

# D.4.3.3 PILOT CROSS-BORDER INTERMODAL SERVICE

<b>Working Package n:</b>	4. Analysing and piloting new sustainable mobility solutions
<b>Activity (n. and description):</b>	4.3. Piloting actions in connecting different transport nodes
<b>Deliverable (n. and description):</b>	D.4.3.3. Pilot cross-border intermodal service
<b>Responsible Partner:</b>	PP1 – Friuli Venezia Giulia Region
<b>Status:</b>	Final
<b>Deadline (as from the original AF):</b>	12/2022
<b>Finalized on:</b>	6/2023

## 1. Background, scope and description of the pilot action

The territory of the Friuli Venezia Giulia region is crossed by numerous cycle paths and the Region itself, in recent years, has done a lot to make the regional cycle paths increasingly interconnected, also thanks to intermodal connection with bike&bus and bike&ship. With the pilot action D.4.3.3 the goal was to connect the Friuli Venezia Giulia territory with the Parenzana cycle path and Istria region, which is also of considerable interest for cycle tourists and lovers of slow mobility.

The Bike and bus service connecting Trieste to Parenzo/Porec is a new seamless and harmonized intermodal transport solution in a cross-border territory. It has been designed on the basis of the need of users thanks to the strict cooperation with local stakeholders (FIAB). In this purpose, the initiative has shown a relevant capacity to support intermodality and behavioural change, encouraging citizens and tourists to visit the territory by bicycle providing them with a concrete alternative option to private cars. Hence the relevant contribution of the activity to O.4.3 MIMOSA Position paper on integrated actions applied on different transport modes.

The initiative represents a pilot service that FVG Region tested for the first time in 2021 on ICARUS project. MIMOSA project gives the opportunity to make this test starting in Spring and ending in Autumn 2022, inserting also two bus topping along the journey and decided to test the service for Spring 2023 as well. The pilot project is strictly connected to the Mimosa activities related to sustainable public transport solution on the coastal area of the Programme.

The bike-bus initiative tested concretely the potential of this kind of services in a cross-border territory such as that of FVG and Croatia, with the aim of supporting intermodality and encouraging users to exploit sustainable transport options. In this purpose, the initiative registered a rising number of passengers for all the 7 months of activity in 2022 and also a rising of passengers compared to the season 2021 (pilot testing on Icarus project) and registered a good number of passengers also in 3 only months of running activity in 2023; it represents a supporting element and a valuable input contributing to the long-term planning of intermodality and transport policies at the regional and cross-border levels.

## 2. Implementation of the pilot action (including a description of the externalized services/supplies/works)

### **Year 2022:**

FVG Region completed the tender procedure for the selection of the economic operator in February 2022. The company that won the tender is different from the one that carried out the service last year (on ICARUS). MT Viaggi won the tender and carried out the service, as planned in the contract, with a morning departure from Trieste at 9 o'clock and a return journey at 6 pm from Poreč, every Saturday and Sunday of the weekend from April 23rd to July 17th and from August 20th to October 31st.

Once the tender was concluded and the service was entrusted to MT Viaggi, the FVG Region carried out an inspection along the route in order to locate two intermediate stops that could guarantee less trained cyclists to travel shorter stretches of the cycle route.

The two stops were located in Rabuiese (Italy border), at the beginning of the Parenzana cycle path, and in Plovania (Croatia border with Slovenia), at the exit of the motorway in a stretch of road that crosses the cycle path a few kilometers further downstream.

Of the two bus stops the one in Rabuiese was more successful. Most likely because it allows cyclists to find parking more easily around the bus stop, while Trieste bus station is much more complex to reach by car but guarantees the intermodal connection with the railway from Venice and Udine.

The service was suspended from mid-July to mid-August because it was found to be unattractive in the hottest period of the year and also due to the budget available to finance it.

A total of 100 bus round trips (2 for each day) were completed between Trieste and Poreč, with a capacity of 28 passengers and bikes (the capacity of transport of passengers was higher but it was imposed that bookings could only be made with bikes in tow and the bikes transported per trip could not be more than 28). A total of 1.407 passengers and bikes made use of the service throughout the 7 months (50 days) of activity.

