

The
**TRAFFIC SNAKE GAME
NETWORK**

European regional workshops Report 2014

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Traffic Snake Game Network

The Traffic Snake Game is a campaign to promote walking and cycling to school for children (aged 4-12), their parents and teachers. It was created by Mobiel 21 and started out as a small campaign with only a handful of schools in Flanders, Belgium. However, over the years the number of European countries interested in playing the game has increased. Evidence has shown that the campaign increases the use of sustainable transport modes and reduces CO₂ emissions. To date, 18 countries have signed up to play the game and take advantage of this successful strategy which encourages parents to try alternatives to the car for home to school trips.

The Traffic Snake Game Network (TSG Network) has been established to share the experiences of the game with more cities and schools across Europe and beyond. This network disseminates the campaign, extends its impact and publicises the results and experiences that keep the award-winning¹ campaign alive. The TSG Network functions as an observatory that disseminates, supports and monitors the Traffic Snake Game worldwide. The European Commission has favoured the network for partial funding between 2014-2017. The project team aims to establish an effective EU-wide and long-term support network to replicate, transfer and expand the take up of the Traffic Snake Game.

The consortium is currently represented by national focal points (NFPs) in 18 EU countries. These NFPs are organisations that will champion the project, disseminate information about the campaign and steer the implementation of the Traffic Snake Game in their country. The NFPs receive support and training from a small core group of organisations: Mobiel 21 (Belgium), WYG (United Kingdom) and DTV Consultants (the Netherlands).

We refer to: www.trafficsnakegame.eu for up-to-date national and international contact details.

1.2 European regional workshops

The TSG Network European regional workshops are an essential part of the support of the NFPs, providing them with the tools and advice to implement the Traffic Snake Game at the national level in their own country. The workshops are about empowering the NFP's to run a campaign. The overall goals of the workshops are:

¹ 1 The project was awarded the Sustainable Energy Europe Award in the category 'Promotional, Communication and Educational Actions'. The jury praised it for setting up new mobility campaigns in which pupils play a central and active role. The high replication factor allows a snowball effect: more and more schools and children participating in the project and its aim to increase the use of sustainable transport modes.

- To provide the NFPs with the right marketing, policy and performance tools for implementing a national campaign.
- To train NFP's in co-ordinating the implementation of the Traffic Snake Game and be able to:
 - stimulate the uptake of the Traffic Snake Game;
 - support the uptake of the Traffic Snake Game;
 - assess the uptake of Traffic Snake Game;
 - make the National Focal Point self-supporting after the project lifespan in order to maintain the action and build up national structures for long term strategic change.
- To provide key information to National Focal Points, including:
 - Advice for cities on how and why to stimulate sustainable home-school transport (policy level); and
 - Advice for schools/teachers/parents/children on how to realise sustainable home-school transport (performance level).
- To ensure the cohesion of the National Focal Points and the sustainability of the Network

These workshops will be delivered once a year in a EU regional approach: parallel sessions allowing smaller group work with neighbouring countries that are more likely to have a number of similar contextual needs.

2. The 2014 edition workshops

2.1 Workshop dates

The first series of workshops took place in May 2014. Each session was spread over two half days:

- Central and Eastern Europe session took place in Szentendre, Hungary during 12-13 May 2014 and was attended by the core partners and the NFPs from Czech Republic/Slovakia, Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary.
- Southern Europe session took place in Madrid, Spain during 19-20 May 2014 and was attended by the core partners and the NFPs from Italy, Greece, Slovenia, Portugal and Spain.
- Western and Northern Europe session took place in Leuven, Belgium during 27-28 May 2014 and was attended by the core partners and the NFPs from Lithuania, France, Malta, Germany, Austria and Belgium.

2.2 Goals and agenda

The goal of these workshops was to train each NFP in the basics of the TSG and covered the following:

- how the TSG works
- how TSG is implemented at the national level
- how to train national practitioners
- how to find and embed structural partners and sponsors
- how to communicate and evaluate the campaign on national level

Agenda day 1

- Welcome by M21: Short welcome and explanation of the workshop
- TSG Game by M21: Explanation of TSG (classic) and short discussion
- TSG Game deluxe by M21: Discuss activities to complement the TSG in each country on several levels: class, school and city + short presentation about examples.
- Train national practitioners by DTV: How to train national practitioners. Practical guidance and outline of a training programme. Do's and don'ts combined with experience from core countries
- Mind mapping by DTV: who will the practitioners be, how will you organise the workshop, who will you invite? Wrap up by M21: Summary and reflection

