



Peer review: Boosting sustainable cross-border mobility in Tyrol-South Tyrol-Trentino

A Policy Learning Platform peer review
19-20 January 2023, Innsbruck (Euregio Campus)

Final Report

1. Brief presentation of the beneficiary and its motivation to host a peer review

This information is mainly taken from the background paper and the application for the peer review

For citizens from the European Region Tyrol-South Tyrol-Trentino, mobility is the key topic in which cooperation should be strengthened. Since the EGTC has collected statistics about the attitude and expectations of citizens for Euregio, published every two years in the Euregio Monitor, the importance of mobility has become an ever more pressing topic for citizens. Certainly, a key driver for the strong interest in cross-border mobility is both the interest in cooperation between integrated territories that share strong historic, cultural and linguistic bonds.

Not less important, the strategic importance of the Brenner border for the North/South transport axis has not only positive consequences on the local population. Transport in Euregio has its specific challenges, due to the challenging geographical structures of the Alps, its ecological systems, and its transit function. Despite efforts in favour of modal shift, heavy goods vehicle (HGV) road traffic is constantly increasing along the Brenner corridor. In order to increase the modal shift from road to freight, Italy and Austria are building, with support of the European Union, the Brenner base tunnel. However, its completion is currently estimated only in ten years, that is in 2032, with traffic projections predicting further heavy increases of goods traffic over the next years. Finding the right balance between protection of environment/human health and free trade of goods/economy within the Euregio and its national member states is matter of ongoing debate,

Many initiatives have been taken over the last ten years to increase sustainable cross-border mobility. In 2017 the EGTC gathered experts in the field of mobility to draft a thesis paper on challenges and opportunities for sustainable mobility in Euregio. The paper, although in some areas dated, represents a useful synthesis of the discussions between the main departments, public companies, research centres and stakeholders in cross-border mobility in Euregio. The initiatives and projects to improve cross-border mobility have been explained in the background paper.

Given the priority of the INTERREG Italy-Austria programme 2021-.27 on strengthening cooperation governance, also relating to the area of mobility, the INTERREG Europe peer review was an important tool to deepen collaboration between partners, raise awareness for funding opportunities as well as gather expert knowledge and best-practises of cross-border cooperation on mobility from all over Europe.

2. Specification of the policy challenge encountered

This information is mainly taken from the background paper and the application for the peer review. The “thematic blocks”, i.e. the guiding questions of the peer review should also be mentioned.

The EGTC government programme of Land Tirol contained many initiatives for strengthening mobility, some of which have been implemented, some of them have not (see the thematic background paper for more information). Successfully implemented were a cross-border ticket for families (in 2020- 39 euro for one day for two adults and three children) and the Euregio student ticket (in 2021 – the current price is 320 euro). The Euregio mobility day, which allows free travel throughout Euregio on two selected days per year, is a big success. The last Euregio

gather key actors and programme bodies in order to identify possible topics in relation to a better cooperation governance in mobility to be implemented with INTERREG Italy-Austria 2021-27, in synergy with other (regional, interregional, state and European) funding programmes. Given the important role of the EGTC Euregio Senza Confini for common mobility projects in the programme area of INTERREG Italy-Austria, that EGTC has been invited to join the peer review.

3. Participants

List of participants in the peer review:

- Members of the beneficiary organisation

René Zumtobel, regional minister for mobility, environment, sustainability, European traffic policy, waste management, Land Tirol

Matthias Fink, representative of Land Tirol in the General Secretariat of EGTC European Region Tyrol-Trentino

Stefan Graziadei, project manager EGTC

Benedikt Meinardi, intern EGTC

Patrizia Pierdomenico, intern EGTC

Ekkhard Allinger-Csollich, director of mobility department of Land Tyrol

Patrick Skonieczki, mobility department Land Tirol and co-lead EUSALP AG4 on mobility

Julia Schmid, mobility department Land Tirol

- Local stakeholders:

- o Robert Bettel, VVT (public mobility provider, Tyrol)
- o Werner Dilitz, regional manager ÖBB (Austrian railways)
- o Esther Jennings, Euregio Inntal (border between Austria and Bavaria)
- o Roger Hopfinger, regional manager Trentino and South Tyrol for Trenitalia (Italian railways)
- o Alexander Rammerstorfer, coordinator service and information system South Tyrolean transport agency (STA)
- o Chiara Paterno, assistant to director general of STA
- o Sandra Leutner, CLLD terra raetica
- o Sabine Richter, CLLD Wipptal
- o Philipp Schlemmer, CLLD Dolomiti Live
- o Dianin Alberto, Eurac research (expert in cross-border mobility)

