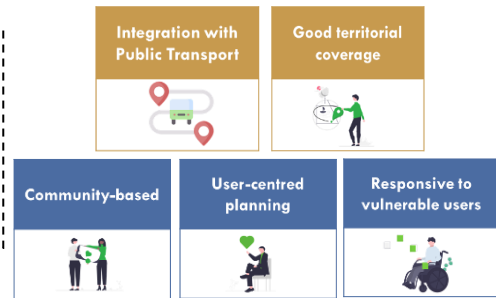


1.3. Bürgerbus Dreisam-Stromer (DE)

The Bürgerbus Dreisam Stromer is a **community-based transport service** operated in Kirchzarten, Germany with more than 60 stops along four different lines. The service has fixed routes and fixed timetables, available for the public and it is run by volunteer drivers.



1.3.1 About Baden-Württemberg, Germany

Country	Region	Target Area	Population	Population density
Germany	Baden-Württemberg state	35.751,46 km ²	11.124.642 inh. (2021)	311,16 inh./km ²

Baden-Württemberg is a region in southwestern Germany, bordering France and Switzerland. The Black Forest, famous for its evergreen landscapes and traditional villages, extends across the mountainous Switzerland.

The region is poor in raw materials (except the wood of the Black Forest), wines, fruit and vegetables are grown there. Industrial activities are highly developed: the greatest number of workers are employed in the automotive, electrotechnical, wood and electromechanical industries. The organic nature of the infrastructure and the presence of high-quality human resources, which demonstrate a strong propensity for innovation, constitute the main development factors. Together with Bavaria, it constitutes the most economically modern and active region in the country. Motorway and air communication routes are well-developed.



Figure 8 - Baden-Württemberg state

The Bürgerbus Dreisam Stromer is a community-based transport service operated in Kirchzarten, Germany. The municipality of Kirchzarten is located in the area of Freiburg in Breisgau, centrally in the valley of the Dreisam river, in the Southern Black Forest Nature Park – Baden-Württemberg. The Freiburg town is only 11 Km west of Kirchzarten.

1.3.2 Description of the Mobility Solution

The Bürgerbus initiative aims to complement conventional public transport services in low densities areas with sustainable services thanks to volunteers driving the vehicles (minibus or large passenger cars) and undertaking part of the other tasks related to the provision of a transport service.

There are mainly two forms of community services in Baden-Württemberg: Bürgerbusse and Bürgerrufautos.

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There are two service concepts of Bürgerbusses:

- 1) The “urban-rural link”; the service connects a district centre (small or medium-sized town) with the surrounding villages at times or in areas where no other conventional bus service operates.
- 2) The “small city bus”; the service operates within a city or town which is too small for a traditional city bus, but still too big to be served adequately by the regional services present.

As regards Bürgerrufautos, the concept is the same; the difference consists in collecting trips without fixed stops.

It is important to highlight that the potential service is limited by numbers of active Bürgerbus volunteers and the size of vehicle.

Usually, Bürgerbus operates following fixed routes and fixed timetables, available for the public. In recent years, several different service schemes such as Demand Responsive Transport service have been developed.

The trip purpose can be different as well. In most areas, people use the service for having access to shops and services, also for leisure or social activities. The service is free and runs daily, except on Friday and Saturday afternoons and on Sundays and public holidays.



Figure 9 – Bürgerbuses network

Target user groups and needs

Although Bürgerbus service is available to the general public, most travelers are elderly or people with reduced mobility. Considering the wide area covered by the service (one of the biggest German states), this Good Practice benefits also a range of other target groups including youngsters and families with children. In most areas, people use the service for having access to shops and services, also for leisure or social activities.

Involved Bodies

The key involved stakeholders were the following:

- The *Competence Centre for New Public Transport* at NVBW – Nahverkehrsgesellschaft Baden-Württemberg mbH, the mobility agency for the German federal state of Baden-Württemberg;
- The *State Association pro-Bürgerbus Baden-Württemberg*;
- Several German *Municipalities* which support the development of Bürgerbus.

Mobility services provided/addressed

Currently, the Bürgerbus Dreisam-Stromer operates a service that operates at more than 60 stops along four different lines. The service is operated thanks to the large participation of volunteer drivers.

