



D3.1: Train the Walkers Seminar

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The CIPTEC Consortium consists of:

Participant #	Role	Partner	Country
1	Coordinator	AUTh	Greece
2	Beneficiary	TERO	Greece
3	Beneficiary	MVNGO	Italy
4	Beneficiary	KARGENC	Türkiye



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1.0	19/10/2024	Iason Tamiakis (Tero), Dimitrios Nalmpantis (AUPh)	The first draft was sent to the partners.
1.1	28/10/2024	Giancarlo Masi (MVNGO)	Provided input.
1.2	29/10/2024	Elif Kayhan (Kargenc)	Provided input.
1.3	30/10/2024	Iason Tamiakis (Tero)	Revised and updated the file. The final draft was sent to the partners.
1.4	30/10/2024	All partners	Reviewed final draft.
2.0	31/10/2024	Dimitrios Nalmpantis (AUPh)	Final editing and submission.





Abstract

This is the WalkingBus D3.1: Train the Walkers Seminar.

This deliverable is a public dissemination report that summarizes the proceedings of the seminars. The WalkingBus project involves partners from three (3) different countries: Greece, Italy, and Türkiye. To maximize efficiency and outreach, the consortium decided to conduct one training seminar in each country, delivered in the respective local language. This deliverable summarizes the proceedings from the local seminars, which were conducted in person and online.





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Acronyms

AUTh	Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
CO ₂	Carbon Dioxide
EACEA	European Education and Culture Executive Agency
KARGENC	Kargenc Environment Sport Club
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MVNGO	Mine Vaganti NGO
Q&A	Questions & Answers





1 Introduction

The WalkingBus project aims to encourage safe, sustainable, and community-driven transport options for children traveling to school by organizing WalkingBus routes in collaboration with schools and local communities across Greece, Italy, and Türkiye. A key element of this project is the “Train the Walkers Seminar,” a training program designed to equip the designated “walkers,” including teachers, parents, volunteers, and other stakeholders, with the necessary knowledge and skills to safely and effectively operate WalkingBus routes.

During this seminar, the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH) led the training sessions, focusing on the critical safety aspects essential for organizing and conducting WalkingBus journeys. AUTH’s guidance was complemented by Tero’s contribution, which centered on promoting the environmental benefits of WalkingBus and provided tools for fostering community engagement and awareness of the initiative.

This document summarizes the proceedings and key takeaways from these training sessions, which were delivered both in person and online to ensure accessibility and broader reach. Each seminar was conducted in the local language, ensuring clear communication and effective knowledge transfer among participants in each country. This report is intended as a public dissemination tool, capturing the approach and core insights from the seminars to guide the successful implementation of WalkingBus initiatives across diverse regions.

In total, 92 “walkers” participated, and thus, the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) of 50 participants was successfully met.





2 Train the Walkers Seminar Methodology

The methodology for the “Train the Walkers Seminar” was designed to provide practical and relevant training for participants, including teachers, parents, volunteers, and local partners involved in the WalkingBus project. Given the project’s multi-country scope, the methodology was structured to support local relevance while ensuring consistent delivery across Greece, Italy, and Türkiye. The training was organized into several stages, detailed in the following sub-chapters.

2.1 Training design and content development

The training content was collaboratively developed by AUTH and Tero, with each institution contributing its expertise in complementary areas:

- **Safety Focus (AUTH):** AUTH took the lead in creating safety guidelines, protocols, and best practices specifically for WalkingBus operations. These guidelines covered road safety, group management, emergency procedures, and risk mitigation techniques tailored for child pedestrian groups.
- **Environmental and Promotional Focus (Tero):** Tero developed materials highlighting the environmental benefits of walking buses, aiming to reduce reliance on car transport, lower emissions, and promote healthier habits. Additionally, Tero prepared promotional guidance to help participants advocate for the WalkingBus initiative within their communities and schools.

The training materials were adapted for each local context and translated into the respective languages to ensure clarity and cultural relevance.

2.2 Participant selection and invitation process

Each participating country identified key stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and local volunteers, to participate in the training. Invitations were extended to these groups, focusing on individuals with an active interest in community-based school transportation solutions.





AUTh and local partners managed registration and coordinated participation logistics to accommodate both online and in-person attendees.

2.3 Training delivery

To maximize accessibility and engagement, training was delivered through a combination of:

- Online seminars: An online format was chosen to reach a broader audience and ensure that participants across different regions could join remotely. These sessions provided flexibility and increased accessibility to training resources.
- In-person sessions: In some countries, in-person sessions were held to reinforce learning, facilitate practical demonstrations, and allow for hands-on experience in a controlled environment. Local facilitators supported these sessions.

Each seminar was conducted in the respective local language, with Questions & Answers (Q&A) support provided as necessary to ensure participant comprehension and engagement.

2.4 Data collection and feedback mechanism

To gauge the seminar's effectiveness, participants were asked to provide feedback at the end of each session. Feedback was collected through:

- Post-training surveys: These surveys gathered quantitative data on participant satisfaction, clarity of content, and perceived usefulness of the training modules.
- Qualitative feedback: Open-ended questions allowed participants to share insights on areas for improvement, additional resources they might need, and their interest in further involvement in WalkingBus project initiatives.