#### **Year 2023:**

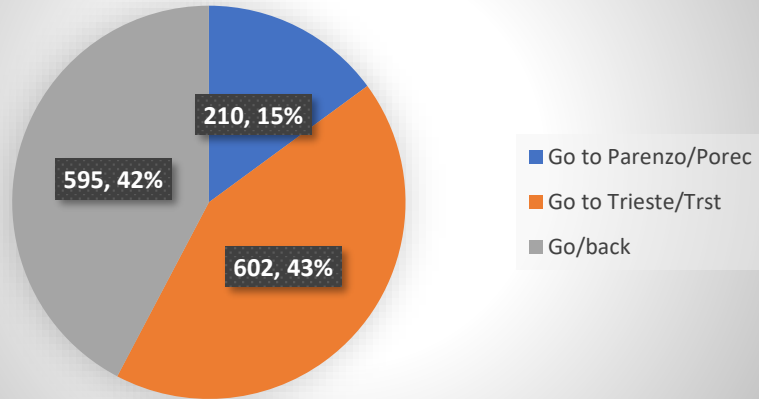
After the approval of the MIMOSA' major change in which PP1 FVG Region asked for introducing a new Spring season of the Bike&Bus Trieste-Porec for Spring 2023, FVG Region lunched and closed the tender procedure for the selection of the economic operator in March 2023. The company that won the tender is the same that carried out the service last year, MT Viaggi srl (the only one which took part to the tender).

The service was planned in the contract with a morning departure from Trieste at 9 o'clock and a return journey at 6 pm from Poreč, every Saturday and Sunday (the same scheduled of 2022). It started on April 23rd and it ended on June 25th for 35 days total. The Bus made the same route and the same two intermediate stops, in Rabuiese (IT) and Plovania (HR) as planned last year.

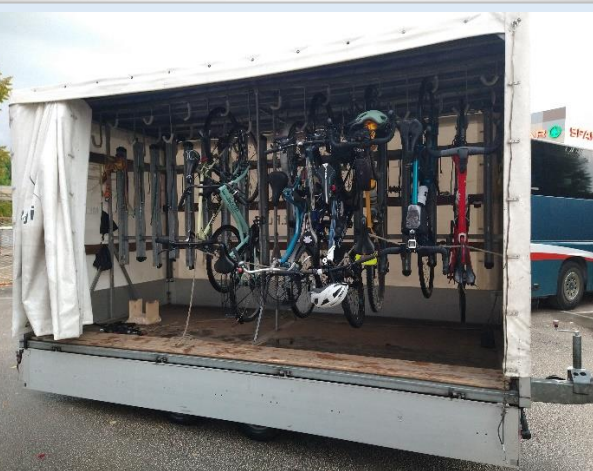
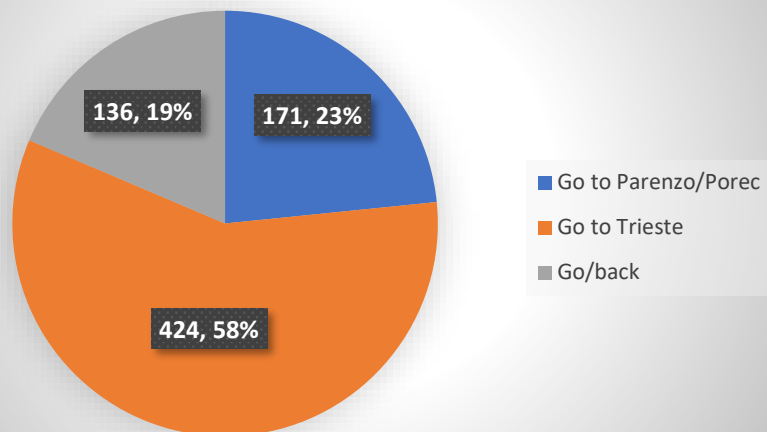
As already emerged from last year's monitoring data, the Rabuiese stop was more used than the Plovania one and users preferred the return journey from Poreč to the outward journey.

