

# ACUTE - Accessibility and Connectivity Knowledge Hub for Urban Transformation in Europe

## WP3 – Practitioner Interaction

### D3.4.2 Report on national workshop Austria

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#### Project Partners

Organisation	Country
University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna   BOKU	AUSTRIA
Université Gustav Eiffel   UEiffel	FRANCE
Centre d'études et d'expertise sur les risques, l'environnement, la mobilité et l'aménagement   Cerema	FRANCE
Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies   LBTU	LATVIA
University of Latvia   LU	LATVIA
Research Institutes of Sweden   RISE	SWEDEN
University of Westminster   UoW	UNITED KINGDOM
Malmö University   MAU	SWEDEN
Grazer Energieagentur GmbH, Graz Energy Agency   GEA	AUSTRIA
VTI/Sweden's national centre for research and education on public transport   K2	SWEDEN
Power Circle   PC	SWEDEN
University of Innsbruck   UIBK	AUSTRIA

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# 1. Workshop goals & set-up

## 1.1. Goals

- Within the framework of the ACUTE (Accessibility and Connectivity knowledge hub for Urban Transformation in Europe) and UERA TWG Urban Accessibility and Connectivity, a particular interest is given to the issues of accessibility and connectivity, especially in the context of 15-minute-city urban model, for both goods and people.
- With regard to the Task 3.4, five National pilot workshops in the countries involved in the KNH are required. The goal is to enhance national collaboration and knowledge exchange among academics and practitioners. To foster cooperation at the national level, using the local language is encouraged for the workshop.

## 1.2. Structure / workshop guideline

The Austrian National ACUTE workshop was side-event to the 1<sup>st</sup> Mobility Conference of the Austrian Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK) in Vienna (8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> of April, 2024). The side event took place on April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024 from 13:30 to 15:00.

The workshop “The 15 minute city: researchers meets practitioners” was planned for 1.5 hrs and was structured as follows:



### 1) PART A – Welcome & Introduction (15 min)

*Method: general introduction for all*

- |        |   |
|--------|---|
| 10 min | Introduction to the workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Short intro to the ACUTE project</li> <li>- Idea of a knowledge hub</li> <li>- Introduction to current ERA-NET projects</li> <li>- Setup of the workshop</li> </ul> |
| 5 min  | Introduction of all participants  |

### 2) PART B – Discussion Research - Practice – Transfer

*Method: World Café with 2 tables or corners*

*Duration: 2 x 15 min discussion + 10 min summary/résumé = 45 minutes*

- |        |   |
|--------|---|
| 15 min | B-1 How can we accelerate the implementation of research results?<br><i>Start session B-1 with cards / then short summary of the 1st session</i><br>[RESEARCH INTO IMPLEMENTATION]  |
| 15 min | B-2 How can we ensure that research deals with the issues that actors are confronted with in their everyday lives?<br><i>Start session B-2 with cards / then short summary of the 1st session</i><br>[PRACTICE INTO RESEARCH] |
| 10 min | Collecting the results from the World Café  |





### 3) PART C – Set-Up of a knowledge hub

*Method: division into two groups by interest*

*Duration: 15 min discussion + 5 min summary + 10 min discussion = 30 minutes*

- 15 min C-1 Possible structure & functionality of a knowledge hub
  - Functionalities
  - Access / placement
  - Operator / online provision of data input
  - Mapping of user interests
- 15 min C-2 Content & future topics
  - What content should be provided?
  - Where do cities need scientific support / decision support?
  - Who provides information?
- 15 min Collecting the results from the World Café
- 15 min Concluding discussion

#### 1.3. Participants

The following list names the workshop participants and their institutional affiliations including the information whether they can be considered researchers (R) or practitioners (P). The recruiting was underdone with the aim to generate a balanced group of people between the two groups.

