



CoP Public Infrastructure and Social Services

Example of Good Practice

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Regional Management of the Metropolitan Area of Styria &
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REGIOtim – a multi-modal mobility network

Metropolitan Area of Styria

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1. Introduction

REGIOtim is a network of multimodal nodes, where public transport is combined with e-car sharing, public charging stations, bicycle parking, micro-public transport and other functions. As “tim” was developed in the City of Graz from its urban transport operator in 2015, the network now gets adapted and extended to the peripheral areas of the Metropolitan Area of Styria. The offer intends to provide an affordable alternative to car ownership in accordance with the daily needs of the local population.

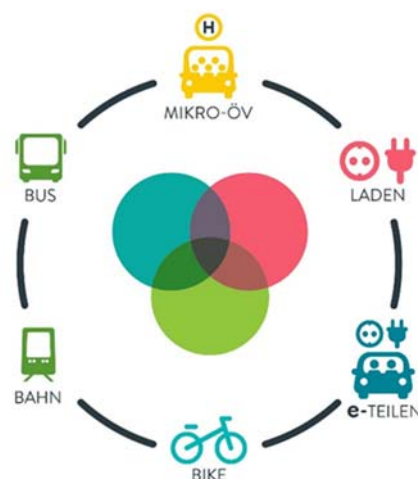


Figure 1: Components of a tim node; Source: RMSZR

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A clear trend towards multimodal mobility behaviour can be observed not only in urban areas, but also in the extended urban regions and adjacent peri-urban municipalities. The "typical car driver" or the "pure public transport user" is hardly any longer the driving model of transport behaviour. Rather, transport users want to use the most suitable means of transport or the most appropriate combination of means of transport for the purpose of the journey and the current destination. Multimodal hubs make this linkage possible (RMSZR 2019).



Figure 2: tim node in Hart bei Graz © Regionalmanagement SZR

Multimodal transport behaviour prevails when more than one means of transport is used for different routes. For example, the bicycle is used for short distances in the city, public transport for the daily commuting and the car for weekend excursions. A special form of multimodality is intermodality, which occurs when different means of transport are combined within a route. For example, for the daily distance between home and office, the own bicycle to the train station is used first of all. The journey to the city is made by bus and the last part of the journey is made by bicycle from a public bike-sharing facility. The possibility of using many different means of transport for one or more journeys makes it possible to achieve optimal mobility solutions for each individual (Deutsches Institut für Urbanistik 2018).

The experiences from REGIOtim can provide suggestions and ideas for new concepts of multimodal and intermodal transport systems for other Living Labs in the ROBUST project, especially for other rural-urban regions. Although the first project implementation outside of the city of Graz only started in autumn 2019 and it is too early for an evaluation process, the Regional Management is already collecting know-how from the implementation process. The pressure on regions to offer alternatives to conventional transport infrastructure and transport modes to complement public transport systems is increasing. Therefore, the regions of the ROBUST project can learn from each other and generate new knowledge based on these examples.

2. Project Intention / Background information

The Metropolitan Area of Styria is one of the seven regions of Styria and connects the second largest city in Austria with the urban and rural municipalities of the districts Graz-Umgebung and Voitsberg. With 494,227 inhabitants, the region is the most populated region in Styria. The 1,890m² area in the south-eastern foothills of the Alps is characterised by a relatively abrupt change from urban to rural areas, especially along the northern, eastern and western transition zone of the city to its hilly surroundings. The connection between the municipalities in the metropolitan area and the city of Graz, as well as to the long-distance railway network, are guaranteed by the city-suburban express train service. In areas with no adequate train offer, regional bus services provide the public transport network. However, the regional bus service is partly insufficient, as it mainly concentrates on school transport. Since the Metropolitan Area of Styria is characterized by strong commuter flows extending to the sparsely populated parts of the regions, there is a predominant preference for motorised individual transport. Due to poor air quality, high land consumption and the negative impact of traffic on the ecosystem, the pressure on the city of Graz and its surrounding is growing (Bauchinger 2018). For these reasons, it is crucial to provide environmentally friendly and future-oriented mobility concepts. Therefore, the first peripheral multimodal node, which is intended to facilitate the combination of different means of transport, was recently implemented in Hart bei Graz, a municipality close to Graz. This is to be supplemented by a series of further, equally organised, nodes.



