

Romanian HUB

Gender equality and women's empowerment in transport: from theory to practice.

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2019 Skirt Bike, Alba Iulia. Photo source:
<https://www.facebook.com/SkirtBikeAlbalulia/photos>

Executive summary

Statistics show that Romania is one of the EU countries where gender inequality is still high. While EU countries on average are about 60 years from reaching complete gender equality, the corresponding time frame for Romania is estimated at 100 years. The transition towards gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls in Romania is slow regardless of the regulations by the government to reduce gendered inequalities.

The gender imbalance is visible in the transport sector too. The work in the Romanian Hub was developed to create a major *change* in the traditional way people in Romania and Eastern Europe are used to see women in transport and STEM. Also, women and men have different travel patterns as a result of unbalanced caring duties and household activities in Romania. By including the differences in travel patterns and needs in a process of (re)designing the public local mobility infrastructure, the mobility sector can provide equal access to transport, enable women's empowerment and dismantle gendered stereotypes.

Gender equality in Alba Iulia

Alba Iulia is the main city of Alba County and the promoter of a series of Smart City actions to provide sustainable growth and more social inclusion. Public transport and micro-mobility are encouraged by the city as part of the Smart City Strategy and the Sustainable Mobility Plan. The transport sector working environment is still marked by the paternalistic protective approach of working environment characteristic to large parts of Romania. The shift to Smart Mobility should provide new jobs and research opportunities, creating a gender and age equitable working environment.

Gender mainstreaming in Alba Iulia

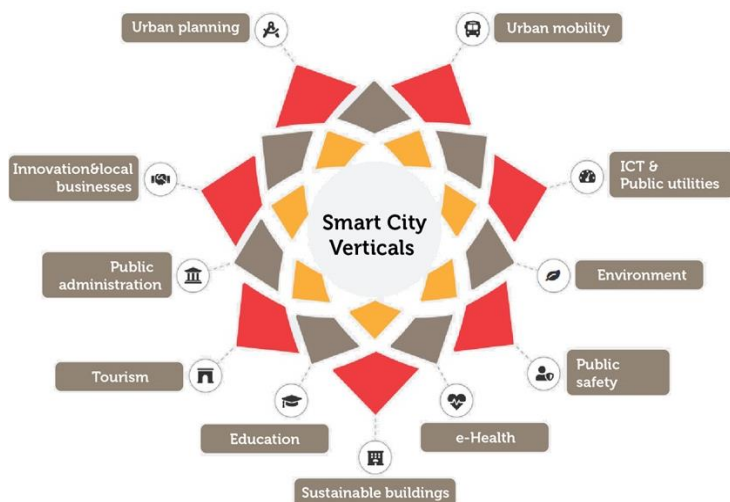
The purpose of this policy brief is to highlight the existing gender inequalities in transport in Romania and to stimulate gender equality in urban mobility through new, sustainable public policies and gender action plans. The policy brief addresses public entities in Romania, that are willing to close the gender gap in mobility and facilitate women's empowerment.

Alba Iulia Municipality is the coordinator of the Romanian Hub at local level and a public authority. The Municipality enabled gender mainstreaming by signing the European [Charter](#) for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life. As a result, the Municipality committed to elaborate and implement an Equality Action Plan by the end of 2022. Furthermore, the Municipality aims to integrate the gender and intersectional approaches in other relevant strategies (such as the Integrated Urban Development Strategy, Alba Iulia Smart City Strategy etc.), in order to enable Gender Smart Mobility projects at local levels.

Gender mainstreaming aims to provide equal access to transport jobs regardless of gender or age. Also, gender mainstreaming can help to plan public transport solutions, which cater for both women and men.

The status of gender actions in Alba Iulia

Alba Iulia Municipality is working on a Smart City Strategy, which includes Smart Mobility. Within the promotion of Smart Mobility is a goal to identify solutions that stimulate women's participation in the sector of Smart Mobility. Alba Iulia has set up events (such as the European Mobility Week, Women Rally etc.), workshops and investment projects in which the Municipality encourages local policymakers, top management of transport operators and educational community stakeholders to identify solutions for a more gender equal sector.



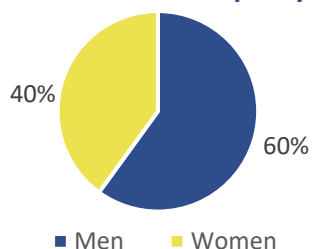
Alba Iulia Smart City Strategy Verticals

Photo source: Alba Iulia Municipality own photo collection

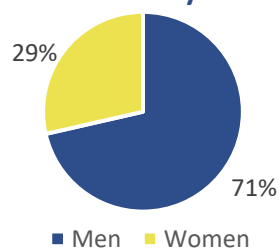
Gender impact assessment at local level

The values of Alba Iulia Municipality are aligned with the national legislation, outlining democracy, respect for the law and the citizen, integrity, ethics, transparency, commitment for sustainable development, performance, efficiency (value for money), innovation in providing high-quality public services, gender equality and non-discrimination. The gender assessment of the local context starts at the internal level within the Municipality. Thereafter, a macro-environment analysis takes place, including an assessment of the interaction with external stakeholders.

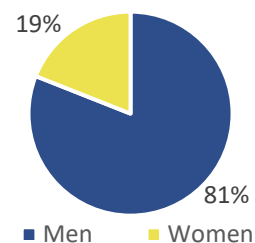
Top management
Alba Iulia Municipality



Gender distribution
in Alba Iulia City Council



Gender share in STP Alba,
the private operator
of the local
public transport services



Approach

During the first phase, an assessment of the existing development strategies of Alba Iulia Municipality was conducted. The second phase of assessing the external environment requires supplementary financial and human resources for more precise outputs, which represents the focus of the project sustainability.

