

MOBILITY ADVICE IN FRANKFURT SCHOOLS, GERMANY





Mobility Advice in Frankfurt Schools

Problem description

An increasing number of children and teenagers are driven to school and to leisure activities by their parents. Parents do not show them how to use the different public transport facilities or provide them with information about local public transport. Neither do parents set a practical example by using public transport themselves. As a result, children suffer from a lack of independence when travelling to school and to leisure activities.

As well as reflecting a lack of environmental awareness, this development means children and teenagers have exercise deficiencies which can lead to a wide range of health problems. What is more, the use of cars increases pollutants and noise and thus has a higher environmental impact.

Description of the campaign / measure

In the project STEP BY STEP – Mobility Advice in Frankfurt Schools, children and teenagers were informed about local public transport and introduced to the different information media. The aim was to lay a foundation for independent travel on public transport, to help to remove inhibitions and fears, to boost motivation to travel independently and to improve the image of local public transport. Subsequently, the students were able to implement what they had learned on an outing.

The targets of the project STEP BY STEP – Mobility Advice in Frankfurt Schools were as follows::

- to prepare a suitable method or concept for communication of the necessary knowledge of local public transport in a way oriented to children
- to teach children and teenagers the basic skills (reading a timetable, fares, etc.) so that they can travel independently on public transport
- to arouse interest in local public transport primarily in children/teenagers and indirectly in parents and teachers, to improve the image of local public transport
- if children, teenagers, parents and teachers are convinced of the benefits of local public transport, they will then act as multipliers (friends and acquaintances)

The Mobility Advice in Frankfurt Schools project predominantly addresses two target groups, namely classes 3-6 and classes 7-10 at Frankfurt schools.

Part 1: Classes 3-6

In classes 3-6, the focus was on communicating basic principles.

Since many of these children, particularly in classes 3, 4 and (early) 5, have hardly travelled on public transport (can usually walk to school, parents use cars for leisure activities too), they have little prior knowledge of local public transport and how to use it.

Campaign 1: Communication of knowledge to lay foundations for trial travel

In these classes, work was done with students to show them how to read a timetable in the timetable book, what information can be obtained from the timetable book (e.g. list of stops, sales points, range of tickets, lost property office, etc.) and how the timetables on display are structured and how they differ. In addition, they were told what a "direction" is and how to find out which direction to travel in to get to one's destination. Using overview maps (for example), routes were travelled in theory and changing points found.

Campaign 2: Implementing/trying out what has been learned

Students were then able to implement what they had learned on an outing. First, the outing was planned with the children in the class (the best means of transport to use, departure and arrival times, where to change, the cheapest type of ticket, etc.) Then the class set off on its outing. In other classes, local public transport was used directly after the advice session to go and see the work of the traffiQ timetable planners.

Part 2: Classes 7-10

Various measures were designed to motivate this target group to use buses, trams and trains more. Thus teenagers between 14 and 17 were encouraged to change over to increased use of buses, trams and trains in Frankfurt for a short time. They were assumed to have a basic knowledge of local public transport.

Campaign 1: Providing extra knowledge as a way of motivating students to try out Frankfurt public transport

A specially prepared quiz with questions about Frankfurt's local public transport was used to increase students' knowledge and encourage discussion. Questions in the quiz were, for example, how long a "short route" is or what you should do if a ticket machine is out of order. Questions were also asked about changing buses, trams or trains during travel, similar to the concept for classes 3-6.

Firstly, the quiz served as a presentation guideline for the mobility advisors. Secondly, it gave structure to the resulting discussion both with and between students and ensured that all subjects were addressed in an ordered sequence.

Campaign 2: Implementing/trying out what has been learned

All the relevant schools (schools with classes 7-10) were notified by circular of an offer of free use of Frankfurt's local public transport for one week with a free weekly ticket. A small poster was also designed to promote this campaign, to hang on the notice boards that all schools have. A total of 200 tickets were issued to students between 13th Nov. and 11th Dec. 2004. 71 questionnaires were returned. The students were able to choose at their own discretion when to start using the weekly ticket during this period.

In view of the good response, traffiQ repeated the campaign in January 2005. From 29th January 2005, traffiQ issued at the mobility centre another 77 test tickets (weekly tickets) to teenagers between 14 and 17. The campaign was closely oriented to Carnival time and commented by the press.