Figure 3: Components of the first REGIOtim node in Hart bei Graz. © Regionalmanagement SZR

The project is based on the concept of the multimodal mobility node-system "tim – täglich.intelligent.mobil." developed by the city of Graz, in particular by the Holding Graz Linien (Holding Graz 2019). REGIOtim is the advanced stage of the urban model in a suburban space. Public transport is combined with e-car sharing, public charging stations, bicycle parking, micro-public transport and other functions, creating a flexible offer to meet the mobility needs in the region (Planum 2017).

“tim” Graz was developed in the project "KombiMo II" (Holding Graz 2014), funded by the BMVIT¹. In 2017 the Regional Management of the Metropolitan Area of Styria was able to start in cooperation with the City of Graz and Holding Graz the project in the framework of an IGJ/ERDF funded project. In a first analysis phase, a categorisation and prioritisation of potential implementation sites for the districts of Graz-Umgebung and Voitsberg were developed. For this survey, the adaptation of the urban location criteria to the needs of the suburban and rural area was crucial. The challenge here was to reassemble the complex framework conditions, required services and cooperation partners for the operation of car sharing. Adapting an existing system in this way brought synergetic advantages, but limited the flexibility in the design for some aspects such as the charging infrastructure.

Within the framework of the Interreg Central Europe project "[Peripheral Access](#)", the first multimodal mobility node was realised in a suburban municipality.

In November 2019, after intensive preparations, a REGIOtim node was put into operation in the municipality of Hart bei Graz along the operating model specially designed by the regional management. Shortly afterwards, the implementation of another REGIOtim node followed in the municipality of Lieboch. First statistical evaluation reports of car-sharing in Hart bei Graz are available, but inconclusive due to Covid-19 outbreak in March 2020.

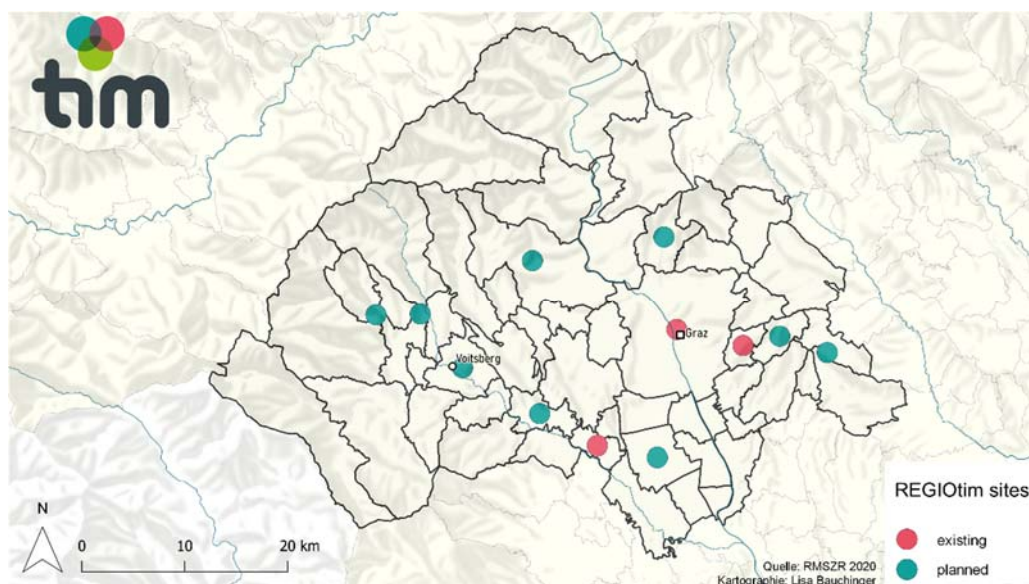


Figure 4: REGIOtim sites in the Metropolitan Area of Styria (source: RMSZR 2019, illustration by BAB)

The adaptation of a successful urban concept in the field of multimodal mobility to the peripheral rural environment is a pilot project within the Metropolitan Area of Styria.