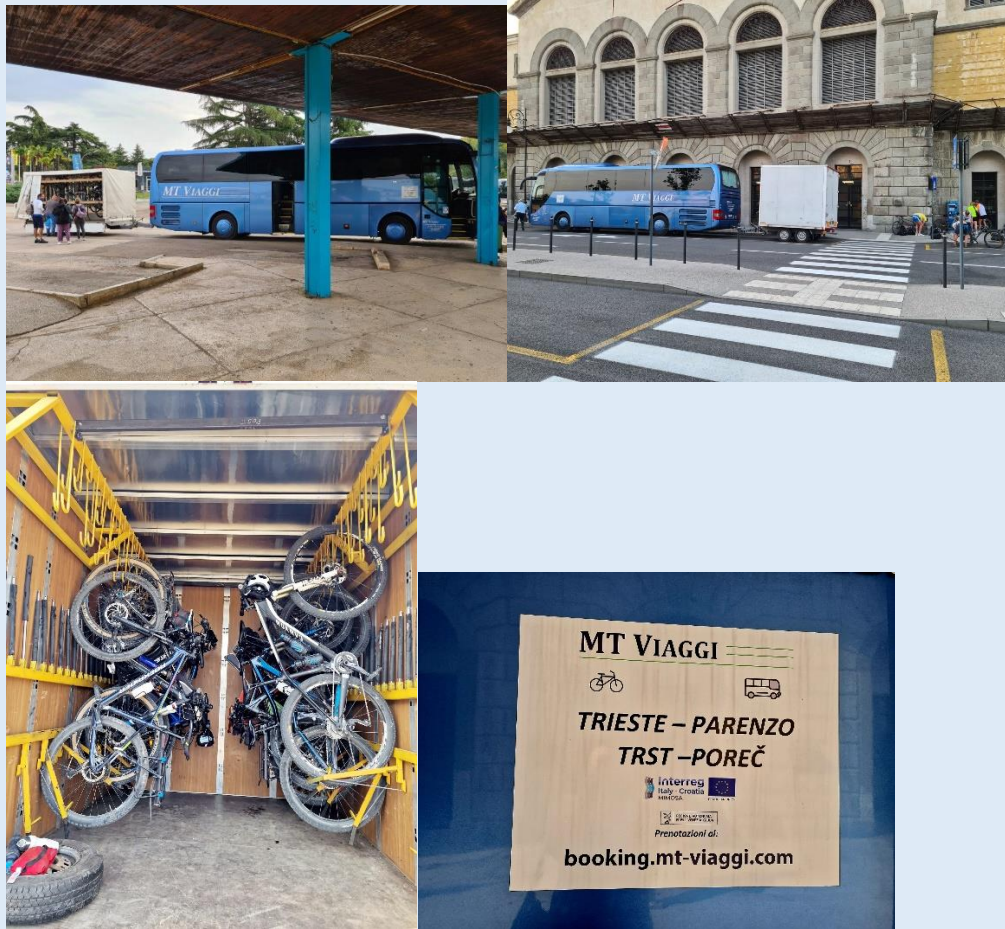
In 2023 a total of 70 bus round trips (2 for each day) were completed between Trieste and Poreč, with a capacity of 28 passengers and bikes (the capacity of transport of passengers was higher but it was imposed that bookings could only be made with bikes in tow and the bikes transported per trip could not be more than 28). A total of 731 passengers made use of the service throughout the 3 months (35 days) of activity, compared to the 644 of the first three months of last year (23 days)

### Frequency of trip 2022 (50 days)



### Frequency trip 2023 (35 days)





In 2022 the regional offices were able to come out on time with the campaign to raise awareness and promote the initiative. The promotional poster was posted in various streets of the city of Trieste and various social passages were organized, both on the regional and Programme/Project social networks.

**Insights sul post**

#FVGEuropa: torna il BICI BUS Trieste-Parenzo  
Riparte il Bici Bus, il servizio gratuito di collegamento...

Publicato da Carla Ciampalini · 5 g

Impressioni del post	Copertura del post	Interazioni con il post
78.413	74.879	7109

**Distribuzione**

+1.7x più impressioni rispetto ai tuoi altri post dopo 6 giorni dalla pubblicazione. Scopri di più

**Interazioni**

150 Reazioni  
42 Commenti  
0 Clic sul link  
17 Condivisioni  
0 Altri clic



In 2023 PP1 FVG Region has developed a new promotional campaign via social media and website, both in Italy and in Croatia, maintaining the visual image of the previous campaign to retain the user.





### 3. Information about stakeholders role/involvement

The planning of the Bike & Bus pilot action between Trieste and Poreč was also widely shared with the regional representatives of **FIAB (Italian Federation of Friends of the Bicycle)**, who participated in two meetings organized on the ICARUS project in February 2020 and November 2020. Subsequently, at the end of the ICARUS experience, we organized a stakeholder workshop again with FIAB referents to draw the conclusions of the experience.

Further suggestions emerged from these meetings to improve the service, providing for an intermediate stop outside Trieste, later identified in Rabuiese, near the beginning of the cycle path and the stop in Plovania confirmed. This, according to the FIAB referents, helps families who handle more easily on the Slovenian section of the cycle route, which is better equipped, rather than the Croatian section, which is of considerable interest and scenic beauty, but is more passable by MTB.

FIAB has also widely supported FVG Region in promoting the proposed service, organizing social outings throughout the year.