- Other EGTC as relevant partner

- o Esther Horner, representative of Carinthia at EGTC Euregio Senza Confini
- o Chiara Fabbro, administrative and project expert, EGTC Euregio Senza Confini
- o Enzo Volponi, responsible for local public transport in Friuli Venezia Giulia region

- Peers

- o Michael Dejozé, director EGTC Euregio Maas Rhein
- o Jürgen Peter Hiller, Berlin-Brandenburg Spatial Planning Department
- o Jürgen Neumüller, Head of the European Spatial Planning Dpt., Berlin-Brandenburg Spatial Planning Department
- o Sandra Sodini (note: Sandra Sodini is also the director of EGTC Euregio Senza Confini)
- o Steffen Schönicke, Executive Director, Euregio Egreensis, Arbeitsgemeinschaft Sachsen/Thüringen e.V.
- o Werner Schreiner, State Commissioner for cross-border cooperation (Landesbeauftragter für die grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit), State Chancellery of Rheinland-Pfalz

- Interreg Europe team
 - o Nicholas Singer
 - o Estelle Roger
 - o Thorsten Kohlisch
 - o Elena Ferrario
 - o Bernhard Schausberger
 - o Soroush Brandenburg

4. **Policy Recommendations**

Description of the policy recommendations, with reference to good practices and other information mentioned during the peer review. This section can also include a brief analysis of the feasibility of each recommendation in time (e.g. categorisation of the recommendations into short-term, medium-term, long-term implementation potential).

Reference is made to the selected policy recommendations that INTERREG Europe and peers suggested:

Governance models

Governance structures and mechanisms

Governance structure: regular meetings take place between the regional ministers for transport of Tyrol and South Tyrol. A working programme for the next years covering cross border issues has been agreed. The last trilateral meeting specifically on mobility between all three regions (Euregio mobility meeting) took place shortly before the pandemic (28 February 2020). At that meeting, the main projects of the Tyrolean EGTC presidency were discussed: the Euregio2Plus-ticket for daily trips within Euregio, the Euregio yearly public transport subscription, the integration of all three regions into the ticket selling system as well as the expansion of the traffic information system to the Trentino region.

Implementation of policy recommendations: it is planned that before fall 2023 a meeting between all three mobility departments will be organized to discuss common euroregional topics. The policy recommendations of INTERREG Europe will be sent beforehand to the participants to stimulate reflection on the best-practises presented. The aim is to present a cross-border cooperation project for the EGTC, possibly in the framework of the second call of the INTERREG ITALY-AUSTRIA programme, and to support implementation of cross-border mobility projects in the framework of the EGTC.

Note: it deserves mention that cross-border cooperation structures exist in the immediate border area, for instance the working group on mobility of CLLD terra raetica. Cross-border mobility is a key interest for all CLLD-strategies in the area of the European Region Tyrol-South Tyrol-Trentino.

Ensure political agreement

The EGTC board is composed of the three governors of member regions. The EGTC has the possibility to push for political agreements concerning cross-border mobility. As well, various initiatives (such as the Euregio citizen’s council) are a bottom-up push factor for cross-border mobility, considering that mobility and the Euregio-ticket is consistently mentioned as a key topic for citizens.¹

Creating thematic working tables

It has to be noted that mobility departments regularly exchange themselves during meeting of existing cooperation structures (EUSALP AG4, Brenner corridor platform BCP, etc). On May 16, 2023, the presidents of South Tyrol and Tyrol handed over a “road map” on strengthening rail services to EU Scan-Med coordinator Pat Cox, in the framework of a BCP-meeting in Innsbruck.

¹ Link to the [document with the recommendations of the Euregio citizens council.](#)

As said before, the EGTC will organize a meeting between the transport departments of its member regions. The EGTC has an interest in creating a stable working table on mobility, rather than an hoc-one, on the example of the peer Euregio Maas Rhein. It has to be noted as well that the EGTC has the instrument of specialized board meetings, where the regional ministers competent for certain thematic areas gather. This has already been the case where the regional ministers for civil protection met and signed an agreement on a cross-border cooperation agreement on civil protection. The agreement was subsequently signed by the Euregio board during the meeting on May 13, 2023. It could be envisaged that such a specialized board meeting takes place between the competent ministers for transport, to prepare a board meeting of the EGTC where a well agreed and defined topic of CBC in transport would be discussed.

Projects and initiatives to meet the needs of the territory

Territorial impact assessment:

Demand analysis: the EGTC has carried out a survey on the mobility demands in view of the completion of the Brenner base tunnel (the BBT should be completed in 2032). The analysis showed the willingness of citizens to pay a higher price for faster cross-border connections.