The feedback was analyzed to inform adjustments in future training and to evaluate the overall impact of the seminars on participants' readiness to operate walking buses safely and sustainably.





2.5 Reporting and dissemination

This report summarizes the findings from each country's seminar, consolidating participant feedback, content effectiveness, and the success of the delivery methods used. By comparing the results across different regions, this report aims to provide insights that may support the refinement of future WalkingBus initiatives and encourage broader adoption of the walking bus concept.





3 Realization of the Train the Walkers Seminars

In this Chapter, the proceedings of each seminar on each country will be summarized. The WalkingBus consortium developed a template for this reason, as seen below.

3.1 Greece

Responsible organization:	Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH) & Tero (Tero)
Date:	24/10/2024
Number of sessions implemented:	One (1)
Location (or online platform):	Zoom
Participants target groups:	Parents, Teachers, Volunteers, General Public, Researchers
Total attendees:	29
Main Goal & Specific Objectives: The goal of the “Train the Walkers” seminar for the Greek case is to equip parents, teachers, and volunteers with the knowledge and skills necessary to implement the WalkingBus initiative safely and effectively within their local communities. Specifically, the seminar aims to: 1. Enhance Safety Awareness: Provide participants with in-depth guidance on road safety, child supervision, and emergency protocols to ensure safe WalkingBus operations for students commuting to and from school. 2. Promote Environmental Benefits: Educate participants on the environmental advantages of the WalkingBus, emphasizing how reduced car use can contribute to lower emissions, cleaner air, and a healthier community. 3. Empower Community Advocacy: Enable participants to become advocates for the WalkingBus within their schools and neighborhoods by equipping them with promotional tools and messaging strategies to encourage broader community involvement.	





4. Foster Consistency in WalkingBus Operations: Establish standardized practices across all WalkingBus routes, ensuring that all involved stakeholders in Greece are aligned on operational protocols and sustainability goals.

Event Description: The “Train the Walkers” seminar for the WalkingBus initiative in Greece was held online via Zoom, gathering a diverse group of 29 participants, including parents, teachers, and local volunteers. The seminar, designed to support the establishment and smooth operation of WalkingBus routes, focused on equipping participants with practical skills and knowledge to manage safe, environmentally-friendly, and community-supported walking routes for children commuting to school.

Hosted by the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH), with collaborative insights from Tero, the session covered mainly the safety protocols and best practices as well as promotion strategies. that can provide the tools to encourage broader community involvement in the WalkingBus initiative. The seminar concluded with a feedback session, allowing attendees to express their views on the training’s clarity, usefulness, and overall impact on their readiness to organize and lead WalkingBus routes.

Implementation Process: The implementation process for the “Train the Walkers” seminar in Greece involved several carefully planned steps to ensure effective training delivery and participant engagement. A breakdown of the process follows:

1. Planning and Coordination:

- Content Development: AUTH and Tero collaborated to develop the training content, with AUTH focusing on safety protocols and best practices for WalkingBus operations, and Tero addressing environmental benefits and community promotion strategies.
- Translation and Localization: The training materials were translated into Greek and adapted for the local context to ensure that the content was accessible, relevant, and easily understood by all participants.

2. Participant Outreach and Registration:

- Targeted Invitations: Invitations were sent to key stakeholders, including parents, teachers, and community volunteers interested in or currently involved in the WalkingBus initiative.





- Registration Management: A registration link was shared with invitees to streamline attendance tracking and ensure efficient management of the online seminar on Zoom.

3. Training Delivery:

- Zoom Online Seminar: The seminar was conducted online via Zoom, allowing participants to join remotely. This format was chosen to maximize accessibility, especially for those unable to attend an in-person event.
- Dual Focus Presentation:
 - Safety Training: AUTH led this segment, focusing on practical safety guidelines, group management, emergency response, and child supervision techniques specific to the WalkingBus context.
 - Environmental and Promotional Training: Tero led the session on the environmental impact of walking buses and provided strategies for promoting the initiative within communities and schools to encourage wider participation.
- Interactive Q&A and Discussion: The seminar included a Q&A session to address participants' specific concerns and foster an interactive environment. Participants engaged actively, asking questions and sharing insights related to their experiences and expectations for the WalkingBus.

4. Feedback Collection and Analysis:

- Post-Seminar Feedback: A short survey was distributed to gather feedback on the seminar's content, delivery, and overall effectiveness. Participants were encouraged to comment on what they found most useful and suggest any additional topics for future training.
- Data Analysis: Feedback responses were analyzed to assess participants' readiness to implement WalkingBus routes and identify areas for improvement in future seminars.

5. Reporting and Dissemination:

- Summary Report: Following the seminar, a report was prepared to document the training's outcomes and participant feedback. This report contributes to





the WalkingBus project's public dissemination efforts, capturing the seminar's proceedings and its impact on community members involved in the initiative.

This structured implementation process ensured that participants were not only informed but actively engaged, equipped with essential skills, and motivated to implement safe and sustainable WalkingBus routes in their communities.

Challenges and Issues Encountered: Some of the challenges and issues encountered during the implementation of the “Train the Walkers” seminar in Greece follow:

1. Technical Difficulties:

- **Connectivity Issues:** Some participants faced unstable Internet connections, causing occasional disruptions in audio and video. This affected their ability to fully engage and follow the training content, especially during interactive discussions.
- **Familiarity with Zoom:** A few participants had limited experience with Zoom, leading to minor delays as they navigated features like muting/unmuting and using the chat for questions.

