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# Breaking Barriers in Public Transport ■



This project has received  
European Regional  
Development Funding  
through the INTERREG III B  
Community Initiative



## Short Introduction and Summary of Result ■

The International Network of Light Rail City's project LiRa-2: "From Vision to Action" has run from 2002 until the end of 2005. This leaflet gives a short introduction and a summary of the results. The partners have made "Breaking Barriers in Public Transport" the main theme of the project.

### > LiRa-2



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### > Background: From Vision to Action

The first LiRa project, now referred to as LiRa-1, featured pilot studies into four relevant subjects. The project was concluded with a successful conference in the Scheveningen Kurhaus hotel in The Netherlands in 2001. The final report, a Vision document converting the project proceedings into concrete actions, was issued on that occasion. Very much like the development of the INTERREG framework, i.e. placing more emphasis on implementation and concrete and tangible action, the LiRa network has decided to go from vision to action to make Quality Rapid Transit work better, a whole lot better ■



## > Common issues

As a result of the first project, it has turned out that, with the LiRa partners and other similar organisations, there is clearly a demand for supporting methods, procedures and tools as well as the closely related transnational transfer of knowledge. That is why the LiRa network has decided to take up this challenge and has set itself the task to realise some of them as part of an INTERREG IIIb-project. Continuing with this idea, after the end of LiRa-1, three common issues of the partners were identified to be included in the second stage of the project. These common issues are the focus of LiRa-2:

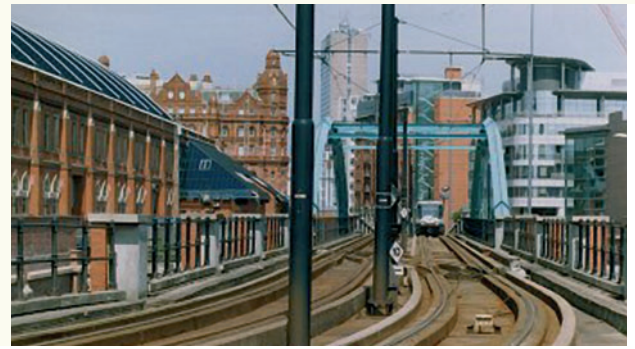
- The need for a transnationally usable methodology to assess various Quality Rapid Transit options (to be referred to as QRT) in terms of both costs and benefits in various institutional environments, preferably in the form of a software tool.
- The need to get a better grip on Quality Rapid Transit's relationship to urban and regional spatial development and the related importance of optimal design solutions.
- The need to work towards chain mobility: A journey by public transport usually involves more than one mode of transport, since the stops or stations are hardly ever located at the exact start or finish of a journey. Most of the time, physical, conceptual and commercial institutional barriers have to be overcome between (A) different public transport networks and (B) the networks and the 'outside world'. LiRa-2 aims to make a big leap forward towards removing or reducing these barriers.

All of these issues were translated to three sub-projects within an overall structure ■



## > Devising a transnationally usable assessment tool

One of the sub-projects of LiRa-2 is the compilation of an assessment tool to compare various options to implement a Rapid Transit line or system. After exploratory meetings with partners involved in the Netherlands, Belgium and the UK as well as a short review of existing literature sources, an external was found, experienced in both the transport field as well as in software development. AGV - consultants in mobility from The Netherlands devised a software tool that makes it possible to assess whether a new Quality Rapid Transit line is feasible in the area you want to study. The tool was developed to give results in one day. It has been tested and gives results that can be very useful in the early stages of planning new public transport lines. Parameters for the tool are available for Belgium, Great-Britain and Germany. The assessment tool can be downloaded for free from [www.lira-2.com](http://www.lira-2.com) ■



## > Transnationally getting to optimal planning and design

The way that light rail stops are designed, planned, and integrated into the urban environment (landscape, townscape) determines the extent of the contribution of QRT to spatial development on the urban and regional scale. LiRa-1 has learned there is a wide variety of good and bad practice. Unfortunately this has not given clear insight into the actual implementation-related do's and don't-s. In a search for an appropriate way to get further than just documenting good practices, the network has decided to organise expert sessions. This method has emerged out of site visits from the first project, involving representatives from all partners visiting the system of each partner where a meeting is held. This is extended into a session, dedicated to certain problems to planning and design. The organising partner poses a clear problem definition and provides documentation. Selected officials from overseas prepare themselves in advance and pay a site visit. Together with a selected group of local stakeholders (preferably including consultants, politicians, transit users, etc) there is a targeted meeting at the site to evaluate the problem, the intended solution(s), their advantages and disadvantages, etc.

In 2004 and 2005 expert sessions were organised in respectively Stockport (UK) and Delft (The Netherlands). The reports of the meetings can be downloaded from the website ■

## > Breaking down barriers together

The main part of LiRa is about chain mobility. We define this as 'the combined intermodal door-to-door transport of individuals, using QRT as a part of the journey'. One of the main results of the first project was the conclusion that improving QRT itself is not enough to create a better door-to-door journey, an essential to see public transport as a viable alternative to the car. Clearly, there are distinguishable barriers between distinct networks of QRT as well as barriers between networks and the 'outside world'. Reducing these barriers might be just as important as improving the transit services. This was concluded from a Literature Review. The 'Seamless Journeys' sub-project aims to move towards chain mobility by working on reductions of:

- **Physical barriers:** actual, 'touchable' barriers to be found in the physical world. Any objects or (interior) designs, arrangements of buildings or other spatial patterns, impeding seamless journeys are included.
- **Conceptual barriers:** a main problem with all barriers is how travellers perceive them. Unlike physical barriers, conceptual barriers are inside the human mind and are largely a matter of lack of accurate travel information, the perceived poor image of public transport and barriers in the traveller's mental map.
- **Commercial barriers:** those commercial considerations that hamper door-to-door journeys. They are caused by commercial and financial motivations, in other words the way relevant actors deal with financial issues in transport.
- **Institutional barriers:** barriers that are defined in the way Quality Rapid Transit is organised and regulated. This concerns laws and regulations that (might) impede the 'chain mobility efficiency' of the transport system. This especially relates to vulnerability to different rules and laws for diverse transport modes and branches within public transport.

'Seamless Journeys' supports initiatives in seven of the LiRa partners' regions relating to Chain Mobility. In five case studies the existence of barriers is recognized. Subsequently solutions to overcome the barrier are developed. Finally the results are evaluated to generate information on the effectiveness of the measure.

Partly it concerns ongoing developments taking a lead from the transnational view, partly they are more pilot-like projects initiated from the LiRa-1 view. An example is the provision of travel information. Apart from modern and 'flashy' dynamic information systems, in many respects basic low-tech solutions might be preferred to cope with the traveller's information needs. This starts bottom-up, with provision of excellent static travel information and is completed with reliable dynamic travel information.

In many cases seamless journeys is an innovative field for which finding support is more difficult than 'traditional' improvement operations ■

## > LiRa-2 Final Report

In September 2005 the final conference of the project was organised in Manchester. Both the general conclusions and the results of all sub-projects were presented to an international audience. On this occasion is the Final Report given to all participants. The report can be downloaded from the LiRa-2 website ■



## > Newsletter

The LiRa network has a website: [www.lira-2.com](http://www.lira-2.com). Apart from basic project data, via the website an e-mail newsletter is issued until the end of 2006. If you wish to receive this free information service, please register your e-mail address with the address [info@lira-2.com](mailto:info@lira-2.com). The archive of all earlier issues of the newsletter is available on the website ■

## > LiRa-2 Partners

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