ACC:TRA

Evidence and Acceptance –
from Experiments to Transformation

Guidelines on Evidence and Acceptance for Urban Accessibility Management

Implemented in a Digital Platform

Deliverable 10.2 – 30.10.2025

The guidelines on evidence and acceptance for urban accessibility management are summarized within the nine success factors that were developed based on the work carried out to date in the ACCTRA project, in particular the national findings in Task 10.1 and 10.2. These results are based on a broad discussion of the identified relevant criteria with regard to acceptance (design, governance, communication strategies, participation, planning process etc.) as well as the results regarding evidence-based planning. This summary is based on exchange and discussion of the general and specific insights gained in both cities (Klagenfurt and Istanbul) and their international reflection in a workshop format by end of October 2025 in Vienna. The results described below have been reflected upon and optimized based on a large number of feedback loops, both within the project consortium and with experts outside it.

1 Local person as the driving force in the project

A well-connected local person who works closely with the project managers or decision-makers and the local administration at all relevant levels and departments drives the project forward, ensures ongoing progress and serves as a mediator.

The involvement of a well-connected local person as a link between the project leaders and the community is a key success factor for transformation projects. This person helps to build trust, improve communication, promote commitment and (often supported by the project team) manage conflicts. Through their local expertise and networks, they help to ensure that the projects can be implemented sustainably and successfully. Ideally, this person has a personal identification with the project, a high level of commitment to the project, characterized by courage and enthusiasm.

2 Convincing images, photos and renderings

High-quality images and renderings with a clear local reference are of central importance in transformation projects in the mobility sector, as they make complex concepts and solutions visually tangible and create a common language and motivation for all those involved.

A budget must be planned from the outset in order to create or have professionally created good images and high-quality renderings, which are essential for the success of transformation projects in the mobility sector. These can make complex concepts and interrelationships visually tangible and understandable and must depict the conditions on site - glossy images from other projects, municipalities, cities or countries are only suitable for this to a very limited extent. Sustainable mobility projects often affect many different stakeholders - from the general public to decision-makers and investors. Precise visualisations can be used to clearly communicate abstract ideas, such as new transport solutions, sustainable urban planning or innovative vehicle concepts. They create a common visual language that reduces misunderstandings and makes it possible to generate acceptance and enthusiasm for change. In addition, appealing renderings have an emotional and inspiring effect, which is particularly important for strengthening confidence in new solutions and actively shaping change. They are also extremely important for press relations.

3 Narrative and communication

Successful implementation of transformation projects in the streetscape requires more than just technical expertise and planning. An often underestimated but crucial success factor is sufficient investment in the development of narratives and effective communication.

The provision of sufficient funds for narrative development and communication should be factored into project planning from the outset. A well thought-out and adequately funded communication concept is a key to sustainable success - always based on a solid data situation, evidence-based data and results. Professional communication makes it possible to develop clear and appealing messages that increase understanding and acceptance in the community. This promotes broad support and ensures a smoother project process. Narrative development should also be set up and supported professionally - this is the only way to create an optimal solution with a high level of acceptance. Narratives should have a strong, local connection - the focus should be on prospects for a local future, a concrete, local benefit for the largest possible group of those affected. Generally abstract narratives such as 'save the climate' or 'save x tonnes of CO2' are (unfortunately at present) much less likely to be widely accepted.

4 External and neutral moderation | mediation

External, neutral and impartial moderation, or mediation in the event of conflict, lays the foundations for successful collaboration and increases acceptance of the project goals.

The involvement of an external, neutral mediator ensures that all perspectives are heard and taken into account fairly. This impartial, neutral approach via a third party helps to minimise conflicts of interest and creates an atmosphere of trust in which open and honest discussions are possible. This approach promotes a balanced discussion in which all parties are treated equally and the decision-making process can be transparent and fair. If possible, this person should not come from the (external) planning team, as planning is often a point of attack for citizens' initiatives, for example - a neutral moderation role cannot be guaranteed here. A person who does not belong to any of the groups involved in the project is ideal. The cost of this moderation or mediation can become significant over the course of a project - therefore sufficient budget should be provided for this from the outset.

