IMPACTS MEDIA RELEASE

European Passengers' Federation
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# IMPACTS: Redefining Public Spaces in Dugopolje and Istanbul

**Public transport is a crucial aspect of urban mobility, allowing people to commute, socialise, and explore their cities safely and cost-effectively. However, overcrowding, limited digitalisation, outdated reporting mechanisms and decreased perceived safety can discourage its use. This results in decreased use of public transport and missed opportunities for multimodal mobility, traffic reduction, and citizen feedback.**

To address these issues, the IMPACTS project (**I**nclusive **M**obility: **P**ublic **a**nd **C**ollaborative **T**rusted **S**paces) aimed to create a human-centric public transport system that promotes passenger safety, encourages support for fellow travellers, and collects feedback to improve the services and urban environment. IMPACTS was a one-year project, led by Technische Universität (TU) Berlin and supported by EIT Urban Mobility, an initiative of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), a body of the European Union. Within the project, IMPACTS developed and tested a socio-technical tool, WizGo, which connects (i) passengers of mobility services in proximity off- and online and (ii) allows users to report issues in the urban environment to the respective mobility provider. The project ended in December 2023.

The cities of Dugopolje (Croatia) and Istanbul (Turkey) partnered with the project to improve their transportation services and rural and urban environments. Testing WizGo in these two distinct environments with active participation from people, provided valuable feedback to further refine the application. These activities brought to light the many diverse benefits of a social community app in public spaces with the need and desire for instant and local community support.

As part of the pilot project in Dugopolje, the IMPACTS initiative placed a strong emphasis on enhancing passenger connectivity within the broader Split area. The goal was to elevate the public transportation experience for students and employees by implementing tools designed to facilitate the identification of co-passengers based on various criteria. This approach aimed to achieve greater comfort, safety, and travel efficiency. WizGo was tested on suburban bus lines passing through Dugopolje (lines 35, 35A, and 69), and provided passengers the opportunity to connect while waiting for the bus. This innovative feature fostered a sense of security and community support among passengers, thereby enhancing connectivity and instigating positive changes in the public transportation experience.

A representative of the Dugopolje Municipality, Marija Čipčić, highlighted the transformative nature of the IMPACTS project, stating, *"IMPACTS is a groundbreaking initiative that not only improves public transportation but also builds passenger communities. It signifies a significant step towards a more humane, secure, and efficient way of traveling, contributing to environmental conservation and better utilization of urban space. The project transcends technical innovations, focusing on creating an environment where passengers feel supported and safe while using public transport. In the Dugopolje pilot project, the emphasis was on establishing a model that will serve as a foundation for future improvements in public transportation and passenger connectivity in the broader Dugopolje area."*

In Istanbul, the IMPACTS project was piloted in a historic peninsula, targeting visitors to support their transportation experience and digitise the current feedback mechanisms. The pilot study was conducted on Istanbul's T1 Tramway line from October 2nd to 6th, and included an initial workshop with the participation of project partners and other stakeholders. Following the workshop, the targeted users downloaded, used, and provided feedback on the WizGo application within the T1 Tramway line. The primary objective was to boost the sense of security within the line, while allowing people to provide feedback to local authorities regarding urban transport and the surrounding environment. This feedback loop aims to assist local authorities in addressing and refining service delivery and the urban fabric based on real-time user insights.

Through using the WizGo app, passengers in Dugopolje reported feeling more satisfied with urban transport connectivity, while in Istanbul, passengers reported feeling more secure and safe. These outcomes underline the positive impact of a tailored application like WizGo on user satisfaction and urban mobility effectiveness. The WizGo application can thus play a significant role in providing effective services and increasing the use of public transport.

To conclude, the IMPACTS project as whole effectively promoted both online and offline connectivity among passengers, empowering them to report urban environment issues. Martin Schlecht, coordinator of the IMPACTS project, further stressed the opportunities resulting from the project collaboration, *"The Impacts project proved the power of passenger communities as the ultimate catalyst to improve public transport. With the right digital tool, citizens can actively shape the transport environment and contribute to an immediate feeling of safety and comfort in public transport, not only for themselves but for the entire community."*

Next steps after the IMPACTS project's end include further refining the WizGo application and establishing additional collaborations to expand its use.

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## About EIT Urban Mobility

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*IMPACTS is a project under the support of EIT Urban Mobility.*

*EIT Urban Mobility, an initiative of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), a body of the European Union, aims to accelerate solutions and the transition towards a user-centric, integrated and truly multimodal transport system. As the leading European innovation community for urban mobility, EIT Urban Mobility works to avoid fragmentation by facilitating collaboration between cities, industry, academia, research and innovation to solve the most pressing mobility challenges of cities. Using cities as living labs, its industry, research and university partners will demonstrate how new technologies can work to solve real problems in real cities by transporting people, goods and waste in smarter ways.*

## About IMPACTS

IMPACTS aims towards a human-centric public transport system that prioritises passenger safety, encourages mutual support and enhances mobility services and the urban environment through feedback mechanisms. The project focuses on the development, implementation, testing and commercialisation of connecting and reporting innovations in public transport.