

REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF PILOT ACTION IN SK: MULTIMODAL CONNECTION WITH CORE CITY AND HINTERLANDS

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1. Executive Summary

Pilot Action is the bike point at the train and bus station in Banská Bystrica. The bike point is supposed to serve mainly for commuters and general public who are coming to and out from the city by train or bus. A well equipped shelter shall serve as a model solution (no comparable bike point with high quality standards exists in the city nor in the region so far).

From the usability point of view, the bike point is located in very appropriate place - main bus station and railway are in its proximity. Thus, the bike parking point contributes to better infrastructure for commuters from the surroundings of the city.

The new bus station has been completed in autumn 2017 and it is connected with newly built shopping center, which makes the space attractive not only for travellers but also as a shopping destination for inhabitants of the city.

The implementation of the pilot action has been delayed from originally planned schedule in November 2018 to April-May 2019. The most important factors causing the delay were that preparation of the technical documentation and permissions could only start after completion of large construction of the new bus station and then by complicated permission obtaining process, where involvement of the National Railway Company took more time than expected.

The construction of the bike point has been completed by end of May 2019, and it was received by very positive reaction from the public and future users.

2. The pilot action

Pilot Action is the bike point at the train and bus station in Banská Bystrica. The final technical solution of the bike point is supposed to include the following:

- 18 lockable spaces for bikes, out of this 12 in bike boxes equipped with e-bike chargers and 6 roofed bike stands
- 10 boxes for helmets and other smaller luggage
- self-service stand;
- informational map of town and its walkability;

Main responsibility was with PP10 - City of Banská Bystrica. The city as a responsible institution arranged the agreements with the State Railways Operator (rent of the area where the bike point is built) and organised the small investment. The City will also take a responsibility for operation of the bike point after its completion. The PP5 cooperated closely on the pilot action by providing the expert support, negotiating the planning and permissions and promotion of the newly constructed bike parking point to the public.

Target group of the pilot action is mainly adult commuters coming to and out from the city by train or bus. The separate target group are visitors of the city who wish to park their bike or also charge the e-bike on the safe place. The area offers various services including shopping, eating, coffee, etc. therefore possible group is really wide.

Theoretically the target group is unlimited (several thousands of passengers pass the area). Separate issue however is, how many of them will start to use the bike point and its services. The purpose of the bike point is also to motivate people to use the public transport and biking more than so far.



The pilot was introduced in the final stage of the project (end of May 2019). Originally the investment was supposed to be finished earlier (autumn 2018). The reasons for relative delay were the lengthy processes of obtaining the necessary permissions and arranging the contract regarding the rent of the area from the National Railways Operator to the city of Banska Bystrica.

3. The aim of the pilot action

The overall aim of the pilot action is to contribute to development of the infrastructure for more sustainable mobility in the city of Banska Bystrica. The infrastructure for biking in the city is so far only very limited. On the other side the demand from the public increases as the city suffers from traffic jams and lack of parking space. Thus, the pilot action is part of the strategy to motivate people to switch from cars to other transport modes. By placing the modern bike point in the frequently used location, the pilot project will constitute an important contribution to gradually built infrastructure for better mobility in the City of Banska Bystrica.

The pilot action has been identified jointly by the project partners - Ekopolis and the City of Banska Bystrica. On the level of institutions, the National Railways Operator has been intensively involved as this project is also in line with its interests. Important is also, that the area where the bike point is built is owned by the National Railways Operator, therefore it was necessary to arrange the rent contract between the city and the owner.

The desired outcome is that the bike point will be frequently and regularly used by the commuting passengers, visitors to the city, and local inhabitants while using the services of the Terminal Shopping Centre. In more general terms the bike point should become part of the step-by-step developed infrastructure for biking transport.

