

INTEGRATION AND REGULATORY STRUCTURES IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT

CASE STUDY – BRUSSELS CAPITAL REGION

Brussels, July 2003

1- GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE CASE STUDY

A/ General statistics on the case study

- Area size and population

Total area : 5.000 km²

Built-up area : 1.000 km²

Surface of administrative Region: 162 km²

Population : 2.337 million, divided between 0,964 million in Brussels Capital Region, 0,9 million in the suburbs, and 0,47 million in the outer ring of suburbs

- Public transport supply and patronage (figures for 2002)

	Heavy rail	Metro	Tramway	Local bus	Suburban Bus VVM+TEC	Total
Trips (million)	40 ¹	96,6	57,6	50	38 +11	293,2
Passengers-km (million) (estimation)	800	531	317	275	480 +120	2523
Places-km (billion) (no standee for railway, 7 standee/ m ² for other)	2100 ²	3399	1923	2273	1890+ 630	12215

- Modal split

In Brussels Capital Region: 25.1 % of motorised trips are made by public transport

In the suburban areas: 5-10%

B/ Actors involved in public transport

- General information

Belgium is a federal kingdom comprising 1 federal State, 3 Regions and 3 Communities, each having its own Parliament, elected by the citizens.

Regions are- mainly -competent for transport –except railway-, public works, environment, land use and agriculture, communities are competent in education and culture, the State is – mainly- competent for army, international relationship, social policy, police, justice, health and railway.

- Operators involved

➤ *Société des Transports Intercommunaux de Bruxelles (STIB)*

STIB is Region-owned company that was created in 1953. It has a monopoly on all the “local” routes which were granted by the legislator between 1953 and 1989 (date of transition from state property to Region property) plus new routes inside administrative boundaries. STIB hires some 6.000 employees.

Mode	Lines	Length of network (km)	Length of line (km)	Stations	Rolling stock	Places-km (billion)	Passengers (million)
Metro	3	34.7	40.6	56	218	3399	96.6
Tramway	16	131	205.6	+/-2.200	292	1923	57.6
Bus	47	351.1	436.4		571	2273	50
Lift	1	0.003	0.003	2	2		0.15

¹ Including international and national trains

² estimation only local trains

➤ *Société Nationale des Chemins de Fer Belges (SNCB)*

SNCB is the state-owned company in charge of operating the Belgian railways. It has a monopoly to operate all services of the national rail network, which include the railway routes used for suburban and regional services in the Brussels region. SNCB hires some 44.000 employees for the whole network. About 40% of clients have Brussels as origin or destination in their trips. Services are provided through international (TGV, Thalys, Eurostar), National (Intercity and Interregional), local trains (range to 30 km) and peak hour trains. No specific statistics are available for offer and use of trains in the metropolitan area. Variety of offer made difficult to estimate number of lines and network length. The table gives only local lines.

Mode	Lines	Length of network (km)	Length of line (km)	Stations	Rolling stock	Pl-km (billion)	Passengers (million)
Heavy rail	8	100	210	100	+/-40 EMU	2.100	Local +/-10 Other +/- 30

➤ *other regional companies*

The 2 other regions (Flanders –De Lijn- and Walloon-TEC) operate suburban bus services from and to Brussels + services in the suburbs.

They have some 2.000 employees operating in the metropolitan area.

Mode	Lines	Length of network (km)	Length of line (km)	Stations	Rolling stock	Places-km (billion)	Passengers (million)
TEC	39		1.398	1.212	167	630	11
DE LIJN	54		1.080	+/-2.000	493	1.890	38

- Organizing authority

The 3 Regions and the State are “organizing authorities” for their operator. They each have their own legal framework for organizing transport.

Federal State: law 19/3/1991 about SNCB

Brussels Capital Region: “ordonnance” 22/11/1990

Walloon Region: “décret” 21 / 12/ 1989

Flanders Region : “decreet” 1990 + about mobility (2002)

For local transport in the Brussels Capital Region, the organizing authority is the Minister in charge of transport representing the executive of the Brussels Capital Region³.

The “ordonnance sur l’organisation des transports en commun” defines:

- a) STIB operates regional public transport
- b) Term of references which STIB have to comply are defined by the executive
- c) A management contract is negotiated each 5 years between the executive and the STIB.