Studies have already been carried out to analyse future demand for rail passenger transport along the Brenner corridor. The EUSALP project CrossBorder gives a very good overview of cross-border obstacles and solutions in the cross-border mobility of commuters.

Rolling stock for cross-border services

One of the challenges in cross-border services is that rolling stock is not able to operate in both countries, or is able to do so only after a long stop at the border. Öbb and Trenitalia already purchased trains that are able to operate in both countries. Delivery is expected in the next years. This would mean that trains could run at the different voltage systems that are in use in Italy and Austria, shortening the time of the stopover at the state border. Long distance trains should not stop any more at the border, which next to the purchase of compatible rolling stock needs the removal of technical barriers. This already is the case on the Austria-Germany border and the aim is to implement it as well on the Austria-Italy border. The timeframe set for implementation is the timetable change 2025/26. From 2026/27 half our connections from Innsbruck to Bozen/Bolzano should be implemented from early morning to late evening.

It has to be noted that a fast cross-border (bus) connection in the border area of Itlay-Austria-Switzerland, has now been agreed on, linking Mals/Malles in South Tyrol and Landeck in Tyrol with a rapid bus connection from December 2023 onwards. The regions decided to split the cost for operating the line (2 million euros year) between each other, and mobility providers of Tyrol and South Tyrol work on the mutual recognition of their transport subscriptions for the mentioned cross-border bus line.

Integrated ticketing and tariffication

Euregio-ticket: during the Euregio-board meeting of May 13, 2023, Arno Kompatscher, governor of South Tyrol, as well as upcoming EGTC president (from October 2023), announced that during his presidency a focus will be on the implementation of the Euregio (year-long ticket. The implementation of Euregio ticket was a key objective of the Tyrolean presidency (2019-21). During the Tyrolean presidency, two important offers for sustainable cross-border mobility, the Euregio students' ticket and the Euregio2plus ticket, have been implemented. The Euregio student ticket is a success and has been sold more than 2.500 times in the year 2022.

Due to different ticketing systems in the three regions with a different price level, cross-border ticketing and a cross-border public transport subscription remains an important challenge. The objective of the EGTC is to ensure political agreement extend cross-border ticketing to a broader category of users and with a broader scope (for instance the elderly or all youth), and eventually to the whole population of the EGTC.

5. Possible calendar of implementation

This section helps the beneficiary to start working concretely on the implementation of the recommendations, by reflecting on the possible time frame and resources to be dedicated for such actions. A Gantt chart can be proposed, or any other easy to use format to visualise and plan a calendar of activities. The information provided here is never binding.

The recommendations of INTERREG Europe will be discussed in meetings with the public transport organisations and the mobility departments in bilateral meetings and planned Euregio mobility conference in summer/fall 2023. A concrete calendar of implementation can only be given after the meeting with mobility departments and mobility providers (the mentioned euroregional mobility meeting) has taken place.

6. Conclusions

In this section, very brief considerations on the peer reviewed recently experienced can be indicated, including possible desired follow up activities to stay in contact with the peers or with the Policy Learning Platform (if deemed relevant).

The main take away from the peer review is the recommendation to create a stable thematic working table on mobility coordinated by the EGTC, as in the Euregio Maas Rhein. Cross-border cooperation on mobility is already intense and a key political priority. Improvements in cross-border ticketing are a priority for the upcoming EGTC presidency of South Tyrol (from October 2023-September 2025).

Relating to projects in the framework of the INTERREG Italy-Austria cooperation programme, the EGTC Euregio Tyrol-South Tyrol-Trentino will be part of two projects. In the project "EU Move", presented by LP Euregio Senza Confini, the Euregio Tyrol-South Tyrol-Trentino will be AP. The interest in common mobility projects has been confirmed in a letter by EGTC president Maurizio Fugatti (province of Trento and EGTC Euregio Tyrol-South Tyrol-Trentino) to Peter Kaiser (EGTC Euregio Senza Confini). The EGTC European Region Tyrol-South Tyrol-Trentino is as well an associated partner in a project presented in the first INTERREG IT-AT call of the mobility department of South Tyrol and Tyrol ("Mobility for future"), which „aims to support educational institutions in the regions to integrate the topics of mobility management and climate change into everyday school life and thus create awareness for future.“

Both EGTCs presented during the first INTERREG call a common project, "Fit4Co Cross Border obstacles", during which pilot actions (for instance also relating to mobility) can be implemented. The EGTC aims at presenting an INTERREG project on mobility during the next call of the INTERREG Italy-Austria programme in 2024, which will be coordinated with the "EU Move project". Representatives of both EGTCs will meet regularly to define future initiatives also relating to mobility.

Signed by: Dr. Elisa Bertò, Secretary General of the EGTC European Region Tyrol-South Tyrol-Trentino