¹ Austrian Ministry of Mobility, Infrastructure and Technology.

3. Main Description

The multimodal approach of “tim” is intended to reduce the dependency of mobility in the region on individual cars. The accessibility of central but also decentralized places in the region should be enabled without the need to use private cars. Furthermore, a demand-oriented and affordable mobility for everyday users and commuters is to be strengthened. The “tim” nodes in the districts of Graz-Umgebung and Voitsberg are located in densely populated, well connected public places in order to strengthen the accessibility on foot or by bicycle. In many municipalities the railway station is suitable for the implementation, in others it is the municipal office or an existing Park and Ride site. The existing public transport system serves everywhere as a base, which in many municipalities is supplemented by the hailed shared taxi GUSTmobil. The latter is particularly suitable as a feeder to the “tim” nodes and can therefore be crucial when several modes of transport are combined within one journey.

“tim's” modern and personal public appearance is intended to make alternative mobility solutions as “one package” more attractive. This powerful synergy is especially needed in small towns and rural areas to encourage the population to switch to non-motorised modes of transport, such as walking and private or public bicycles and public transport, such as train, bus and taxi as well as car-sharing.

Brand owner of “tim” is the Holding Graz. Behind every tim-hub outside of Graz stands one operator, in most cases the respective municipality. In addition to the Regional Management as a connecting element, the public operators are supported by a PPP model that has been set up specifically for this purpose.

This model is based on four pillars:

- Operator and customer support
- IT system and booking platform
- Charging infrastructure
- Local service and maintenance

Regarding the operator and customer support, the Regional Management developed a set of performance criteria, which served as basis for a procurement of external contractors. This company is responsible for the 24/7 customer service and provides the municipalities with support regarding accounting/invoicing and the administration of the system. In context of the IT system, specifically considering the aspects server hosting and management, a cooperation with Holding Graz was enrolled to guarantee attractive cost sharing for all “tim” locations in Graz and the region. Furthermore, the current structure of the booking platform as implemented in Graz was adapted and expanded to cover all “tim” locations in Graz-Surroundings and Voitsberg. This booking system is operated by Holding Graz, in cooperation with IBIOLA Mobility Solutions.

The “tim” customer card was intended to be used as one card for all functions within the system. “tim” cards can not only unlock the e-car sharing vehicle, but also connect it to the home base charging station. In addition, it allows energy charging at any charging station within Austria when customers are using a carsharing vehicle for longer distances. The regional energy provider offers a b2b charging tariff at a monthly flat rate to fulfil this demand.

For public charging, a maintenance and billing service can be ordered in addition, which proves its worth if the operator does not have the resources for this himself. Since the municipalities represent the operators of the system, they are responsible for all local service and maintenance activities such as car insurance, maintenance of all structural components at the location and the administration of customer registrations, including the issuing of customer cards.

REGIOtim² is a concept that promotes the change to environmentally friendly means of transport, such as walking, cycling or public transport, and enables flexible mobility with e-carsharing. In the future, the shift of the modal split to climate-friendly modes of transport could thus be enhanced throughout the entire region of the Metropolitan Area of Styria. If it is possible to shift everyday mobility routes and commuter flows to many different modes of transport, efficiency of mobility in the region can be increased, ecological effects improved and it might contribute to an overall increase in well-being in the region.

4. References

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² Further information to the project can be found on the website: www.tim-zentralraum.at