2. Limited Engagement and Interaction:

- **Reduced Face-to-Face Engagement:** The online format, while necessary for accessibility, limited the level of interaction and hands-on engagement compared to an in-person seminar. This impacted the effectiveness of certain safety demonstrations and group management techniques that would be better understood through practical, in-person training.
- **Participant Hesitation in Q&A:** Some participants were hesitant to ask questions in the open forum, possibly due to unfamiliarity with online seminars or concerns about interrupting the flow of the presentation.

3. Varied Backgrounds and Knowledge Levels:

- **Diverse Experience Levels:** The audience included participants with varying levels of familiarity with the walking bus concept and safety protocols. This created a challenge in maintaining a balanced pace that met the needs of both experienced and novice attendees.





- Differing Expectations: Some attendees expected more community-building and promotional guidance, while others were primarily interested in safety protocols. Managing these differing expectations required careful adjustment of content emphasis and time allocation.

4. Language and Content Localization:

- Technical Language Barriers: While materials were translated into Greek, certain technical safety terms and environmental concepts required additional clarification, as some attendees found them complex. This sometimes led to additional questions and required real-time adjustments from the presenters to simplify explanations.
- Adapting Global Concepts to Local Contexts: Some content related to the environmental impact and community promotion strategies needed to be adapted to resonate with the local cultural and environmental context, which required additional time and adjustments during the session.

5. Feedback Collection Limitations:

- Limited Survey Participation: While feedback was essential for evaluating the seminar's impact, not all participants completed the post-seminar survey, leading to partial insights on overall participant satisfaction and effectiveness.
- Time Constraints on Feedback: Collecting qualitative feedback during the session was challenging due to time constraints, resulting in fewer insights on real-time reactions or immediate takeaways from participants.

These challenges provided valuable insights for enhancing future training sessions, including better pre-seminar technical support, simplified content, and potential in-person follow-ups to strengthen participants' readiness and comfort in leading WalkingBus routes.

General Overview and Results: The "Train the Walkers" seminar in Greece successfully engaged 29 participants, including parents, teachers, and volunteers, who joined via Zoom. The training was delivered by AUPh, focusing on safety protocols, and Tero, emphasizing environmental benefits and promotional strategies for the WalkingBus initiative.





Despite minor technical issues and varied participant familiarity with the content, the seminar achieved its primary goals of equipping attendees with essential knowledge and skills for running WalkingBus routes.

Results:

- **Positive Participant Engagement:** Most attendees actively participated, particularly during the Q&A session, expressing enthusiasm for implementing the WalkingBus.
- **Increased Awareness:** Participants reported a better understanding of safety protocols and the environmental impact of WalkingBus activities.
- **Constructive Feedback:** Feedback indicated high satisfaction with the training, though some participants suggested more localized examples and practical demonstrations for future sessions.

Overall, the seminar fostered community readiness and laid a strong foundation for expanding the WalkingBus initiative within Greece.

Satisfaction: Feedback from participants was generally positive, with most attendees expressing satisfaction with the seminar's content and delivery. Key points from the feedback include the relevance of the content which focused on both safety and environmental aspects and the clarity since the information was clear.

Learning Outcomes:

1. **Safety Awareness:**
 - **Understanding:** Safety protocols, including group management and emergency procedures.
 - **Confidence:** Attendees reported feeling more confident in ensuring child safety, suggesting the training successfully addressed safety concerns.
2. **Environmental Awareness:**
 - **Comprehension:** Participants demonstrated a solid understanding of the environmental benefits of the WalkingBus initiative, acknowledging the importance of reducing car usage and promoting active travel.
 - **Motivation:** The environmental emphasis was well received which results to motivation to advocate for eco-friendly transport solutions in communities.





3. Promotion and Organization Skills:

- The material delivered enhanced readiness to promote the concept of walking bus as well as boosted organization confidence.

Overall, the seminar effectively enhanced participant knowledge and skills, with strong outcomes in safety awareness, environmental understanding, and organizational confidence.

Effect of the Activity: The “Train the Walkers” seminar successfully prepared participants to implement WalkingBus routes, equipping them with the knowledge and skills needed to ensure safe and organized operations. The training fostered a sense of community responsibility and raised awareness of the environmental benefits of the initiative.

Next Steps and Actions:

1. **Implementation of Pilot Rounds:** Following this seminar, three (3) rounds of WalkingBus pilots will be conducted at a selected site. These pilots will serve as practical applications of the training content, allowing participants to gain hands-on experience in real WalkingBus operations. The pilots will also provide valuable insights for refining the WalkingBus model and assessing its effectiveness in the selected community.
2. **Follow-up with Participants:** Participants were encouraged to follow-up communication for continued support. This will help reinforce the knowledge gained and offer guidance as they could potentially implement WalkingBus routes.
3. **Potential for Replicability:** The seminar and pilot rounds have demonstrated the potential for expanding the WalkingBus concept to other communities. The training materials and insights gained from the pilot implementation can be adapted for similar initiatives in other regions, ensuring a scalable and replicable model for safe, sustainable school transportation.

