

Economic and social results of the first year of Tallinn Free Public Transport

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Annual POLIS conference

Tiit Laiksoo

Tallinn Transport Department



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Basic figures

- Population of Tallinn 430 000 (as 01.12.13)
- 2012 City budget – 500 Mio €
- Total number of public transport (PT) vehicles (buses, trams, trolleybuses) – 560
- 2012 PT budget – 53 million €
- Total tickets revenue - 17 Mio €
- 5 Mio € from non-Tallinners
- Free PT for Tallinners costs 12 Mio € annually



The number of private cars

	01.01.2010	01.01.2011	01.01.2012	01.01.2013	30.09.2013
City of Tallinn	122 695	132 906	145 867	157 494	165 823
City with Harju county	178 211	194 486	214 282	230 841	242 614

Growth in 3 years and 9 months:

- City of Tallinn – 35%
- Harju county – 36%

Factors of urban mobility

Factor	Action
Time	PT priority system, tighter schedule
Price	Free for Tallinners + students + elder people (65+)
Quality	Upgrading PT vehicles, more bus stops, convenient transfer
Reliability	Real time information system in bus stops and in internet
Weather	Underground bus terminal in city centre, more bus shelters

Why free public transport (FPT)?

Social aspects: guaranteeing mobility for unemployed and low income residents. Using PT facilitates sharing common space for different segments of the society

Economic aspects:

increasing labour mobility in the city limits;

stimulating consumers activity;

savings from public transport are spent for local goods and services

Green aspects: modal shift from cars to PT, cleaner air, less noise, more urban space

Fiscal aspects: strong motivation to register place of residence, thus increasing personal income tax



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In the beginning there was a referendum

- Plebiscite on free PT 19-25 March, 2012
- Plebiscite **informed** the community and **involved** them in decision-making, thus locking the free PT decision politically - power shift in the Council cannot change it easily

Result: Yes -75,5%, No - 24,5%



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Preparatory steps

- More space for PT vehicles: expanding separated bus lanes network in 8 km (Summer 2012)
- Saving: merger of two municipal public transport companies (June 2012)
- Political decision: from City Council (September 2012, in force from January 2013)
- Support: implementation of new PT ticketing system based on contactless cards (from September 2012)



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Source of funding

New residents: registered population in City of Tallinn grew since April 2012 by 13 000 persons

Result: increasing municipal revenues from personal income tax
(every 1000 residents brings ca 1 million euros into city budget)



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Initial progress report

Social survey from ... :

- Increased frequency of bus users: 21% (incl. 8% of previous non-users)
- New profiles of passengers on business days (see the picture), evenings and weekends
- More people go out to spend free time and money



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First results

I - Number of passengers

Surveys by KTH Royal Institute of Technology (Sweden)

Period	Growth
Spring 2012/ Spring 2013	+ 9,4%
Summer 2012/ Summer 2013	+ 4,9%

II – Real speed of vehicles in city limits 2013

Surveys by ...

Type	Speed
Private cars	21,5 km/h
Buses	17,7 km/h
Trolleybuses	16,7 km/h
Trams	14,4 km/h

Support: the new ticketing system

- Contactless cards
- Joint card for Tallinn and Harju county
- Account based system
- Stand by for others regions + cross border
- Operating cost: 2 times lower
- Gathering PT usage data for optimising the PT network
- Stand by for contactless credit cards and NFC mobile phones
- Number of cards in use and validations:

2013	Cards	Validations
January	228 591	6 213 698
February	243 413	7 194 863
March	260 866	8 161 671
April	273 565	9 102 367
May	279 943	9 265 035
June	271 782	7 665 587
July	269 179	7 645 687
August	295 116	7 453 391
September	292 694	10 778 170
October	298 615	8 922 893

Extensions of FPT

- From October 28, 2013: commuter (electric) trains became free for residents inside the city limits
- Cost for the city budget: up to 75 000 € in 2013 and up to 350 000 € in 2014
- Number of trips in I zone (City of Tallinn):
 - October: 22 300
 - November: 75 000



International networking

- With Aubagne (FRA) Tallinn is initiating the European Network of Free Public Transport to bring the issue in the EU agenda
- Positive initial opinions by the European Commissioner Johannes Hahn on 28 February 2013
- Transport Commissioner Siim Kallas positively transforming was keynote speaker of FPT conference in Tallinn on August 2013



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Chinese interest

- Developing contact with City of Chengdu (China) which tried FPT from Oct 2012 to June 2013
- Metropolis with population over 14 million provides FPT in combination with severe restriction of cars
- Tallinn FPT was listed among 30 most deserving urban innovations in Guangzhou International Award
- However FPT in Guangzhou lasted only 1 day in 2010 Asian Games, China is closely looking for Chengdu results and also for European experience

Polish FPT cases

Zabki: free for local residents

Nysa: free for driving licence holders

Zory: considering

Warsaw (and Riga):

establishing reduced price for the local residents (for Tallinn it was first step towards FPT)



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We have a dream

- Free Public Internet is often recognised as everyone's right, now it is the turn of urban mobility
- City of Tallinn is looking forward to become the candidate for the European Green Capital nomination for 2018,
FPT is a brave step in this process

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