#	Fist Name	Family Name	Institution	R	P
1			TU Wien	x	
2			Amt der Tiroler Landesregierung		x
3			PLANUM Fallast & Partner GmbH		x
4			MK Landschaftsarchitektur		x
5			private		x
6			TU Wien	x	
7			Walk-space.At		x
8			REship System Services, and TU Delft	x	
9			Salzburger Verkehrsverbund		x
10			Stadt-Umland-Management Wien / Niederösterreich		x
11			Bike Citizens Germany GmbH		x
12			Radlobby		x
13			Herry Consult		x
14			FFG	x	
15			BOKU	x	
16			BOKU / thinkport VIENNA	x	
17	Sonja	Russo	BOKU / thinkport VIENNA (Moderation)	x	
18	Maria	Juschten	Graz Energy Agency (Moderation)		x
19	Markus	Mailer	University of Innsbruck (Moderation)	x	

## 2. Discussions on knowledge transfer (Topic B)

### 2.1. Transfer of results from research into practice (B-1)

#### Relevance of themes & project partners

- Practice view: many projects disregard needs of cities (push vs. pull)
  - projects should ensure the **mutual relevance** of research topics for research & practice
  - institutionalized exchange on these needs & relevant research themes?
- Different ways of ensuring mutual relevance of topics:
  - integrating **practice partners** into the project design from the start is crucial! Inclusion of practice partners beyond LOIs supporting the proposal
  - including knowledge transfer into project structure (beyond dissemination)
    - continuous exchange / (project-independent) institutionalization of transfer
  - **real-life integrations** as project element (i.e. living labs)
    - facilitate mutual understanding between stakeholders, aligned goals & problem awareness / allows users to try & experience alternative mobility solutions
  - fun / attractive design of projects (interesting storyline / methods / partners) / **experimental mind-set**
- Crucial **stakeholders** to be included from the start:
  - Public administrations → need to create spaces for research, “creative milieu”
  - “Board” of public and private stakeholders
  - Others (citizens, industry, politics, ....) when needed

#### Resources – time & money

- limited funds make real-life integrations difficult due to high costs related to infrastructure projects or experiments
- problem: research projects often not attractive for practitioners due to funding (FFG) requirements & the high administrative work
- Different ways of ensuring funding / resources
  - Integrating industry partners into projects as separate funders
- **Time disparities:** research & practice don’t always follow the same timelines.
  - Research: moves rather slowly, project time spans
  - Cities: can move rather fast or very slow, depending on topics, election time spans
  - Industry partners: tend to move quicker, fast need for commercialization of ideas & experiments.
- Innovation needs time → window of opportunity?
- Tricky step: from demos/trials toward long-term implementations

#### Communication & networks

- Goal 1: creating attention for research outcomes / creating a good story / “cool” messages
- Goal 2: addressing various target groups → target group specific messages
- Research needs to ensure accessible dissemination channels (i.e. social media / using “influencers” to convey messages)
- Crucial: accessible language beyond research terminology and work package structures
- Dissemination into practice is partly in conflict with researchers need for academic research papers as an indicator of scientific success.
- Dissemination activities may need to be times with political election periods
- There is a need for regional networks & exchange of insights on regional topics.

## 2.2. Transfer of relevant questions & problems from practice into research (B-2)

### Accessibility to research projects

- Creating diversity in projects
  - o Use participatory forms of communication from the beginning of the project in order to involve stakeholders at an early stage and thus be able to incorporate questions and knowledge from practice into the project
  - o Research teams should be diverse in order to ensure that all relevant stakeholders and topics are covered
- Give stakeholders the opportunity to contribute their own research questions
  - o To allocate research budget to different stakeholder groups, to ensure that diverse needs are covered.
  - o Facilitate access to research projects for stakeholders who do not yet have experience with research funding programs.

### Designing research programmes

- The design phase of research programs needs to include the city perspective to ensure up-to-date and practice-oriented topics.
- Research projects are always caught between the goal of policy-oriented implementation and the requirement that research should be independent
- Are the questions asked by stakeholders the "right" questions?
  - o It is important to listen properly to stakeholders
  - o Identify and provide input opportunities for stakeholders
  - o Collect and store stakeholder questions → for future research calls
  - o Opinion polls and existing knowledge need to be included when designing research tenders
  - o Research should always critically scrutinise its indicators and objectives so that it does not bypass practical needs

### Designing research projects

- Designing research projects iteratively
- Specific stakeholder needs can only be identified through dialogue
- Discussions with stakeholders and early involvement of practice partners (industry) are essential.

### Working in research projects

- Working in research projects iteratively
- Agility in research projects (not strictly following a predetermined vision) is a key and should be possible, if arguable.

