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Mobile app and internet portal for public transport

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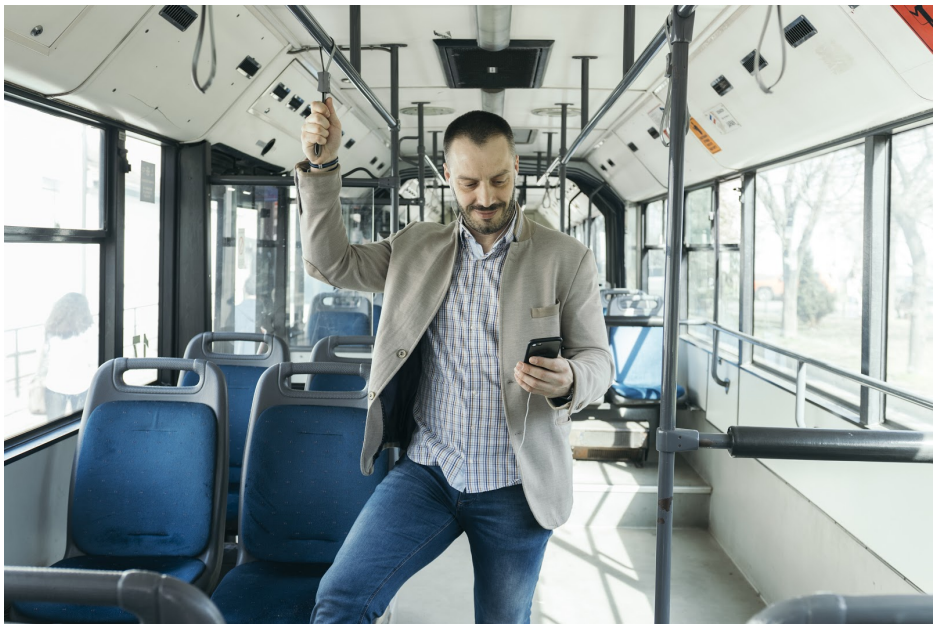

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- A modal shift to public transport by improving its accessibility via a mobile app
- Fewer cars, air pollution and congestion
- Better planning bringing mobility to all

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.

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