With the completion of this training and the upcoming pilot rounds, no further training sessions are planned.





However, the initial training and pilot data will form the basis for ongoing support and future adaptations, supporting the WalkingBus initiative's growth and long-term sustainability.

Conclusions: The “Train the Walkers” seminar effectively prepared participants to launch and manage WalkingBus routes, with a strong emphasis on safety, environmental impact, and community engagement. The seminar achieved high satisfaction levels, and participants demonstrated readiness to implement the WalkingBus concept in their communities. The upcoming three (3) rounds of pilot implementations will provide valuable hands-on experience and insights, further solidifying the WalkingBus project's potential for positive, sustainable change in school transportation. With these foundations in place, the WalkingBus concept is poised for replicability in other regions, supporting safer and more eco-friendly travel for schoolchildren.

Attachments/Photos:

Screenshots from the online Train the Walkers seminar in Greece follow (Figure 3-1, Figure 3-2, Figure 3-3, and Figure 3-4).

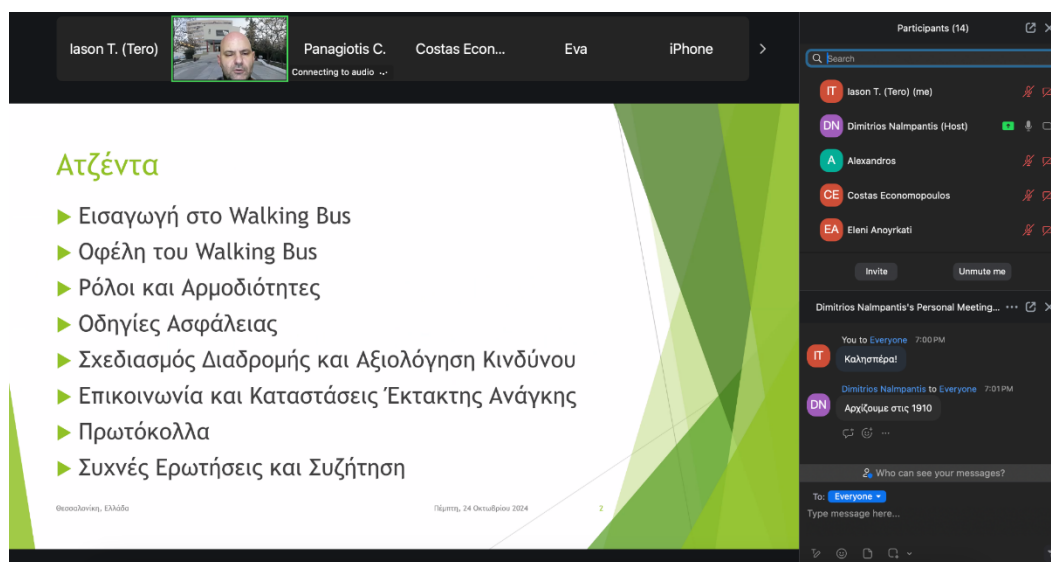


Figure 3-1: Screenshot of the agenda of the seminar in Greece.



Πρωτόκολλα Έκτακτης Ανάγκης

- ▶ Μικροτραυματισμοί: Να έχετε μαζί σας βασικά κιτ πρώτων βοηθειών και να γνωρίζετε τα βήματα πρώτων βοηθειών.
- ▶ Σοβαρά επείγοντα περιστατικά: Καλέστε τις υπηρεσίες έκτακτης ανάγκης (ΕΚΑΒ 166) και γνωρίζετε τα πλησιέστερα ασφαλή σημεία.
- ▶ Σχέδιο εκκένωσης: Να έχετε μια διαδικασία σε περίπτωση έκτακτης ανάγκης, όπως αλλαγή διαδρομής ή διαχωρισμό της ομάδας.

Θεσσαλονίκη, Ελλάδα Πέμπτη, 24 Οκτωβρίου 2024 35

Participants (20)

Participant	Status
iPhone	✓
MP	✓
Samsung SM-A256B	✓
Stavroula Kanakidou	✓
Theodoti Eleftheriadou	✓
Vasilis Sardellas	✓
ΒΑΣΙΛΙΑΔΗ	✓
Δάφνη Ψαρρά	✓
ΚΑΔΑΠ Kids Athletics	✓
Νικητας Μπαχαρσας	✓
Panagiotis C.	✓
Ευαγγελία Μπελάκου	✓
ΠΑΡΑΣΚΕΥΗ	✓

Figure 3-2: Screenshot of the emergency protocols of the seminar in Greece.

Οδηγίες Ασφάλειας

- ▶ Να θυμάστε!
- ▶ Τα παιδιά έχουν μειωμένη αντίληψη του κινδύνου.
- ▶ Τα παιδιά βλέπουν διαφορετικά.
- ▶ Τα παιδιά ακούν διαφορετικά.
- ▶ Τα παιδιά δεν έχουν μεγάλη εμπειρία κυκλοφορίας.