### 3. Discussions on a future knowledge hub (Topic C)

#### 3.1. Relevant themes & contents (C-1)

##### Urban & rural area:

- Do not draw a boundary at the city limits
- Include peri-urban spaces → don't just think in or for urban spaces

##### Digitalisation

- In order for digitalisation to make its contribution to the mobility transition, it must be designed in such a way as to ensure low-threshold access for everyone
- Digitalisation is not necessarily usable for everyone
- Factors such as age, language and education play a major role in accessibility and must therefore always be taken into account

##### Translation and changes in society

- It is necessary to develop an awareness of current social problem areas and hurdles
- Incentives to raise awareness need to be redesigned
- Mobility transition should be communicated in a "cool" and positive way → target group-orientated and up-to-date approach

##### Time prosperity

- Needs research and analysis on the following questions:
  - What is the value of which time and what is its purpose of use or utilisation?
  - How do individual time accounts and therefore their utilisation and allocation differ?
  - How is the perception of time changing?
- Indicators of accessibility should be redefined
  - Different perspectives must be taken into account → gender, socio-economic aspects, etc.
- up to now, accessibility was about → reaching distant places more quickly
  - this paradigm should be critically scrutinised

#### 3.2. Possible structure, functionalities & organisational arrangement (C-2)

##### General requirements

- Good structure is key → intuitive navigation & handling
- Data formats? Pdf ensures longevity but more difficult to translate automatically?
- Ensuring protection of data / data rights / patents / copyrights?

##### Functionalities

- **Problem-centred search function:**
  - i.e. Problem-centred search function (=AI chat bot / real humans?)
  - topic- instead of project-based search
- **Database:**
  - repeated wish for a comprehensive project database / repository of both finished and ongoing projects) → digital archive
  - included information: key facts, partners, results & links to project websites
- **Event calendar:**
  - Idea: illustrating local / national / international networking possibilities on different topics
  - To be discussed: Local vs. EU level? Language?
- **Exchange of ideas / support:**
  - i.e. moderated forum

- direct exchange possibilities
- Possibilities for finding practice partners?
- Maybe involve some sort of "fun" element → "VR experience"?

#### **Provider / responsible institution & funding**

- **Longevity:**
  - Ideally: long-term assignment, not project-based
  - Integration in existing platforms possible? i.e. data.gov.at
- **Outreach:**
  - Ensuring a certain level of outreach / awareness
  - Ideally: larger institutions / wide networks
  - Automatic translation of contents (AI-based) to ensure outreach across EU?
- **Funding:**
  - Again, should be long-term, not project-based → neutrality as a requirement?
  - Idea: „project fee“ from included projects as part of project dissemination budget? → clearly outline & communicate benefit for participating/contributing projects? More than facilitated dissemination of results? Outsourcing of dissemination & data storage?
  - Alternative: through national research funding organisations → FFG doesn't see this as their mandate/mission

## 4. Learnings/take-away messages from the Austrian workshop

### Methodological take-aways

- Group setting generally worked well, especially the world café format where both groups switched between the two topics.
- Chosen time frame of 1.5 hrs was not quite sufficient; some discussions could have been much longer / more in-depth, especially the design of a future knowledge hub
- Language of the question/workshop design should also include practitioners, who are not familiar with some research terminologies (i.e. dissemination)

### Content-related take-away messages – knowledge transfer

- Knowledge transfer from research into practice (and the other way around) was seen as an important topic with room for improved communication / cooperation between the two
- Many of the identified barriers are of structural nature (i.e. structure of research funding & required admin; limited project time spans & related funding; diverging timelines between research and implementation projects)
- Cooperation is not sufficiently encouraged by academic system (focus on papers as merit)
- But some aspects can be improved by the different stakeholders (i.e. integration of practice stakeholders early on, frequent exchange on research needs, living lab integrations etc.)

### Content-related take-away messages – knowledge hub

- Knowledge hub idea was perceived very positively – especially the idea of a searchable project database was seen as a potential asset
- Different possible functionalities and set-up options were suggested but they would need further & more in-depth discussions & prioritisations
- Open questions: ownership, updating responsibilities, long-term funding
- Unclear, how topic-specific the knowledge hub should be / where to draw the line of what to include or exclude

### Photos from the discussion round



