

INTERFACE in a nutshell

Crossing the Southern Baltic Sea as foot passenger by ferry has lost its importance during the last decades. Ferry operators & ports obtain their major revenues with motor vehicles and cargo traffic and have adjusted their service and infrastructure to these target groups only. This trend has triggered a circuit of negative effects, becoming evident especially in INTERFACE areas. The service requirements of foot passengers and cyclists have been neglected completely with the consequence that ferry ports/terminals do not even offer a minimum of service standards, but present themselves as unattractive waiting areas instead. Access for people with reduced mobility is limited. Moreover transport operators linking ports with cities and their direct hinterland strongly lack interoperability. Infrastructure gaps additionally hinder smooth transport chains. As a consequence attractiveness of cross-border foot passenger transport is poor & suffers a low demand in the Southern Baltic Sea.

In order to raise the number and satisfaction of foot passengers, basic improvements in the service quality and transport infrastructure are necessary. Here applies the EU-Project INTERFACE.

INTERFACE sets minimum standards for the service quality of ports/terminals for foot passengers, cyclists and people with reduced mobility, considering their special needs. INTERFACE closes gaps between ports and cities, by improving the interoperability of (existing) intermodal transports, facilitating cross-border passenger information and testing, where appropriate, additional shuttle services.

Lead beneficiary of the project is the Hanseatic City of Rostock. The total budget amounts up to Euro 1.6 Million of which 1.2 Million are co-financed by European Union within South Baltic Cross-Border-Cooperation Programme 2007-2013. The geographical dimension of the project covers in particular the transport axes Karlskrona- Gdynia - Baltijsk/ Kaliningrad, Trelleborg- Rostock and Gedser- Rostock but also considers other ports in SBA.

21 partners from Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Poland and Russia, including local and public authorities, traffic and port operators as well as the ferry companies Scandlines, TT Line and Stena Line, form the partnership.

Their common goal is it to revitalize cross-border passenger traffic without car to a comfortable, cheap and environmental friendly alternative, when travelling within the Southern Baltic Sea Area. Attractive transport connections, which are available and accessible for everybody, are the basic requirement to facilitate regional integration and growing together beyond national borders.

INTERFACE has started in April 2009 and will last until April 2012 (36 months).