Θεσσαλονίκη, Ελλάδα Πέμπτη, 24 Οκτωβρίου 2024 36

Participants (21)

Participant	Status
Ilias Trochidis	✓
iPhone	✓
Stavroula Kanakidou	✓
Theodoti Eleftheriadou	✓
Vasilis Sardellas	✓
AA	✓
ΒΑΣΙΛΙΑΔΗ	✓
Δάφνη Ψαρρά	✓
ΚΑΔΑΠ Kids Athletics	✓
Νικητας Μπαχαρσας	✓
Panagiotis C.	✓
Ευαγγελία Μπελάκου	✓
ΠΑΡΑΣΚΕΥΗ	✓

Figure 3-3: Screenshot of the safety guidelines of the seminar in Greece.



WalkingBus D3.1: Train the Walkers Seminar

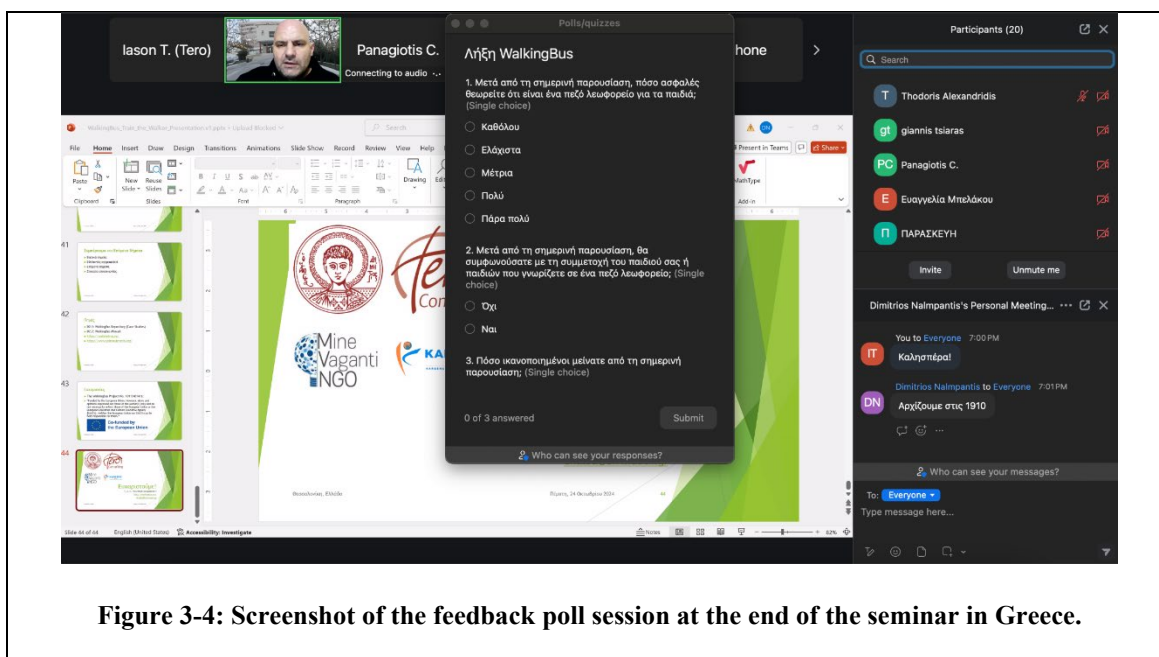


Figure 3-4: Screenshot of the feedback poll session at the end of the seminar in Greece.

3.2 Italy

Responsible organization:	Mine Vaganti NGO (MVNGO)
Date:	28/10/2024
Number of sessions implemented:	One (1)
Location (or online platform):	Conference Room at Sassari, Italy
Participants target groups:	Teachers, Public authorities
Total attendees:	20
Event Description: The event has been organized by MVNGO , in a conference room in Sassari, Italy. As an organization, MVNGO invited two (2) schools of the town to join the seminar and public authorities’ representatives (citizen committees). The following agenda has been followed: 1. Presentation of MVNGO. 2. Presentation of the WalkingBus project. 4. Expectations.	





5. Seminar session.
6. Evaluation.
7. Planning.

Implementation Process: The session opened with an introduction to MVNGO, detailing its role in social projects and its commitment to sustainable and educational initiatives. This presentation set the stage for the seminar, outlining MVNGO's mission and previous work, which contextualized the WalkingBus project within broader efforts toward environmental sustainability and community cohesion. Participants were then introduced to the WalkingBus project, covering its objectives, target groups, and anticipated outcomes. Key aspects of the WalkingBus concept were emphasized, including the importance of road safety, environmental impact, health benefits, and community engagement. The presentation established a shared understanding among participants regarding the purpose and potential impact of implementing such an initiative in local communities.

We explored participants' expectations for the seminar, opening the floor for teachers, committee members, and other stakeholders to express what they hoped to gain from the session. This allowed for alignment on goals, highlighting aspects participants felt were particularly relevant to their local contexts, such as improving children's road safety awareness or fostering social bonds among families. Teachers presented their respective schools and the unique characteristics of their local areas. This was an opportunity for participants to discuss existing challenges and any relevant practices already in place, such as similar safe travel initiatives or community-led safety programs. Local committees also shared their roles and responsibilities, demonstrating their support for the project and commitment to enhancing community safety and environmental sustainability.

Attendees were asked whether any practices similar to the WalkingBus initiative were already implemented in their communities or schools. This helped identify potential synergies and gaps that the WalkingBus project could address, ensuring the approach would be adapted to local needs.