³ The legislative authority is the Parliament of Brussels Capital Region

The Minister is in charge of:

- Negotiate the management contract
- approval of changes of routes
- follow up of all the projects of new infrastructures (metro, right of way for bus and streetcar) on regional ways
- definition of fare policy and setting of fares for all public transport systems in the region
- improvement of the quality of services through dedicated investments
- financial balance of public transport operations (Brussels Region compensates about 2/3 of the cost of STIB)
- surveys about the future needs of mobility

The Region is shareholder of 99.9% of the STIB. The executive has its representatives in the board of directors of STIB for current management.

The regional administration (Administration de l'Équipement et de la Politique des Déplacements ; +/- 600 employee) is in charge of the administrative aspects of transport (3 employee). It is in charge of preparing the management contract, follow-up of the respect of the management contract by the STIB (production, client-barometer, mobility barometer, bonus- malus calculation, financial transparency, route change analyse, CEN qualification,...). Coordination with other operators occurs in this administration.

It also designs and constructs new rights of way (48 km in 2001-2005) and metro extensions (4 km in 2001-2005) foreseen in the management contract (+/- 150 employee).

- Other actors involved

➤ *National government*: the national government is involved in the organisation of railways. It is the shareholder of the SNCB and therefore contributes half of the cost of the company and defines the 10 years investment plan.

➤ *the Regions*

since 17/6/1991 an agreement manages relationship between the 3 Regions for lines coming through the regional boundaries. It was a compulsory act following the regionalisation in 1989 of local and suburban transport in Belgium, made in the mind of avoiding suppression or cutting in 2 of through services. Changes in offer (less or more) and new lines are under control of both parties.

- *Walloon Region*

Local public transport in Walloon Region is under responsibility of holding SRWT (Société Régionale Wallonne de Transport) which owns 5 local transport company named TEC. 2 of them run lines from south suburbs to Brussels with low frequencies. A new line appeared in 2002 linking many dense locations with the metro after agreement of Brussels Region.

- *Flanders Region*

Local public transport in Flanders Region is under responsibility of the “Vlaams Vervoersmaatschappij” (VVM), commercially known as DE LIJN. It is at the same time operator and transit authority with control by the shareholders (the main is the Region). Under special agreements with the municipalities, additional services can be created locally (Mobility Convention).

➤ *Municipalities*

The 19 municipalities of Brussels Capital Region have some competences interfering with public transport although they don't have competence about public transport. They are responsible for the local urban development plan, for the regulation of parking policies on their territories, for street management (except regional ways that represent 270 km of 2.000km).

➤ *User groups*

Several user groups exist in the region. Most of them are represented in a "clients committee" created by the "ordonnance" of 1990.

➤ *Commission Consultative de la Mobilité*

A Committee is in charge of giving an advice to the Minister about all projects having impacts on mobility.

C/ Evaluation of this framework

The separation of transport responsibility between four different authorities doesn't ease solving congestion problems. Lack of finance of some of those authorities is a second concern.

Four different operators operate on the Regions' territory, but only one is under control of the local authority. Coordinating the different operators without enforcement capability (for service quality, coordination of routes and timetables and complementarity of services) is a big concern for local politicians. Brussels Region mobility plans is centred on new train services for the range 10 to 30 km from the centre. It is the key of solving severe congestion problems. After 8 years of discussion, an agreement and a investment plan is reached. Compensating the costs is still under discussion.... Separation of authorities makes it impossible to finance deficit by other authorities (confirmed by the State Administrative Court).

Otherwise inside the Region, this framework made possible to centre the STIB on citizen's needs, expand the network, offer better services (more frequencies, improvement of capacity). After years of decline from 1950 to 1990, ridership increases (+27% for 2000-2002).

For a better integration, 1 authority should be responsible on a large area including Brussels Region and parts of the extra urban areas. It should have authority on land use too. It is a political matter. Other forms of cooperation are possible too.

A better integration of timetables is needed and possible without additional cost. A hierarchy of lines could provide better efficiency of connections with emphasize on multimodal platforms where connections have to be given between modes under high quality standards.

Fare integration exists on a small scale. Enlarging is under discussion but operators discuss about chip cards although fare integration is not (only) a technical problem but a revenue distribution problem.

2- THE WAY TOWARDS INTEGRATION

The STIB is the result of merging many private companies from 1875 to 1925. It was half public owned from 1945 (end of the private concession) and 1980 and since then 100% public owned first by the state and 25 municipalities⁴, then by the state and the Agglomeration⁵ and finally by the Region and the regional investment company. In the last years before regionalisation, one minister had control on public transport in Belgium. The operators were:

- SNCB
- SNCV (today SRWT + VVM)
- 5 local public companies for urban transport (STIB was one of them)

The integration was not achieved in general, each company acting on its “territory”.