<p>Teenies fahren gratis Klasse Aktion der Nahverkehrsgesellschaft „traffiQ“: Die 77 Jugendlichen (bis 17 Jahre), die sich heute als erste in der Verkehrsinsel an der Hauptwache melden, gewinnen ein Testticket, mit denen sie in der Fastnachtswoche kostenlos Bus und Bahn fahren können.</p>	<p>TERMINE</p> <p>KOSTENLOSE KARTE · Ab sofort können Jugendliche bis 17 Jahre kostenlos eine Wochenkarte der Nahverkehrsgesellschaft Traffiq gewinnen. Die ersten 77, die in Mobilitätszentrale an der Hauptwache kommen, sparen dann den regulären Preis der Karte von 13,90 Euro. prak</p>
<p><i>Teenies go free</i> Great campaign by the "traffiQ" local transport company. The first 77 teenagers (up to 17) to report to the traffic island at Hauptwache today will win a test ticket with which they can travel free by bus and train during Carnival week. Source: BILD newspaper, of 28.01.05</p>	<p><i>Free ticket – From today on, teenagers up to 17 can win a free weekly ticket for the "traffiQ" local transport company. The first 77 to come to the mobility centre at Hauptwache will save the normal ticket price of EUR 13.90.</i> Source: Frankfurter Rundschau, newspaper of 28.01.05</p>

Who is the driving force behind it? Who is the beneficiary?

The instigator of the campaign is traffiQ, the Lokale Nahverkehrsgesellschaft Frankfurt am Main mbH. traffiQ works with the two target groups (students 3rd-6th class and students 7th-10th class) with the aim of motivating students to change to "new behaviour", namely (more frequent) use of buses, trams and trains and to try out this new behaviour for a short time.

Alongside this major target group, traffiQ is also trying to persuade parents and teachers to use buses, trams or trains more often or, respectively, to be more aware of the facilities offered by local public transport. To do this, traffiQ expressly addresses parents and teachers on the first page of the teaching leaflet "Tips for Newcomers", providing information on the concept "Mobility Advice in Frankfurt Schools" and soliciting support.



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At the same time, traffiQ is trying to establish strategic partnerships with political decision-makers, such as the City Schools Board or the Rhine-Main transport association.

Mission

To give children and teenagers greater independence when travelling to school and leisure activities by providing information on local public transport and its practical application. Environmental impact will then be reduced by less use of cars.

Results

Both the school advisory sessions and the test ticket campaign were backed up by questionnaires to record any changes in attitudes to local public transport or in mobility behaviour. For the test ticket campaign, a questionnaire was completed before and after the test week. For the school advisory sessions, data was obtained from some of the classes before instruction and from some after instruction. The results of questionnaires in school classes are pre-sented below, followed by those of the test ticket campaign.

a) Mobility advice at schools

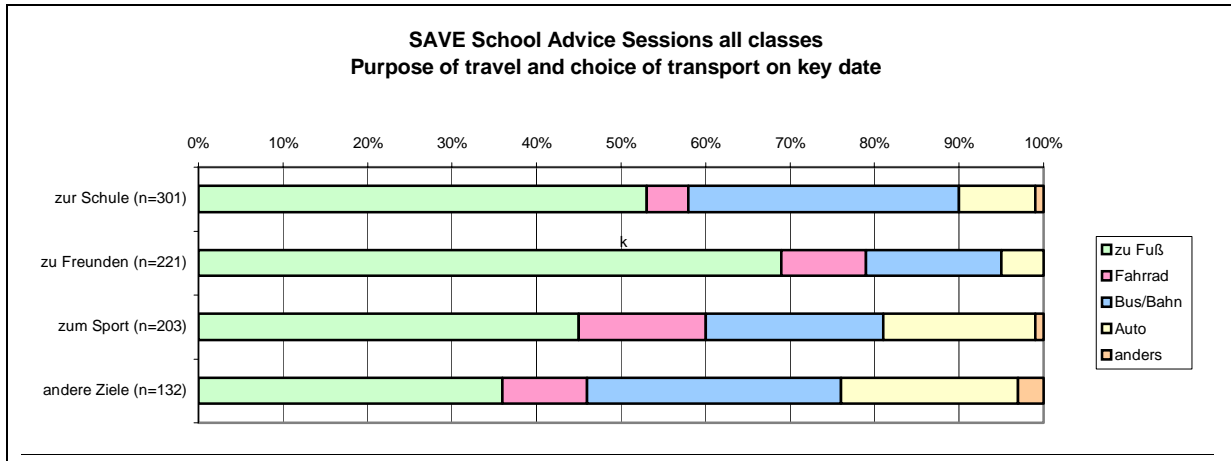
34 classes in the third to ninth years attended the traffiQ mobility advice sessions at a total of seven Frankfurt schools. Years four to six constituted the majority of 72 %. 386 students answered the questions on use of public transport and their attitude to Frankfurt public transport. A good half (56%) completed the questionnaire some time after the advice session and the rest before the session.