Agenda day 2

- Welcome by M21: Project Management issues and goal of the day

- Run TSG at a national level by DTV: experiences from M21, WYG and DTV. Develop an implementation plan for each NFP.
- Partners and sponsors by WYG: How to find the right sponsors and structural partners and Discuss possible sponsors and partners
- Evaluation by WYG: How to evaluate?
- TSG Quiz by DTV
- Wrap up by M21: Summary and reflection

2.3 Impression and overview workshop

2.3.1 Session Szentendre, 12-13 May 2014

The Central and Eastern NFPs were invited to attend the workshop in Szentendre, which was hosted by REC at their office. Twelve people attended the workshop in Hungary. All those responsible for managing and implementing the TSG in their respective country were present. The workshop in Szentendre was the first workshop given by the CORE group. Based on the experiences in Hungary and the feedback from the attendees, the workshop content was revised. The structure of the workshop did not change after the meeting in Szentendre. However the timing allocated to each presentation was adjusted to allow more time to explain the differences between the classic TSG and the deluxe version.

The NFPs who attended the workshop in Hungary had more questions about playing the TSG compared to the other two workshops. Even though the game itself was clear, the participants asked for further information and advice about how to assist the schools in calculating their overall target. During this first workshop, additional time was spent explaining the methodology. The focus was also on engaging the schools and teachers. Not all teachers in the Central and Eastern European countries are interested in or enthusiastic about the TSG. For some it is considered to be extra work, which they are not willing to do for free. If this is the case it is even more important to link the TSG to a theme within the curriculum or any existing projects or campaigns. This will show the schools and teachers that it is not additional work. It was also noted that a certificate might help to convince the schools to join the TSG Network.

During the 'Train the national practitioners' presentation, the NFPs were asked to state which theme they are planning to link the TSG to in their country. The answers were mainly environment, health, traffic safety and sustainability.

The attendees will mainly contact cities via existing networks and projects such as CIVINET, ENDURANCE and other national municipalities networks.

The second day of the workshop started with a mind mapping exercise about implementing the TSG at the national level in their countries. In advance of the workshops, all attendees were asked to discuss this subject with other colleagues within their organisation. The NFPs

will begin by finalising the translation of all the presentation and workshop materials and before the start of the school summer holidays. After this a meeting with all interested parties will be organised. The NFPs will also attend different conferences to raise awareness about the TSG.

At the end of the workshop all attendees were asked to give feedback about the content of the workshop and offer suggestions to the CORE group about how future sessions could be improved. Overall the feedback was very positive. The information given during the workshop was very useful and understandable. The NFPs are very confident in starting the TSG in their countries. The NFPs requested that they receive access to the website as soon as possible.



Photos taken during Szentendre Workshop, TSG Network 2014

2.3.2 Session Madrid, 19-20 May 2014

The Southern NFPs were invited to attend the workshop in Madrid. Gea21 hosted the workshop in a different venue to their office due to ongoing renovations. The event was attended by 13 people. All the attendees were the main persons responsible for the TSG in their country. The structure of the workshop was the same as the event that took place in Hungary, but based on the new timetable and revised slides.

The NFPs asked more questions about the methodology for measuring the success of the campaign compared to the other two workshops. These questions did not only cover the calculations but also the use of the dots and the interpretation of the transportation modes. The design and production of the dots is the responsibility of the NFPs. The CORE consortium explained how the dots should be used and the reasons why the modal categories had been selected. The NFPs were asked to use only those categories and not introduce additional modes for measurement as it will affect the evaluation of the campaign, plus it will require more effort from teachers. The transportation mode 'car sharing' was most discussed. Children who came by car but walked/ cycled the last mile to school can also receive a dot for car sharing.

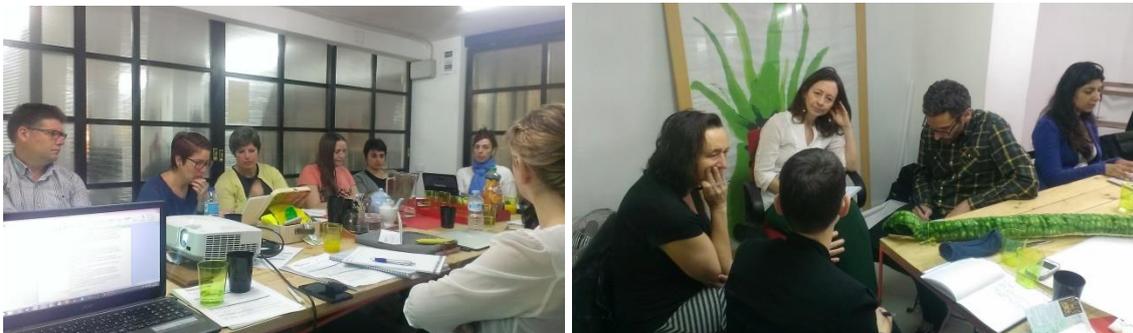
All NFPs were asked to state which theme they will link the TSG to in their country. The answers varied from traffic safety, sustainability, health, public space to lifestyle and vitality. Compared to the other two workshops a clear difference is noted here. In the Southern countries, children's autonomy and independence was also a very important theme.