Following the common content structure, seminar sessions covered various aspects of the WalkingBus project, such as safety protocols, environmental benefits, and planning sustainable routes.

The sessions were interactive, allowing participants to engage in discussions, ask questions, and share their perspectives. This step-by-step exploration helped deepen their understanding of how to implement and promote the WalkingBus concept in their communities.

At the end of the seminar, participants provided feedback on the session content and structure, discussing their takeaways and any adjustments needed to fit their specific needs. This evaluation helped highlight the most effective parts of the seminar and any additional resources or support needed.

The session concluded with a planning discussion, during which participants outlined the next steps for implementing the WalkingBus project in their schools or communities. This included setting timelines, identifying resource requirements, and establishing follow-up points with MVNGO.

Successes and Difficulties: In terms of success, both schools have committed to proposing the WalkingBus activities to families, showing strong initial support for the project. However, a noted difficulty is the potential challenge of securing consistent cooperation from families, which may impact participation and sustainability of the initiative.

General Overview and Results: The WalkingBus Project seminar successfully trained 20 WalkingBus walkers, equipping them with foundational skills and knowledge to implement the WalkingBus initiative in their communities. The main objectives of this initiative are to improve children's road safety, reduce environmental impact, and promote social cohesion through supervised walking routes to school.

The seminar introduced trainers to the WalkingBus concept, focusing on its benefits for both health and environmental sustainability. Trainers learned key safety protocols, such as using sidewalks, crosswalks, and reflective vests and maintaining a structured formation to ensure children's safety. They also explored route planning strategies, including selecting low-traffic paths, ensuring safe crossing points, and establishing rest





areas. Trainers were instructed on handling emergency protocols and equipped with first-aid basics to manage minor incidents along the routes.

A key part of the seminar involved understanding the environmental benefits of the walking bus. Trainers were educated on how walking to school reduces Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) emissions and improves air quality by reducing car traffic around schools. These practices align with broader sustainability goals by instilling lifelong eco-friendly habits in children and encouraging families to adopt sustainable transport options.

Social and community benefits were emphasized as well, with trainers understanding how the walking bus promotes friendships among children, teaches essential road safety skills, and fosters a sense of community as parents, schools, and local authorities collaborate to support the initiative.

The results from the seminar indicate that both schools involved plan to propose the WalkingBus activities to families. Trainers have acquired a comprehensive foundation in WalkingBus operations, making them prepared to lead safe and organized walking routes, engage with families, and support sustainable practices within their communities. Despite potential challenges with family participation, the commitment of these trainers and schools lays a strong groundwork for the WalkingBus project's implementation and impact.

Satisfaction: All the participants were highly satisfied with the training seminar.

Effect of the Activity: The WalkingBus Project activity has made a significant impact by preparing trainers and engaging school communities in sustainable, health-promoting practices. Training 20 WalkingBus walkers provided participants with essential skills to implement the walking bus concept effectively. This training has enhanced their ability to ensure road safety, manage children's well-being along walking routes, and encourage eco-friendly habits that contribute to cleaner, healthier communities.

The activity's emphasis on environmental impact—such as reducing CO₂ emissions by lowering car usage near schools—has made participants more conscious of their role in promoting sustainability. Trainers learned that encouraging walking not only decreases emissions but also minimizes local traffic congestion, leading to a safer and more pleasant environment around schools.



Socially, the activity fosters stronger community ties. Trainers, parents, and schools are collaborating to support the WalkingBus, creating a sense of shared responsibility. Children benefit from social interactions and the development of leadership and safety skills through this supervised group activity, which also promotes daily physical activity that contributes to overall well-being.

However, while both schools are eager to propose the WalkingBus to families, a challenge remains in obtaining consistent family cooperation, which is crucial for sustaining the initiative. Despite this, the project has set a foundation for ongoing collaboration between schools and families, helping communities adopt healthier and more sustainable habits.

Attachments/Photos:

Photographs from the in-person Train the Walkers seminar in Italy follow (Figure 3-5, Figure 3-6, Figure 3-7, and Figure 3-8).



Figure 3-5: Introduction to the seminar in Italy.



Figure 3-6: Presentation of safety guidelines in the seminar in Italy.



Figure 3-7: Presentation of tools and methods in the seminar in Italy.



Figure 3-8: “Walkers” attending the seminar in Italy.

3.3 Türkiye

Responsible organization:	Kargenc Environment Sport Club (KARGENC Club)
Date:	16/10/2024 & 25/10/2024
Number of sessions implemented:	Two (2)
Location (or online platform):	1. Erenler Primary School 2. Kuyumculu Primary School
Participants target groups:	School managers, Teachers, parents, and volunteers (young people)
Total attendees:	42





Main Goal & Specific Objectives: The main goal was to introduce and promote the concept of the Walking Bus system to ensure safe, eco-friendly, and community-driven transportation for children to and from school.

Objectives included raising awareness about the environmental benefits, discussing security concerns, and addressing parental interest in this initiative.

Raising Awareness: Educating parents, teachers, and volunteers about the benefits of a walking bus, particularly the environmental, health, and community-building aspects.

Addressing Safety Concerns: Discuss measures to ensure children's safety, including designated safe walking routes, the presence of responsible volunteers, and safety gear.

