinek, Poland

POPULATION
39,637

LAND AREA
48.46 km²

CIVITAS BUDGET
EUR 1,721,638



SZCZECINEK IN CIVITAS

Szczecinek participated in CIVITAS RENAISSANCE. Under the motto of "Testing Innovative Strategies for Clean Urban Transport for historic European cities", the project connects five cities that face mobility challenges through seasonal tourism: Perugia (Italy), Bath (UK), Gorna Oryhavitsa (Bulgaria), Szczecinek (Poland), and Skopje (Macedonia).

PROJECT INFORMATION

CIVITAS RENAISSANCE aims to demonstrate how the legacy of the renaissance can be preserved and developed through innovative and sustainable clean urban transport solutions. The project aims to test and develop a valuable, reliable and integrated package of mobility measures that will make historic cities cleaner and safer.

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Introduction

The necessary infrastructure – power line, water supply and sewage system – was developed at the main setup of the water transport service in order to increase the quality of the service. The integration of water-tram and water-taxi services with other public transport modes such as buses, bicycles and rickshaws created viable alternatives to the private car. Bicycle rental points were placed close to the stops of the water-trams and water-taxis.

Two water trams, one of which being restored to its historic character, two water taxis, and three new constant piers were constructed and are now in operation.

Taking a closer look

The power line, water supply and sewage system connection at the main stop of the water transport service was implemented in May 2011.

The innovative aspects of the measure are:

- This is a new mode of transport being exploited in the city. No other water borne transport systems, offered as a public mean of transport and not as a tourist attraction, are operating in the Middle Pomeranian region. There are several ferries in the region connecting river banks but

Szczecinek is the first city to experiment public transport in water tram on a lake.

- New organisational arrangements were developed, such as the integration of the water-trams and water-taxis services with other public transport modes such as buses, bicycles and rickshaws. It is a new solution improving free movement by public transport and can help people to become less car dependent.

Results

A survey revealed that only 0.1 percent of respondents used water transport for shopping and commuting (work/school), while the great majority used it for other purposes (e.g. visits, recreational trips). In spite of this, the use of other means of transport (private car, public transport, bicycle) for other purposes surpassed water transport.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Szczecinek is located in the one of the lakelands of the western part of Poland. The city is situated between two big lakes: Trzeciecko and Wielimie. Already in the 19th century the water transport was an important public transport mode for citizens and tourists coming to Szczecinek. After World War II until 2007 it has not played a significant role – one small boat offering cruises on the lake was only an attraction for tourists.

Since 2007 there has been new service implemented – a water-tram offering cruises according to a fixed schedule. At the end of 2007 the city purchased the second water tram – its reconstruction was part of this measure.

Attracting more passengers and avoiding a raise of individual car trips can be realised by offering more flexible (more frequent) and more attractive (more stops and a higher standard of the boat) water transport service. This required the development of the water transport system thanks to the introduction of a second water tram, as well as water taxis. Thanks to CIVITAS, the city also developed a main port and hangar (functioning as maintenance and storage point), as well as mobile piers allowing more stops for passengers.



At first, in 2009, the occupancy of water tram increased by 41.2 percent in relation to the baseline, but in the next season (2010) it dropped slightly. Different factors could influence such a situation. It is probable that after intensive promotional campaigns, citizens wanted to try the water transport but then returned to their previous behaviour. Perhaps the weather conditions had a significant role although weather changes were not recorded.

The key results are as follows:

- the use of water transport increased in relation to the baseline;
- water tram fuel efficiency improved in relation to the baseline;
- the quality of water transport improved in relation to the baseline;
- spatial accessibility increased in relation to the baseline.

Lessons learned

Two main lessons learned can be identified after the successful implementation of the ambitious set of measures creating water borne public transport:

- Good inter-institutional cooperation is required; the water borne public transport is a combination of measures (like water taxis, water trams, water stops, proper promotion of water transport) which are under the responsibility of different partners. Therefore

well defined and good cooperation of all involved stakeholders is a key driver that leads to fruitful results.

- Political support is key: implementing such an innovative solution in transportation needs strong and continuous support from the highest level of the city decision makers. Luckily, during all the stages of the measure's implementation politicians in Szczecinek showed intensive engagement and support.

Upscaling and transferability

The water transport service in Szczecinek will not be extended further. The investments implemented so far, resulting in raising the quality and accessibility of service, are sufficient to meet tourist needs. Since the lake is not surrounded entirely by the town, in most of the cases it is quicker to get from any point of the lake shore to the other by car or bike than by water transport. That is the reason that citizens use water transport service rarely in comparison to other means of transport.

Another reason of the rare use of water transport by citizens is the seasonal character of the service. The use of water transport service by citizens as an everyday means of transport is regularly suspended because of the lake freezing in winter. This fact inhibits the uptake of water transport into the daily behaviours of citizens who prefer whole year-round transport services.

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References or sources

CIVITAS webpages:

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