In 1970 appeared a tariff agreement on some places. In Brussels it took the form of a season pass (MTB still existing). The limits of validity vary from a company to another.

Before fare integration, passengers had to buy a new ticket every time they changed transport operator, and a special every time they changed from one transport vehicle to the other within the same company. It changed progressively inside STIB from 1968 to 1976 where the 1 hour rule for validity of a ticket was introduced.

Since February 2003, it is possible to use the lines of the four operators inside the boundaries of the Region with only 1 ticket (1 trip, 5 trips, 10 trips, 1 day) achieving a full fare and ticket integration.

In 1980, due to the lack of finances, some integration occurs in Brussels under the form of diverting local bus routes to avoid double compensation and sub-use of existing services.

Since, little change was made (a few new lines in connection with new developments).

The only network integration exists inside the main operator (STIB) when extending the metro.

Some timetable coordination exist between railways and TEC/ DE LIJN in the suburbs. In Brussels, frequency of services is such, that coordination is not possible (railway functions under a 1 fixed hourly frequency departure).

Only a few park and ride facilities were built (1.000 places) in connection with the metro. A 10.000 exist around railway stations (with charge).

For bicycles, before the launch of the policy aimed at fostering intermodality between cycling and public transport, it was not easy to leave one’s bike close to metro and railway stations. Since 1998, it is allowed to take one’s bike in the metro after 9 pm or during week-ends.

There is no real integration of information to passengers at present. Each transport company is responsible for the information towards its customers, and is free to say what it wants in its communication. Each company has its own maps of the networks – **but STIB shows all the other train and bus services**- and information services, which sometimes provide information about other companies’ networks, but not always.

⁴ 19 in the region + 6 suburban still desserved by STIB

⁵ special entity in charge of transport, fire brigade and waste collecting in name of the 19 Brussels municipalities from 1970 to 1989

€	Price for city centre	Price for whole region
Single trip ticket	1.40	1.80
Ten trips	9	12.4
Monthly pass	36	58.7
Yearly pass	360	532.3
Yearly pass for students	270	401

➤ *Integration of public transport with other services*

Since April 2003 a car sharing initiative is under way in collaboration with private companies and STIB.

➤ *Integration of public transport with town planning*

The Brussels Development Plan coordinates both, based on the Dutch ABC policy.

➤ *Integration of public transport with environmental policy*

There is a narrow co-ordination between the policies of protection of the quality of the air and of the policies of mobility. The urban mobility plan prepared in co-ordination with STIB, and the regional plan of air quality, prepared by the regional services of the ministry of the environment (IBGE), have to be compatible. 20% of STIB fleet have to be “clean” by 2005 (yet reached).

To reach the Kyoto goals in CO² emissions, traffic must decrease by 20% from 1999 to 2010. The Regional Mobility Plan (1998) is being adapted to meet this goal.

3- THE CONSEQUENCES OF INTEGRATION

3.1 Quantitative consequences

In 1970, there was no quantitative consequence of the first fare integration because there was no price discount. In 1973, after decrease of price of about 10%, a 5% increase in use of public transport was seen.

The new fare integration is too recent to have significant results.

3.2 Qualitative consequences

The improvement of integration has led to an increase of the number of people using several modes of transport and several transport companies during their trips. Although we don't have simple statistics about this reality, it is obvious that the fast development of integrated season passes, which now make up for 75% of all tickets used, has been an incentive for people to switch easily from one mode to the other.

The absence of integrated information is a negative aspect. The quality of information provided can vary a lot from one company to the other and there are no minimum standards.

4- WISHES, PLANS AND BARRIERS FOR FURTHER INTEGRATION

4.1 Planned integrative features

Main projects that could still improve integration in public transport systems in Brussels Metropolitan Region in the future are as follows:

- Development of the Regional Express Network, connected with P+R facilities and feeder bus lines
- Fare integration on the whole area
- development of integrated tickets for park & ride and public transport
- setting up of a high quality, priority bus network for the whole region,
- improvement of interchanges

4.2 Fears for disintegration

Seen the low level of integration between operators, no fear appears.

Fears for disintegration of STIB -in the context of a possible future introduction of competitive mechanisms -don't seem pertinent since they mix two different concepts: integrated network and integrated company.

An integrated network can be achieved even with several transport companies, but needs a strong Organising Authority.

4- LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY

The low level of integration cannot be transferred.

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