Increasing Parental Engagement: Encouraging parents to consider active involvement in the WalkingBus initiative.

Fostering Community Collaboration: Building a network of parents, teachers, and community members who can support and manage the WalkingBus operations.

Event Description: The seminar was held over two (2) sessions, both at a rural and an urban school, to cater to different demographics and community structures:

1. **Rural School Session:** Held at the Kuyumculu Primary School, this session focused on parents and community members interested in sustainable transportation options suitable for longer, rural routes with the participation of 18 people (teachers and parents). Attendees highlighted unique challenges faced in rural areas, such as longer walking distances and limited infrastructure for pedestrian safety. Participants showed enthusiasm for the potential health benefits for children and saw it as a community-building opportunity.
2. **Urban School Session:** Hosted at Erenler Primary School with a larger student population (approximately 1,000 students), the urban session had a high turnout from parents, teachers, and volunteers with the participation of 23 people. In the urban context, discussions centered on navigating busy streets, ensuring adequate supervision on congested routes, and collaborating with local authorities to establish safe pedestrian pathways. The larger school community displayed a strong interest in the walking bus as a way to manage traffic congestion around the school.





Implementation Process: There was high engagement, with attendees actively participating in Q&A sessions and discussions. There were 18 participants from Kuyumculu Primary School and 23 participants from Erenler Primary School. Parents, in particular, expressed a keen interest in the Walking Bus system and inquired about its practical applications. Key questions were centered around:

- Security and safety measures for children.
- Coordination of volunteers to ensure sufficient supervision.
- Potential routes and schedule management.
- Weather conditions.

Key aspects of implementation included the following:

Parent and Teacher Engagement: Parents and teachers actively participated in discussions, asking questions and sharing concerns about logistics, safety, and volunteer roles.

Volunteer Interest: Several volunteers expressed readiness to contribute to the WalkingBus initiative, though some sought clarification on their roles, schedules, and responsibilities.

Q&A Sessions: Attendees raised key questions around the following:

1. Security Protocols: What specific security measures would be in place to protect children on the routes?
2. Scheduling and Routes: How would routes be determined, and what options are available for flexible schedules?
3. Supervision Requirements: How many volunteers would be needed, and would there be any formal training or support from the school?
4. Weather Conditions: What happens in different weather conditions?

The discussions were constructive, with many parents showing genuine enthusiasm for the initiative while acknowledging logistical and safety concerns that needed to be addressed.

Challenges and Issues Encountered: Several recurring challenges and concerns arose during both sessions, such as the following:





- **Safety and Security Concerns:** Parents were worried about child safety on busy or poorly monitored routes. Concerns included crossing busy intersections, child supervision, and potential security risks in both urban and rural areas.
- **Volunteer Availability:** Especially in the rural area, participants questioned the feasibility of securing enough volunteers for longer routes, where the distance between homes and school might vary significantly.
- **Parental Hesitancy:** While supportive in theory, some parents were hesitant to let younger children participate without comprehensive safety protocols, raising questions about risk management and emergency response plans.
- **Logistical Limitations:** Both the rural and urban schools faced specific logistical concerns, such as the lack of sidewalks and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure on certain routes.

General Overview and Results: The seminar successfully achieved its main goal of raising awareness and generating interest in the WalkingBus project and initiative. Both urban and rural communities displayed a strong interest in adopting the concept, but security concerns need to be resolved before full implementation.

Interest Levels: High levels of interest and support for the project were expressed, especially concerning its health and environmental benefits. Also, they agreed that the WalkingBus initiative will have positive economic effects and be friendly regarding the busy times of the families. On the other hand, it will have a contribution on the children's attention on their classes at the first hours of their classes thanks to their physical activeness.

Community Feedback: Attendees expressed optimism about the potential for community involvement and collaboration, with parents willing to contribute time and resources once safety concerns were fully addressed.

Satisfaction: Overall, feedback from participants was positive. The seminar was informative, and parents appreciated the initiative's goals of reducing traffic congestion, promoting health, and fostering a sense of community.

Results:





1. **Safety Awareness:** Parents gained a better understanding of necessary safety precautions, and many were willing to support safety enhancements, such as reflective vests, walking sticks, and designated crossing points.
2. **Environmental Awareness:** Attendees responded positively to the environmental aspect, understanding that a walking bus can reduce the schools' carbon footprint.
3. **Confidence in Promotion and Organization:** Although enthusiastic, some parents expressed the need for support from the school or local authorities in organizing and managing routes.

Effect of the Activity: The Walking Bus seminar prompted discussions on potential next steps, including:

1. **Safety Training Sessions for Volunteers:** Implement training sessions on pedestrian safety, route management, and emergency protocols.
2. **Follow-up with Local Authorities:** Collaborate with local authorities to improve pedestrian infrastructure, especially in rural areas, and implement traffic management measures.
3. **Replicability and Expansion:** The positive reception suggests that similar seminars could be held at other schools, potentially leading to the establishment of WalkingBus networks across the region.

Conclusions: The WalkingBus seminar was well-received by both urban and rural communities. While parents and volunteers are enthusiastic, ensuring safety and security will be key to successful implementation. Moving forward, the focus will be on addressing these concerns through structured training, improved infrastructure, and collaborative planning with local authorities to ensure that the WalkingBus initiative is safe and enjoyable.