5 Stakeholder analysis – local expertise

A comprehensive stakeholder analysis combined with local informal expertise forms a solid basis for successful transformations in the street space.

A comprehensive stakeholder analysis helps to identify and take into account the interests, expectations, perspectives and potential points of conflict of the groups involved. Local stakeholders have valuable knowledge about the specific needs, habits, problems, opportunities and also solutions in the respective environment. This informal knowledge can often cover aspects and generate knowledge that can be overlooked in formal, technical analyses. Local communities often have their own cultural and social dynamics that need to be taken into account when planning transformations. This can help to shape projects so that they fit better into the existing social structure. Local stakeholders and community organisations can play an important role in facilitating and accepting change. Using these networks can help to minimise resistance and gain support.

6 Customised approach and integration

The specific involvement of individuals in transformation projects requires precise customisation to their individual needs and expectations. It is important to systematically work out who needs what - this forms the basis for effective and targeted communication. Factors such as content, form and language are of central importance here.

In order to successfully involve all stakeholders, their different requirements, preferences and competences must be taken into account. This includes customised content, appropriate forms of communication and suitable language. A targeted approach ensures that each person feels taken seriously and that communication seamlessly connects to their specific needs. This customisation not only encourages engagement, but also strengthens trust in the project. A customised approach also means multilingualism in the context of involvement - to this end, it is necessary to determine which ethnic groups and therefore languages are relevant and in what proportions. The translations must be of a very high quality - only this creates a feeling of appreciation for all groups.

7 Professional and standardised press relations

For effective press relations, it is crucial that communication is clear, consistent and visually appealing. Concise and standardised press work that is based on a central narrative and good images or renderings strengthens the message and ensures a uniform perception of the project.

Successful press relations should focus on a consistent narrative that conveys the core message clearly and convincingly. This includes a consistent corporate design (CD) that is designed with love and care to promote professionalism and trust. This is complemented by a strong visual element, such as a striking image or visualisation that visually supports and reinforces the narrative. Together, these elements ensure that press relations are concise, engaging and easy to understand, resulting in effective and positive coverage. It is also important to have trusting press partnerships in which professional external communication can take place without deliberate cross-pollination or false reports.

8 Aesthetic fieldwork for appealing results

The quality of temporary solutions as part of the fieldwork in transformation projects is significantly influenced by the aesthetic effort and its results. Adequate effort for the design and realisation of the fieldwork helps to ensure that the results are not only functional but also visually appealing.

In order to make the fieldwork aesthetically pleasing, it is important to plan and invest the necessary effort appropriately. This includes both the visual design of the solutions shown and the selection of suitable materials and methods that ensure high quality and attractiveness. A carefully planned and implemented aesthetic effort not only improves the appearance of the project, but also promotes a positive perception and acceptance in the community. In every phase of the fieldwork, a great effort to find good solutions must be noticeable and tangible - only then will the population and other stakeholders feel taken seriously and the project will be given great importance and significance, which is essential for the success of the project. In the course of fieldwork, changes to plans due to unforeseen, external circumstances must always be expected - planning always includes the need for flexibility and adaptability in the project plans.

9 Open and honest participation on site

Open and honest local participation is the key to successful project integration. It builds trust, fosters collaboration and ensures that the needs and concerns of the community are adequately addressed.

Open and honest participation means that everyone involved has the opportunity to express their views and suggestions freely and that these are taken seriously. Through transparent communication and active involvement on site, misunderstandings can be avoided and resistance reduced. Involving the community in an honest and open dialogue not only promotes acceptance, but also strengthens identification with the project. This authentic participation forms the basis for successful and inclusive realisation that meets the needs and expectations of all stakeholders. It is essential to be clear from the outset what the subject of participation is - important questions include: What has already been decided? Where is there still room for manoeuvre? Who will be integrated, when and in what form? Who makes decisions when and on what basis?