Results

The assessment found that gender equality and age discrimination are only briefly described or even overlooked within the existing sustainable development strategies in Alba Iulia. However, during the project implementation phase, Alba Iulia Municipality has signed the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life in 2020.

Findings

- Communication barriers accompanied by physical barriers due to the Covid-19 situation;
- Gender imbalances in executive management positions in both public and private entities;
- No Gender Action Plans or similar gender strategies implemented in neither public nor private entities;
- Lack of data related to gender in the local public transport system;
- Low interest in funding gender equality projects by public and private organizations;
- A low percentage of successful women entrepreneurs in transport at the local level.

The TInnGIDLab

Alba Iulia Municipality has created a network of stakeholders (TInnGIDLab) to work on gender and diversity discrimination in the labor market. The network includes public transport operators and authorities, legal enforcement agencies, labor assistance organizations and academia from the local region. Exchange of information with stakeholders is organized regularly as well as workshops. Results of these interactive actions are used to prepare policy papers. The "1st of December 1918" University of Alba Iulia turned out to be one of the most important gender advocates who supported mentorship sessions among students.

Findings

- Main employers are open to solutions to avoid gender and age discrimination;
- There is a need for know-how transfer related to gender equality in the educational system (local schools, universities);
- Technology shift may provide the right tools for gender and age equity measures;
- Project implementation and impact rely on budgetary allocation and alignment within local development strategies;
- Raising awareness within the local community by organizing several public events focused on girls' and women's empowerment in Alba Iulia (such as Skirt Bike, Women Rally, European Mobility Week etc.)



2019 European Mobility Week in Alba Iulia: Public campaign on women's empowerment. Photo source: Alba Iulia Municipality own photo collection

Next steps

- Promote and implement Smart Mobility initiatives to provide equal opportunities in employment, development and research activities;
- Acknowledge the benefits for Gender Smart Mobility by further gender mainstreaming actions (such as the Equality Action Plan as a signatory of the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life)
- Cooperate with academic and training organizations in preparing gender and age equitable learning as well as in individual careers;
- Support innovation and new business initiatives to speed up the digitalization of the transport sector as a key to making jobs more inclusive across gender and age;



Workshop session with "1st of December University Alba Iulia", November 2020. Photo source: Alba Iulia Municipality own photo collection

Recommendations

- Develop and implement a Gender Action Plan or a Gender and Diversity Action Plan;
- Include Gender Mainstreaming in existing and future public policies;
- Identify and activate main relevant stakeholders during all gender mainstreaming processes;
- Identify user needs and collect data on gendered inequalities in transport and smart mobility;
- Include collected data in future planning and design;
- Include the gendered impact of transport in cost-benefit analysis;
- Raise awareness on girls' and women's empowerment through workshops, meetings, events etc.;
- Develop project proposals following a participatory approach on gender equality and diversity;
- Identify potential financial and human resources and implement the project proposals.

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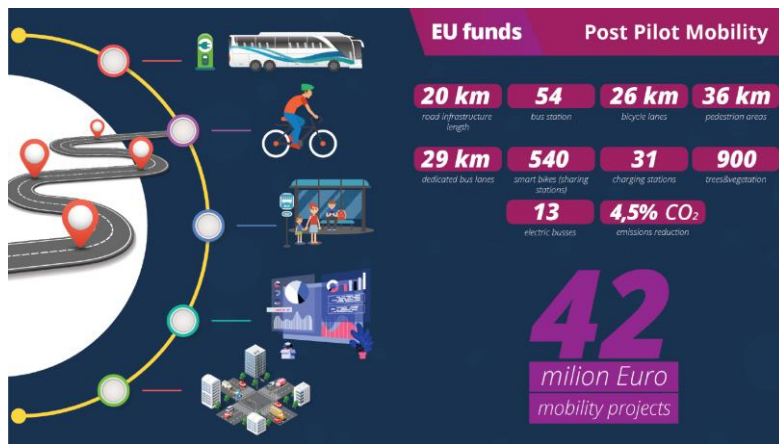
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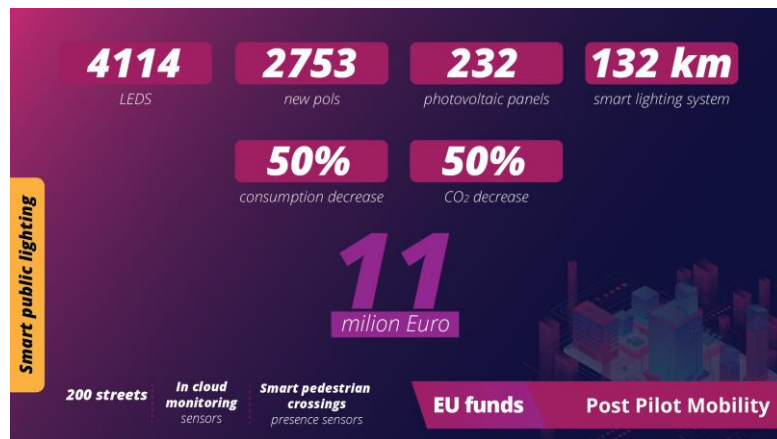
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Main results targeted through the mobility projects funded through the 2014-2020 Regional Operational Programme, Photo source: Alba Iulia Municipality own photo collection



Main results targeted through the smart lighting projects funded through the 2014-2020 Regional Operational Programme, Photo source: Alba Iulia Municipality own photo collection



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