Getting to school

70 % of children answered the question about travel to and from school. Distances between 5 metres and 40 kilometres were given. The average distance was 2.4 kilometres. The estimated time taken to get to school ranges from one minute to 55 minutes. On an average, children took a quarter of an hour to get to school. There was only one child who did not answer this question.

On the key date, every second child walked to school (see Figure 1). 32 % used public transport. Nine per cent were brought to school by car and five per cent came by bicycle. As Figure 2 shows, most children came to school alone or accompanied by an adult (44 % each). The other 12 % came with siblings and/or friends.

AWARENESS FOR CLEAN URBAN TRANSPORT



Explanation:

zur Schule = to school

zu Freunden = to friends

zum Sport = to sports

andere Ziele = other places

andere = other

zu Fuß = on foot

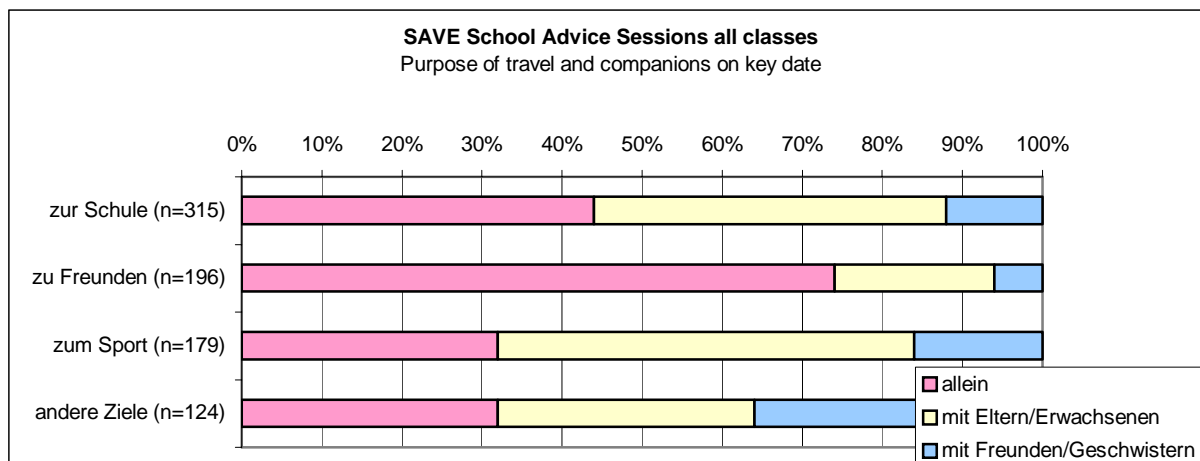
Fahrrad = by bicycle

Bus/ Bahn = bus/tram/train

Auto = car

Figure 1: Use of transport on key date

Figure 1 also shows use of transport to other destinations on the key date. For "normal" travel to school, to friends and sporting activities, the major means of transport are the child's own feet and bicycles. But 46 % of travel to other destinations (visits to doctor or family, after-school care, music lessons, etc.) is also performed on foot or by bicycle; the proportion of local public transport is 30 %.



Explanation:

zur Schule = to school

zu Freunden = to friends

zum Sport = to sports

andere Ziele = other places

allein = alone

mit Eltern/ Erwachsenen = with parents/adults

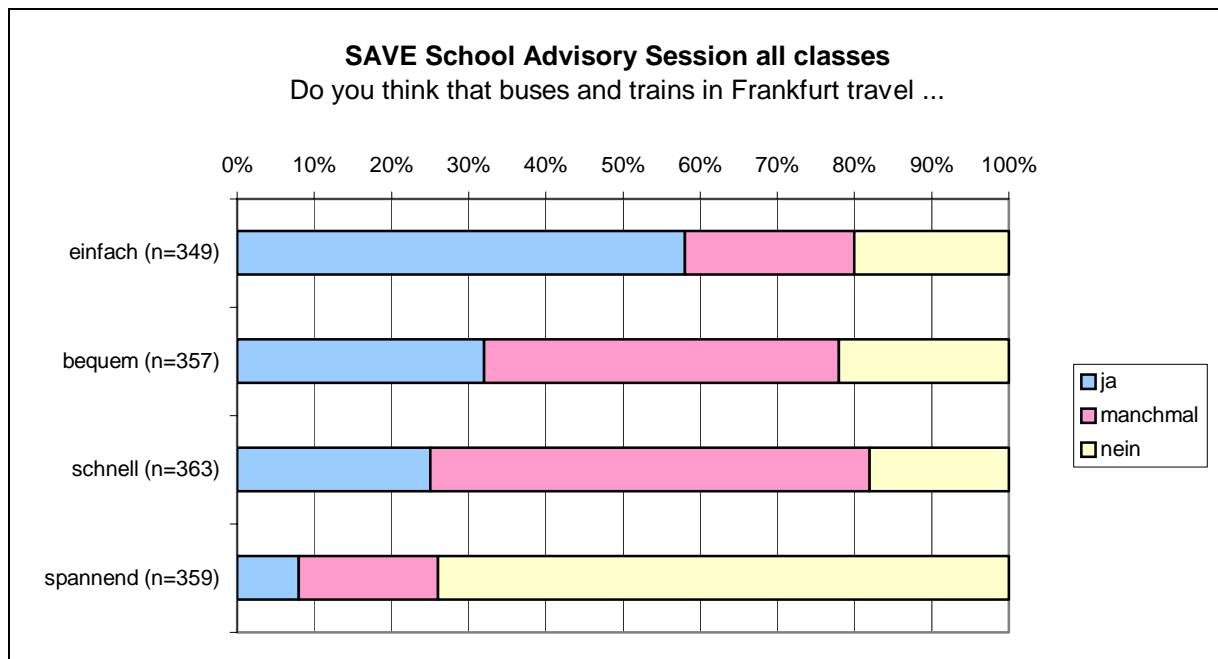
mit Freunden/ Geschwistern = with friends/siblings

Figure 2: Companions on key date

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Assessment of buses, trams and trains in Frankfurt

All the children were asked to assign buses, trams and trains a school mark and give their reasons. The range of marks from 1 to 6 was used. The average mark given to local public transport was 3 - "satisfactory". Most of the children thought that buses, trams and trains travel dully and simply in Frankfurt and sometimes fast and conveniently (see Figure 3). In addition, 108 children criticised punctuality, 104 complained about dirt and smells in vehicles. Overcrowding and damage from vandalism were each criticised 34 times as was the behaviour of driving and inspection staff (including way of driving).



Explanation:

einfach = simply

ja = yes

bequem = conveniently

manchmal = sometimes

schnell = fast

nein = no

spannend = excitingly

Figure 3: Assessment of Frankfurt public transport

It has already been explained above that some of the children answered the questionnaire before the advisory session and some after it, so that the two groups could be compared and any differences attributable to the advisory session revealed. The comparison shows that age and gender are spread equally in both groups but that there is a difference relating to the distance from home to school. The group questioned before the mobility advice session gives a distance of about 3 kilometres, whereas the group after it quotes 1.9 kilometres. Thus the time that the group questioned before the advice session takes to get to school is an average of 6 minutes longer (18 minutes). The result of the greater distance from school is that 44% of the group before the advice session get to school by public transport whereas this figure is only 22% for the group after the advice session. This does not affect the marking of the local public transport programme. In both groups, the average figure was 9 points, i.e. 3+. The attitude features of fast, convenient, exciting and simple are also assessed similarly by