The service is free and is heavily sponsored by shops, banks, etc. locals. It provides access to areas where conventional PT service is weak or does not exist at all. All users benefit from a service that runs four times a day. It is particularly important for the elderly and people with reduced mobility, who use the service for visits, shopping and leisure activities.

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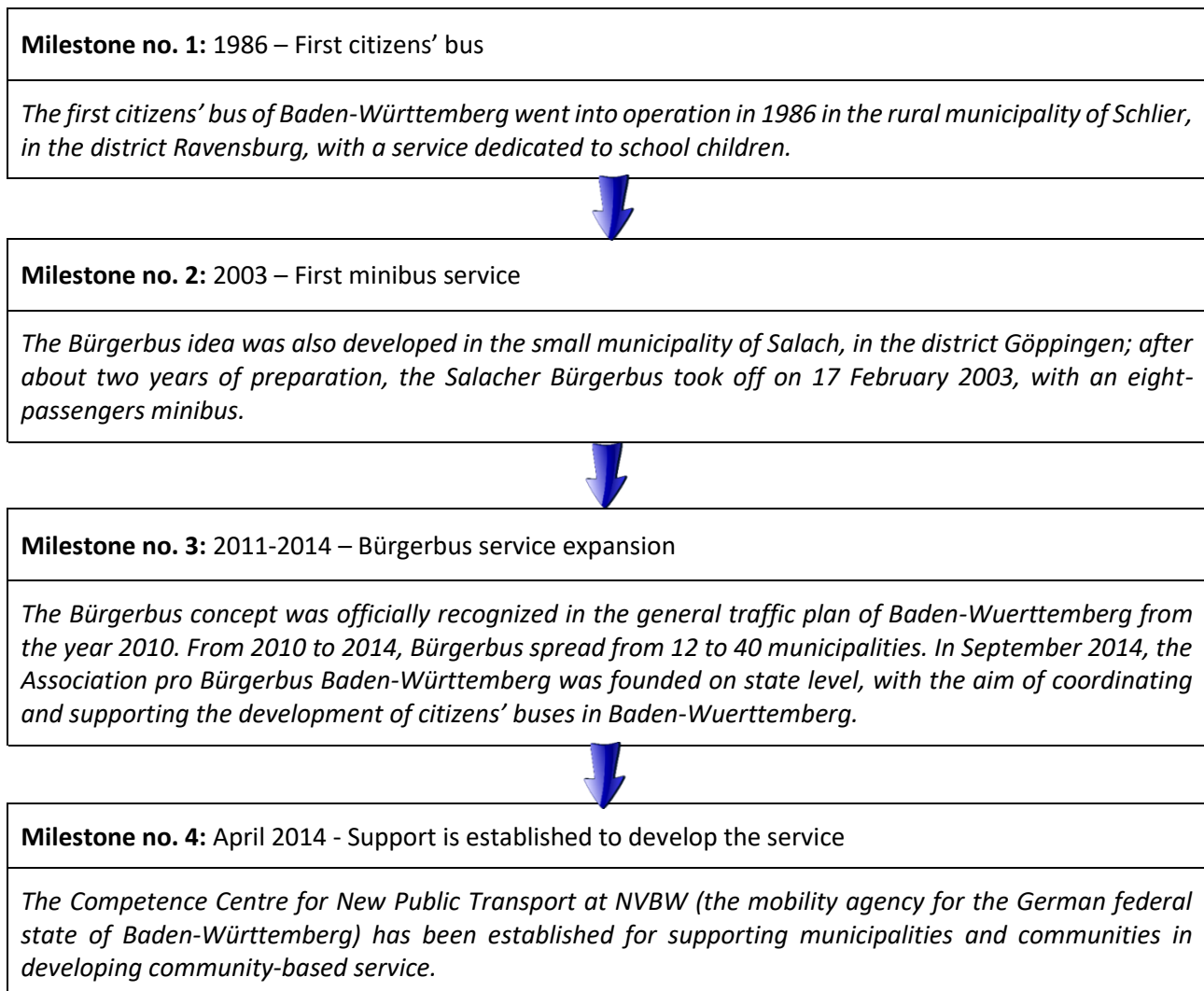
Ridership and other key metrics/results

The idea of developing community-based transport services, which in Germany was initiated in 1985, has successfully led to the development of 350 Bürgerbus services currently in operation. Through the years, only about 25 schemes had to close down. According to a national study from 2016, a Bürgerbus scheme should serve a population of at least 3000 persons (inhabitants in catchment area). Passenger numbers in most cases are between 300 and 2000 trips per month. However, in recent years the variety of schemes has grown, and the range is now considerably bigger.