4. Implementation of the pilot action

The pilot action was introduced to stakeholder during the initial phases of the MOVECIT project - through the meetings, presentation and the discussion on the exact location and functionalities/services of the bike-point

The milestones of the pilot are the following:

- September 2017 - start of preparation of the technical documentation
- October 2018 - conditional agreement with the construction provided with the owner of the land under the bike point (Railways of the Slovak Republic)
- March 2019 - construction permission issued by the City Hall B. Bystrica and tender for supplier organized
- May 3, 2019 - final approval issued by the Railways of the Slovak Republic
- May 6 - construction started
- May 30 - completion of the construction



The pilot action has been selected by the project partners - Ekopolis and the City of Banska Bystrica as the measure which has optimal potential to extend the provided services for users of biking transport in the city. The key factor was the strategic location of the pilot action.

Planning phase was important to reach the agreements on specific parameters of the shelter. The exact position in the broader area was one of the main reasons for time delay as it had to wait till the completion of the Terminal Vlak Bus Shopping Centre.

The main phase of the implementation - it means start of the usage, will follow after the construction of the shelter is finished. However, during several public events the construction of the shelter was promoted and the idea of the bike point was received very positively.

The pilot project has been promoted on several events - for example on the discussions with public during the March 2018 "Transport, City and People", when Ekopolis was mapping the problems and suggestions related to transport in the city. At that time, 5 discussions were organised, one in each of the five city parts. Main public action was "Opening of the cycling season" regular mass ride each spring before the Bike to work campaign organised by the local cycling groups. During this action the questionnaires were distributed to the participants to find out their interest in future use of the bike shelter in the area of the bus and train station.

Due to complex character of the pilot action, involvement of many stakeholders was a natural necessity. The reasons of their involvement included addressing and solving particular issues: locality of the shelter, architectural study, technical parameters, and permission related issues (statements/approvals of various institutions).

There was intensive stakeholders' communication going on throughout the period 6. Stakeholders involved mainly the City Hall, State Railways Company and Ekopolis. Ekopolis was involved as facilitator of the process, to speed up the administrative process. City of Banska Bystrica as the main responsible institution was involved most intensively - through its Departments of Main architect and Department of Project Implementation.

The bike point is located at the train and bus station in Banská Bystrica. The final technical includes the following:

- 18 lockable spaces for bikes, out of this 12 in bike boxes equipped with e-bike chargers and 6 are roofed bike stands;
- 10 boxes for helmets and other smaller luggage;
- self-service stand;
- informational map of town and its walkability;

5. Monitoring of the pilot action

Given the fact that the implementation of the Pilot action was for objective reasons delayed, a long-term monitoring of the use of the physically built bike point was not feasible. The project partners however organised the survey among the target groups to find out their reaction on the project and potential interest in use of the bike point once it is built.

The questionnaire has been delivered to the respondents during the months April and May 2019, on several public events, where the "soon to be completed" bike point was promoted. Project partners produced the infographic banner presenting the functions of the bike point and presented it at the critical mass ride at



the occasion of the opening the cycling season, and other public events related to Bike to work campaign in May. The banner was also exposed and respondents approached directly the construction site near the Railway station.

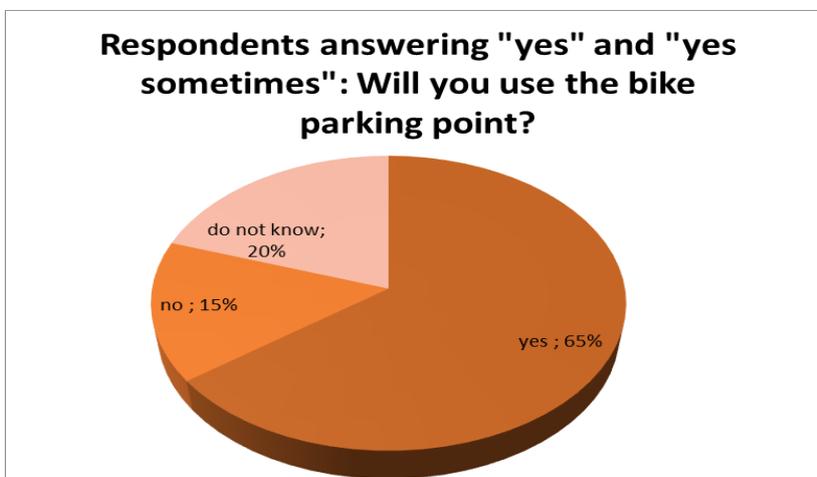
The questionnaire included the following questions:

