

On 16 of November, the Central European Initiative has successfully organised in Tirana the seminar on “Urban Freight Management: an Exchange of Good Practices in the European context and beyond” in the framework of the SUGAR Project (Sustainable Urban Goods logistics Achieved by Regional and local policies), co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund and made possible by the INTERREG IVC programme. About 40 participants, from EU and non-EU Member States attended the event, among which high level officials from the Ministry of Transport of Albania, Austria, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia, as well as the Ministry of Environment of Italy and several other relevant stakeholders such as the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, the University of Tirana, the Albanian Institute of Transport, the South East Europe Transport Observatory (SEETO), etc.

The aim of the seminar was to illustrate the project achievements and explain the potential to transfer its best practices beyond the partnership. It also represented an opportunity to discuss policy experience and good practices in the field of urban freight management.

The benefits of the SUGAR Project from a ‘transfer site’ perspective were presented by a representative of the City of Usti nad Labem that explained how the city benefited by improving, for example, the data collection leading to a construction of more accurate traffic models. On the same topic, an external expert from the University of Rome illustrated the experience of Rome in data collection and how the results of the SUGAR project may be relevant for the city. Whereas, the National Institute for Transport and Safety Research described the good practices analysis, by showing examples of successful policies and conditions for successful transfers. Furthermore, the presentation of the Institute for Transport and Logistics (ITL) highlighted the SUGAR transfer tools and the opportunities for involvement beyond the partnership by creating synergies with new administrations interested in establishing city logistics programmes (SUGAR Enlarged Transfer Programme). In conclusion, the ITL stressed the fact that “at the beginning of SUGAR project, Transfer sites seemed to pinpoint a less clear action strategy compared to the good practice sites. Thanks to SUGAR training sessions, transfer sites already started to change their point of view and this is a big result. Of course the political commitment is crucial for a real change, but it is a strong starting point”.

The seminar was organised back-to-back with the (SEETAC), South East European Transport Axis Cooperation Second Ministerial Conference. SEETAC is a project co-funded by the South East Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme with a wide partnership composed by the highest level institutions in the field of transport and environment in the region. This vast audience allowed a wide dissemination of the main project’s objectives and results by targeting high level officials from the SEETAC Ministries of transport.

The Lead Partner of the Project, Emilia Romagna Region and the Institute for Transport and Logistics as Technical Coordinators, expressed satisfaction over the results of the seminar and stated that “the event made synergies between projects and experiences possible and it paved the way to new cooperation for policy improvement in city logistics.”