Supporting technologies

Some Bürgerbus vehicles are equipped with automated lift for easing the access for people with reduced mobility and people in wheelchairs. However, there are no particular ICT or software requirements. Bürgerbus can work as a low-tech solution that based its success on the use of volunteer drivers and in the active participation of the local communities.

1.3.3 Timelines and Milestones



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1.3.4 Long-term assessment

Success, Durability and Expansion

The service created in the Baden-Württemberg region is in line with government planning, which has promoted the turnaround in the transport sector in order to improve citizens mobility and achieve climate protection objectives in the *Land* (State). Efficient and attractive public transport is at the heart of a successful transition in the transport sector. The state government has therefore set itself the ambitious goal of doubling the demand for public transport by 2030 compared to 2010. The anticipation that this goal can be achieved with a joint effort of all stakeholders is demonstrated by the study Public Transport Report of Baden-Württemberg presented by the Ministry of Transport in 2020.

The success and the durability of this service is highlighted by the number of Bürgerbus initiatives developed in the state of Baden-Württemberg over the last twenty years. A couple of initiatives were developed at early 2000; around a dozen in 2010; and more than 80 Bürgerbus are currently in operation.

Funding and Financing

Bürgerbus is financially sustained by a combination of state and private funding. The state of Baden-Württemberg has been supporting Bürgerbus projects since 2013 with various measures.

Regarding the financial aspect, the operating expenses of the personnel costs, which usually account for at least 60%, are largely reduced thanks to the voluntary participation of the citizens.

As regards the “investment” cost, the biggest part is due to the purchase of the vehicles: for new purchases, it is usually necessary to set around 30 000 - 40 000 euro for a standard minibus. With extra equipment (e.g. mini ramp for people in a wheelchair), the costs can be substantially higher. For a trial operation, a used vehicle could be a smart solution. Further investment costs include things such as costs for setting up additional stops (signs, construction works), timetables and notices (also at existing stops), phone for the vehicle, office Equipment (i.e. Computer workstation with Internet connection). For demand responsive transport services, the costs for stops are reduced; however, the equipment costs for the office are slightly higher.

The operating costs include expenses for driver’s license for passenger transport and health checks for drivers (administrative and medical expenses depending on location, between 200 and 300 euros per person), fuel costs, vehicle insurance, main inspection (TÜV), costs for the maintenance of the vehicles, advertising and marketing (website, printing costs timetables / information material, possibly ads) and other operating costs (for coordination and public relations).

Why is it considered a Good Practice?

Bürgerbus initiatives developed a lot in the state of Baden-Württemberg over the last twenty years. The involvement of the local citizens in the lead of a transport service allows a better understanding of communities needs and the possibility to develop a transport service really tailored to meet these needs.

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1.3.5 Transferability considerations

CONTEXT PECULIARITIES	TRANSFERABILITY CONDITIONS
<p>The shared transport service is feasible in areas poorly served by conventional public transport when there is a context where the spirit of the local community can be used.</p>	<p>The social aspect is one of the most interesting aspects of this good practice, especially due to the presence of a service that is completely different from the "impersonal" form of large conventional public transport. Small vehicle-based shared mobility services, especially community-based ones, bring a level of proximity with other people that can influence their willingness to share space.</p>
DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED/WEAKNESS	LESSONS LEARNT
<p>It is not always so easy to find a balance between the need for locally "owned" and developed schemes and the traditions and requirements of planning and administrations.</p> <p>In some cases, it could be not so easy to find an adequate number of volunteer drivers for covering most of the week days.</p>	<p>To develop such services, it depends mainly on community spirit, and the level of engagement on the local level. Indeed, to make the service work is usually not so much a technical question, rather a cultural and social one, i.e. convince people to use it. Thus, the importance of taking care of developing an accurate and strong promotional campaign.</p>

References for further details

Organization: NVBW Competence Centre (Nahverkehrsgesellschaft Baden-Württemberg mbH)
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