- Slovenia: Traffic safety
- Spain: public space, autonomy of children, liveability, social life
- Portugal: 1) traffic safety, 2) sustainable mobility, 3) children's right to use public space, 4) public health – obese 5) air quality
- Greece: 1) sustainability, 2) environmental issues
- Italy: sustainability and autonomy. Next to this influence the image of walking and cycling. Now people see this as a free time experience

During the 'train the national practitioners' presentation, the attendees were asked who they will contact to disseminate the TSG. ACA-M, CRES and Euromobility will contact cities and ministries. These parties are in close contact with the schools. In Greece 47 schools have already showed an interest and 23 schools in Portugal. Gea21 will contact a child mobility network and parent association to disseminate the TSG. Slovenia planned to organise a national event for teachers. A warning was given to this approach, NFPs do not have the resources to contact each school on an individual level and were advised to get in touch with the relevant individuals within a local authority who could act as a local practitioner.

On the second day of the workshop the focus was on running the TSG in each country and finding the right sponsors and structural partners. For this session, all attendees worked in groups and discussed what their first steps towards a sustainable network would be. Almost all NFPs decided to approach organisations at different levels simultaneously. In Italy, the Ministry will be contacted first, who will then contact the municipalities and after that the schools will be contacted.

After the workshop, the attendees were asked for feedback. The reactions from the participating NFPs were positive. They feel confident about running the TSG in their own countries. They were also asked if they needed anything from the CORE group and their comments included access to the website as soon as possible and to receive all the correct campaign and marketing materials so they can start translating them.



Photos taken during Madrid Workshop, TSG Network 2014

2.3.3 Session Leuven, 27-28 May 2014

The Northern and Western NFPs were invited to join the workshop in Leuven. Empreintes, based in Namen (BE), was supposed to host the workshop but due to the location of their office, it was more convenient to host the event in the M21 office in Leuven. The workshop was attended by 11 people, including representatives of the core group. All persons responsible for the TSG in their country were present. For Paragon (MT) a representative from Brussels attended the workshop. He was extensively briefed by his colleague from Malta. He ensured everyone that he will inform the responsible person at Paragon after the workshop is finished. IVP (AT) also attended the workshop in Leuven. They are more experienced with the TSG compared to the other partners and were asked to share their experiences and knowledge with the group.

The structure of the workshop was the same as the other two events in Madrid and Szentendre. The questions asked by the NFPs were different compared to the other workshops. Their focus was more about sponsorship and finding structural partners. Mobiel 21 explained how they first contacted their sponsor KBC and maintained their ongoing relationship. Tips on finding and contacting sponsors and partners was discussed in more detail during this workshop. Another point of concern was the evaluation as some participants questioned what they should do if they do not receive all the measurement results back from the schools to complete the evaluation tasks. The Core partners provided examples of how they try to tackle this issue.

Most NFPs will encourage a few schools to play the game during European Mobility Week in September. Because this will be the first year of the project, the number of schools playing the game during this week may not be as high as in future years. A larger number of schools will start in the spring of 2015.

During the second day of the workshop, all NFPs started working on their approach to implementing the TSG in their country. The participants in Leuven stated they were planning to start by using their existing contacts to form a network in their country instead of contacting new persons. They are then planning to attend national conferences to disseminate information about the TSG. Almost all NFPs decided to start with one city to implement the TSG. This will also be a good learning experience for the NFPs. Furthermore the attendees will contact cities, cycling associations, Government Ministries, traffic associations and environmental organisations. Below an overview of the themes of each NFP:

- Belgium: Quality of life in the school environment, autonomy, skills
- Malta: Health and transport
- Austria: Traffic Safety & independency
- Germany: Traffic Safety and sustainability
- France: Sustainability and less-car dependent lifestyles
- Lithuania: Sustainability and traffic safety

The participants were very interested in finding the right sponsors and partners, especially the idea of having a private or insurance organisation as a sponsor for the TSG. Experiences from Mobiel 21, WYG and DTV Consultants were shared.