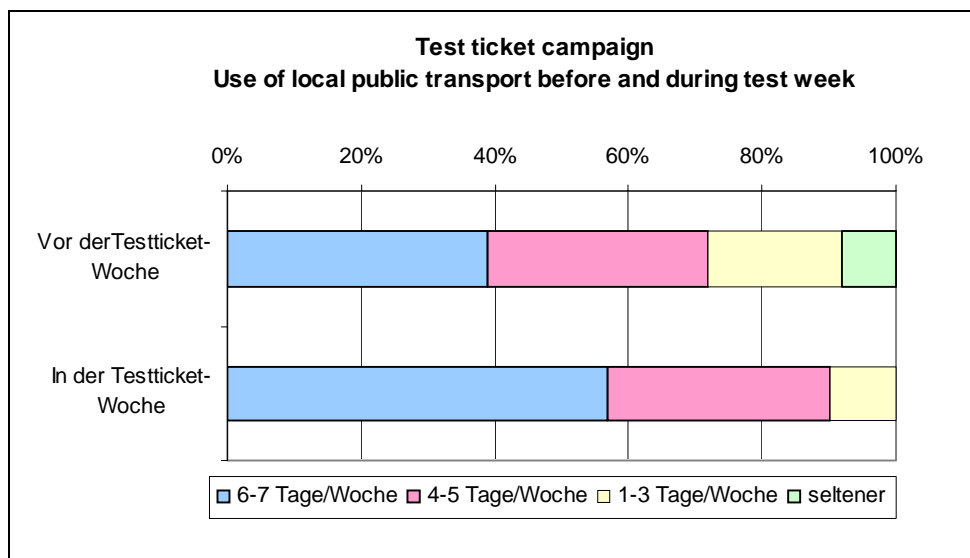
both groups. Both groups found local public transport to be dull and inconvenient. For speed, most of the children entered "sometimes". The ones completing the questionnaire after the advice session found it to be fast more often (29 %) than those completing it before (20 %).

10 % of the children answering before the advice session could not say whether use of local public transport was simple. Perhaps the wording of the question was not clear or they did not think about it. This is indicated by only 4 % of the group who had attended the advice session answering with "don't know". 56 % (after advice session) and 49 % (no advice session) answered "Yes".

b) Test ticket campaign

The response to the first test ticket campaign was very good. 277 test tickets were given to teenagers between 10 and 17. The two questionnaires were completed in full by 90 teenagers, with the proportion of girls being 52 %.

72 % of the participants used public transport at least four times per week before the test ticket week, whereas this proportion was 90 % during the test week (see Figure 4). The transport used was underground trains (38 %), buses (29 %), trams and district trains. The destinations were also varied (see Figure 5). The average mark given to Frankfurt public transport was 3+ before and 2- after the test week.



Explanation:

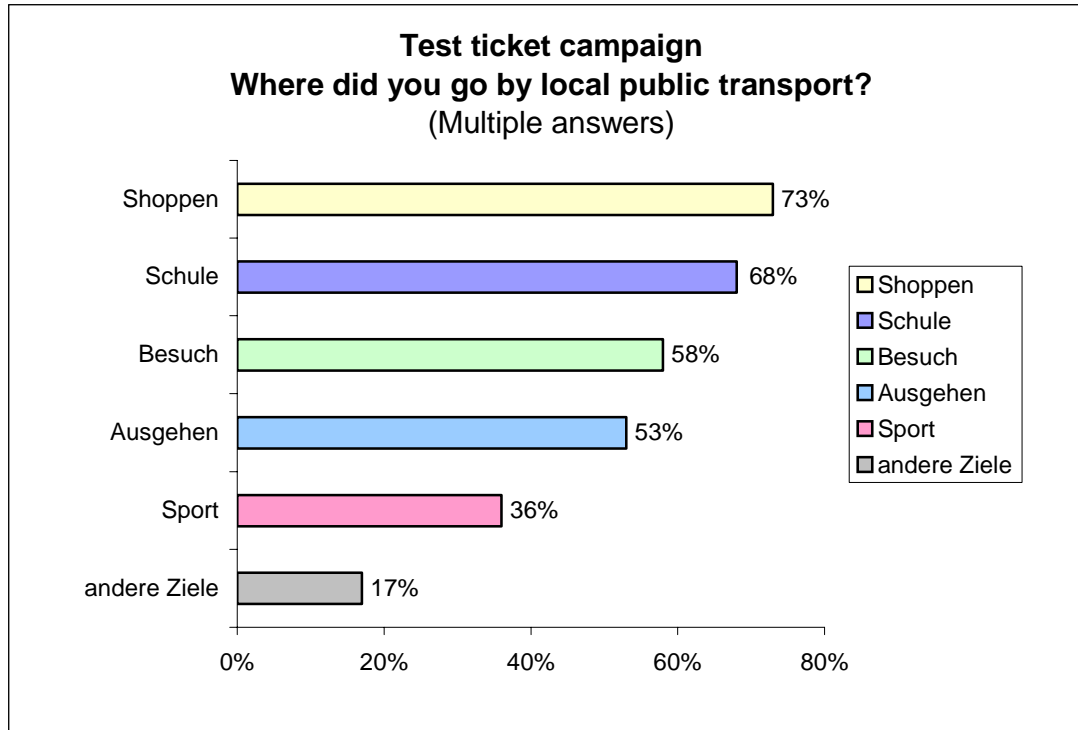
vor der Testticket-Woche = before the test ticket week

in der Testticket-Woche = in the test ticket week

Tage/ Woche = days/week

seltener = less often

Figure 4: Use of local public transport before and in the test ticket week



Explanation:

Schule = school

Sport = sports

Besuch = visit

Shoppen = shopping

Ausgehen = going out

andere Ziele = other places

Figure 5: Purpose of travel with test tickets

Opportunities / barriers

Factors of influence and criteria of success

- ongoing financial resources (personnel, etc.)
- classes should not be too large to ensure individual attention can be given to students
- classes should always be visited by two people so that the "weaker" children/teenagers can be given more help
- when recruiting schools, it is always useful to find a partner at each school (e.g. school head or teacher responsible for road safety education or similar)
- when recruiting schools, it is helpful to have a brochure/flyer with a brief summary of project content
- the personal interest or commitment of the teacher is of major importance for success
- it is advisable for the teacher to expand or repeat subject matter so that the children/teenagers get a good grasp of it
- there should be opportunities for a personal exchange/feedback with teachers/parents and children so that proposals for improvements can be made

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- give-aways, like pencils and rulers which can be used during the advice session, are always welcomed by children and teenagers
- it is advisable to produce a summarising instruction leaflet (separate sheets should be avoided), so that children can expand or repeat what they have learned after the mobility advice session and also so that any interested third parties can also be addressed indirectly by the leaflet

Possible barriers

- Recruiting: the greatest problem is approaching schools or target groups in order to inform them of the concept and convince them of its value. Circulars or info mailings sometimes get no further than secretarial offices before being discarded.
- The time factor should not be underestimated. Enough time must be allowed to find schools and classes, to prepare each advisory session, for travel, the session itself and follow-up/evaluation.
- It has been found that teachers of "upper" classes do not consider the subject of "mobility advice in schools" attractive enough. They are convinced that such a lesson is not important for their students because they are well-informed already. But it has been shown that students in the upper classes have no more than a poor knowledge of local public transport. For example, there is hardly a student who can read the timetable book

Steps for implementation – Frequently asked questions

Working steps for introduction

- Preparation of programme/concept (define content)
- Define and recruit target groups
- Implementation of concept
- Evaluation
- Dissemination / publication of results

Frequently asked questions

How long does an advice session last?

An advice session with a class lasts for two school lessons (after which children's concentration deteriorates) and should be repeated regularly.

Does an advice session involve costs for the school?

No. No costs are incurred for school or students.

What does the teacher have to do in preparation?

The teacher must provide two school lessons. He or she does not have to do anything else, since the mobility advisors bring all the necessary material with them

Information

Further information is available in German and English from
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Cost / Benefits

It is difficult to quote exact costs for the campaigns that have been completed. There are a large number of factors which contribute to success, primarily the personal commitment of the mobility advisors and also the willingness of teachers and students to take part. Thus personnel costs always have to be posted as fixed costs. The costs of an instruction leaflet depend on various aspects (size of leaflet, quality of content and graphical representation, etc.).

For recruitment, mailings were initially sent to schools. About 200 schools were approached, meaning that a total of EUR 288 (large envelopes) needs to be calculated for postage. The test tickets (weekly tickets for Frankfurt city district) cost 4984.50 EUR altogether. Then there were postage costs for the questionnaires sent to each participant after completion of the test ticket campaign and payment of postage costs for the participating teenagers to return the questionnaire – a total of 149.05 EUR. As part of the test ticket campaigns, the cinema vouchers (as an incentive to return the questionnaire) cost 300 EUR.

Further costs were incurred by the give-aways distributed during advice sessions. Wooden pencils and wooden rulers with the traffiQ logo and further infos about traffiQ (e.g. the traffiQ hotline) were used. For 2000 rulers and 1008 pencils, the costs for give-aways came to 2007.96 EUR.

Link and or article for more information

More information can be obtained from the final report of the STEP BY STEP project which can be downloaded from the projects website: www.eu-stepbystep.org