## Bici e TARTUFI – SABATO 29 OTTOBRE . PARENZO E DINTORNI CON BICIBUS – DOMENICA 30 OTTOBRE

PUBBLICATO IL 25 OTTOBRE 2022 IN: **APPUNTAMENTI, GITE SOCIALI**

Sembra che il prossimo weekend avremo per la prima volta la "NOVEMBRATA", allora viste le condizioni meteo favorevoli ho pensato di fare una doppia gita: SABATO ...BICI E TARTUFI e DOMENICA ...PARENZO e DINTORNI CON BICIBUS. Per quanto riguarda la gita di sabato trovate qui di seguito il programma mentre per [...]

*FIAB Trieste also organized some events with their associates to travel the cycle path, using our bike & bus*

All stakeholders have been informed of the renewal of the service for Spring 2023 and many of them have promoted the service on their web pages on their own initiative:

<https://www.parenzana.net/it/home/5868>

<https://www.viaggiareslow.it/ritorna-il-bike-bus-trieste-parenzo/>

<https://www.istra.hr/it/esperienze/sport-e-outdoor/ciclismo/4034>

<https://www.informatrieste.eu/ts/blog/attivo-nei-weekend-bici-bus-il-servizio-gratuito-di-collegamento-transfrontaliero-trieste-parenzo/#post>

There are many bicycle lovers who have independently organized group trips by taking advantage of our bike&bus service on the way or on the way back.



#### 4. Lessons learnt and conclusions

The bike-bus initiative represented a pilot testing the potential of this kind of services in a cross-border territory such as that of FVG and Croatia, with the aim of supporting intermodality and encouraging users to exploit sustainable transport options. In this purpose, the success of the initiative, which registered a rising number of passengers for all the 7 months of activity, represents a supporting element and a valuable input contributing to the long-term planning of intermodality and transport policies at the regional and cross-border levels.

Being FVG a territory rich of cycle paths, the pilot initiative certainly has the potential to be transferred to other parts of the regional area. As a matter of fact, capitalizing on the agreement already reached among authorities of FVG and bordering regions of Croatia and Slovenia, the same service could be arranged for additional lines, which would highly benefit tourists and citizens visiting this cross-border territory in their free time.

Interest in the pilot action also emerged from the Municipality of Poreč, whose representatives were consulted both at the start of the initiative and at its conclusion (a briefing was held in Poreč on 22 October 2022). There has been talk of the Croatian locality's interest in implementing bus services also with electric buses, but also of being able to add a ride of the Bike&bus in the morning departing from Porec. Obviously, the costs and the attractiveness of this service must also be evaluated, also by connecting it to their shuttle bus to the town of Pasino which connects to the railway line that leads to Pula. All with a view to intermodal connections in favor of tourist cycling in the entire area.

#### 5. Problems found and adopted solutions

The problems that arose in the implementation and management of the pilot action were mainly linked to the management of relationships and the sharing of correct information with the company implementing the service. Compared to the previous year, the requests made to the company were not always implemented within the time required and sometimes the clarifications provided on how to book the service were evasive.

From our feedback, following the use of the vehicle by a colleague of ours, it emerged that the online booking system (organized by the company, as for the tender specifications) highlighted that the service was fully booked for several days but in fact it wasn't like that. The booking system did not distinguish between the outbound journey and the return journey of the bus, but counted the reservations as a unique trip. So it often gave the full service because he had reached 28 reservations, but in fact there were still empty seats, especially on the outbound journey. The

region wrote to the company and asked to update the booking system, but this was not possible. A sentence was inserted on the website advising to call the company to verify the effective absence of seats on board. The doubt therefore remains whether the service could obtain even more favorable results, given that the booking system has discouraged several people from using the vehicle.

Despite this disservice, the results were still encouraging as the service reached a total number of 1.418 people travelling with the bus in the 50 days of service for about 28 people per day.

No problem to report for the 2023 experience. Learning from the experience and the difficulties encountered in previous years, we clarified with the company from the outset how to manage the booking and data monitoring system, so last year's problems were resolved.

## 6. Expected follow up (after project closure)

Since it is a cross-border route involving three Member States, it is not easy to make a service of this kind permanent and public, but the aim is certainly to expand its experimentation as an atypical service entrusted to a private carrier. Its seasonality and rescheduling for several years could increase its attractiveness.

As explained above, the idea of promoting the service by combining it with other bus and boat services present on the territory of the FVG Region and Istria region could guarantee its attractiveness and permanence.

Surely FVG Region will move in this direction in the coming years, maintaining an active dialogue with the municipality of Poreč and the Istrian region and developing other project proposals focused on intermodal seamless solutions in the area.