At the end of the workshop the participants were asked for feedback and if they have any concerns about their role in the project. Overall the attendees were satisfied with the workshop. It was good to hear the experiences from the CORE group. The implementation planning work they completed during the workshop will be used for their National Action and Marketing Plan. All NFPs feel confident in implementing and disseminating the TSG in their respective countries. Paragon and ECAT mentioned that they do not have that many cities and schools in their countries. They are a bit worried that they will not reach the target of 60 schools. Most NFP's were also eager on having the website finished in time. Rupprecht Consult and WYG are more worried about the complicated educational system. EPC is concerned about involving the teachers. Almost all NFPs were more worried about finding the right structural partner.

The attending NFP's indicated what they needed from the CORE partners. The following was mentioned:

- Website containing national area and pictures, visuals, experiences, success stories, effects, quotes
- Strategy document: national action plan and marketing plan.
- Video tutorial. This will be in English, but there is a tool to subtitle.
- Calculator on the homepage to see the progress (saved CO2, number of children taking part, etc.)



Photos taken during Leuven Workshop, TSG Network 2014

2.4 Overall reflection

All NFPs representing 17 countries attended the first series of EU regional workshops (some attended workshops that were not in their geographical group due to date availability)..

The size of the groups was between 11 and 13 people and this allowed a good group dynamic. All parties could be and were interactive.

Every workshop concluded with a round of reflection to address any outstanding issues or concerns. Overall, the NFPs provided feedback throughout the two days and shared their views about the content of the workshop. NFPs reported better, more clear and optimistic view at the tasks ahead, including more confidence in tackling them.

The challenge at this stage is moving from 'knowing' to 'experiencing'; from having a real life hands-on experience and testing how the TSG works at the level of schools and cities in their country, and from there on to move forward to the national level. The fine-tuning towards best suited themes (e.g. mobility, or energy, or health), best suited curricular or extra-curricular activities as well as political liaisons at city, institutional and higher levels is a task that needs country-specific action by the NFPs. However, the workshop shared different approaches and views as well as a confirmation that the NFPs were suitably positioned to carry out this task.

A particular call was made to have the start of the TSG campaign in all countries matched to the European Mobility Week (EMW); however in most countries this was not identified as ideal as this coincides with the beginning of the new school year. Most NFPs will try to have their initial trials during the 2014 European Mobility Week..

3. FAQ

Before and during the workshop several questions were asked. This chapter provides an overview of the frequently asked questions.

1. How many dots do we have to provide?

There is a difference between if you only use one colour of dots and if you use different colours for the different transport modes. Please read more about this in the manual.

2. Do we provide all different dots and colours or just one dot for sustainable modes

Each NFP can decide this for themselves.

Pro's:

- you can count only at the last day, you would not need to do it every day
- more fun for children, you SEE modes on the snakes

Con

- more time to disseminate
- hard to estimate

3. Why can't we hand over a dot for those we travel by car to school?

Children earn dots for doing well. This will encourage them to travel more sustainably to school the next day.

4. Why would a teacher do a hands up admin?

It is needed to monitor the progress and the target. Do it together with the name and presence registration, this will save you time. You could also have an older child do this special task for all classes. It will work better if the school receives a (city) reward for monitoring.

5. Can we put two modes like train and public transport together as one category?

Please stick with the MaxEva categories which are walking, cycling, bus, train/tram/metro, carpooling and car.

6. What if children use more than one mode to travel to school?

The longest trip (in time) counts.

7. What if a school doesn't have access to the internet?

Ask them to complete the school measurement forms on paper. These can be sent by post.

8. Does every class teacher send measurement forms to the NFP?

No, the school measurement form will summarize all the class results. This can be sent to the NFP of the third party. Later on in the project schools also have the possibility to fill out the class results online via www.trafficsnakegame.eu

9. Do all classes (have to) play?

No, it is also possible that only a part of the school participates. Please indicate on the school measurement form the number of classes participating (and not the number of classes in your school).

10. How do we know how many large green stickers a school needs?

Calculate it by multiplying the number of classes who will be participating by 10 (days of playing TSG)

11. What if a child comes by car in the morning – walk home?

The children receive the sticker in the morning. The transport mode to school is the mode for which they will receive a sticker. Obviously, going home can be different but we cannot get a hold on all these details.

4. Attachments

In annex to this document, the following attachments are included

- Agenda
- Signed attendance list for each workshop (6 pages)
- Presentations used during the workshops:
 - TSG Classic
 - TSG Deluxe
 - How to train national practitioners
 - How to run the TSG on a national level
 - How to find the right sponsors and structural partners
 - How to evaluate
 - TSG Quiz

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