- Do you visit or pass the area of the Railway station by bike?
- If YES, will you use the bike parking point once available?
- If NO, would you consider to use the bike parking point if available
- If YES, for what purpose would you use the bike parking point?

On the all actions, total of 118 respondents, typically bike users, of all age categories provided their answers to the interviewers. The answers „YES“ and „YES Sometimes“ reached 99, and there were 29 answers NO.

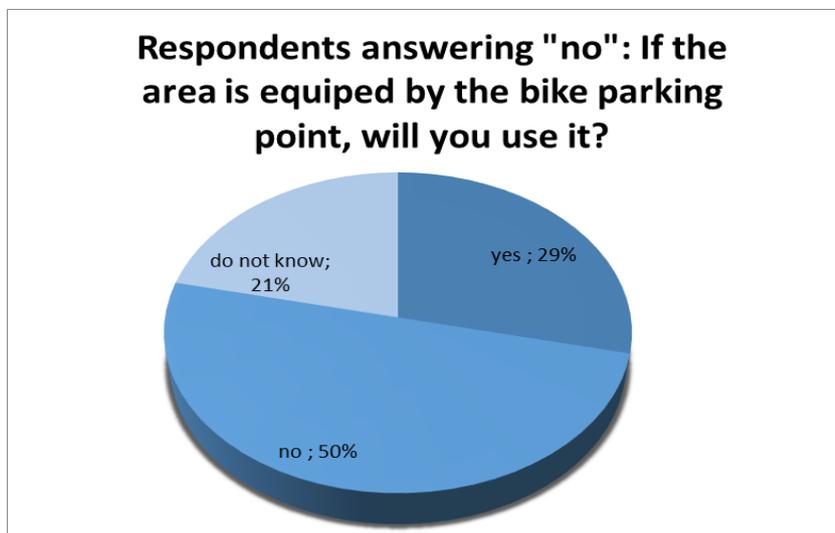


Out of those who responded YES to the first question, 65% responded positively, 15% responded NO, and 20% Do not know.





Even some respondents who usually do not go to the area, would consider to use the bike parking point, if available: 29% positive responses were registered in this category. 50% stayed with NO, and 21% Do not know.



Regarding the purposes, in which cases the users would park their bike in the bike point (or use its other services), the main reasons are presented as follows:



The total costs of the pilot action were 56 000 €.

The cost benefit ration should be evaluated in a broader context of long-term effort of the municipality to enhance conditions for biking infrastructure in the city. The exclusive location of the bike point is giving all the good preconditions to become an integrated part of the transport hub in the city.

This parameter is not relevant to the pilot action.

6. Conclusions

In summary the pilot action is an excellent contribution of the project to step by step change of the mobility patterns in the city. The city as such does not have a long-term tradition of extensive use of bikes and it is obvious that until the substantial change will take place, it can take many years. At the same time one of the main achievements of the pilot action is that it was a joint initiative of the municipality and the NGO.



At the same time the experience shows the planning and permissions obtaining process was yet more complicated than originally expected. In this way the project also contributes to capacity building at the level of the administration on how to cope with this kind of projects in the future. The lesson learned is that the National Railway Operator, even though the plan is well in line with their intentions has far complicated decision-making structures and it would be less complicated to find location which is not in its ownership.

Despite of all process-related and practical obstacles, a unique bike shelter has been constructed and given to use of commuters and city visitors.