Attachments/Photos:

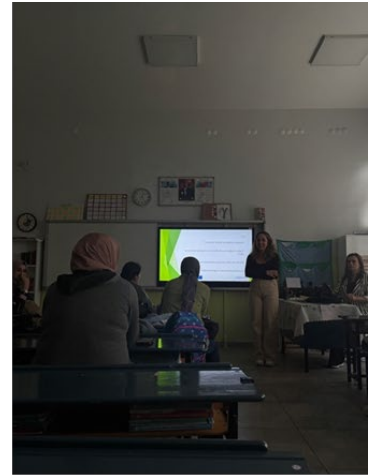
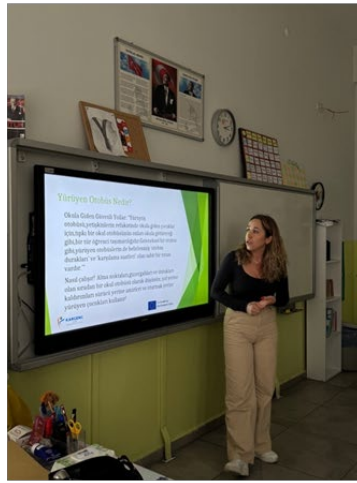


Figure 3-9: Photographs from the seminars in Türkiye.





4 Conclusions

As presented in the present WalkingBus project Deliverable 3.1 “Train the Walkers Seminar”, the WalkingBus Task 3.1 “Train the Walkers” was successfully implemented and fulfilled its objectives by equipping key stakeholders—parents, teachers, and volunteers—with essential skills and knowledge to initiate and manage WalkingBus routes effectively. Through the online seminar facilitated by the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH) and Tero, participants gained a solid understanding of the safety protocols necessary to ensure the well-being of children, as well as the environmental benefits and community engagement strategies essential for sustainable operations.

The seminars received positive feedback, with participants expressing a high level of satisfaction with the clarity and relevance of the training content. Attendees reported increased confidence in their ability to promote and organize WalkingBus activities, which will contribute to the initiative’s successful implementation at the community level. While technical challenges and varied participant familiarity posed minor issues, these were mitigated effectively during the session, resulting in strong engagement and readiness for action.

In total, 92 “walkers” participated in the Train the Walkers seminar, and, thus, the KPI of 50 participants was successfully met.

In the next phase, three (3) rounds of WalkingBus pilot implementations will be conducted across all three (3) countries (Greece, Italy, and Türkiye), providing participants with practical, hands-on experience to reinforce their training. These pilots will also serve as a valuable evaluation tool to refine the WalkingBus model and support its replicability in other regions.

In conclusion, Deliverable 3.1 has established a solid foundation for the WalkingBus initiative, empowering local communities to adopt a safe, sustainable, and community-driven approach to school transportation. The knowledge gained from this seminar and the insights from the pilot rounds will inform future adaptations and potential expansion of the WalkingBus concept, supporting a scalable model for eco-friendly school commuting across diverse regions.





Annex A: Initial Train the Walkers Presentation in English



WalkingBus: Train the Walker

Safe and Sustainable School Travel
A Step Towards a Healthier Future for Our Children
Dimitrios Nalmpantis

Thessaloniki, Greece

Friday, October 18, 2024

1

Agenda

- ▶ Introduction to Walking Bus
- ▶ Benefits of a Walking Bus
- ▶ Roles and Responsibilities
- ▶ Safety Guidelines
- ▶ Route Planning and Risk Assessment
- ▶ Communication and Emergency
- ▶ Protocols
- ▶ FAQs and Discussion

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WalkingBus Project

- ▶ 18 months Erasmus+ Sport project.
- ▶ Partners from Greece (AUTH and Tero), Italy (MVNGO), and Türkiye (KARGENC Club).
- ▶ Scope: promotion of the concept and indicative pilot actions.
- ▶ Up to now: 4 deliverables, one publication.
- ▶ <https://walkingbus.eu/>

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What is a Walking Bus?

- ▶ Safe Routes to School: “A walking bus is a form of student transport for children who, chaperoned by adults, walk to school, in much the same way a school bus would drive them to school. Like a traditional bus, walking buses have a fixed route with designated ‘bus stops’ and ‘pick-up times.’”
- ▶ How it works? Think of it as an ordinary school bus with pick-up points, routes, and stops; it uses the sidewalks instead of the road, supervisor(s) instead of a driver, and children walking instead of sitting!

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Benefits of a Walking Bus

- ▶ For Students: Increases physical activity, social interactions, independence, cardiovascular health, and decreases child obesity; promotes mental health, school sets example for the future!
- ▶ For Parents: Reduces the need for car trips and promotes community involvement.
- ▶ For the Environment: Reduces traffic congestion and carbon emissions.
- ▶ For Schools: Supports sustainable school travel initiatives and their identity.

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Benefits of a Walking Bus

- ▶ For Children:
 - ▶ Increases physical activity.
 - ▶ Increases social interactions.
 - ▶ Increases independence.
 - ▶ Increases cardiovascular health.
 - ▶ Decreases child obesity.
 - ▶ Increases school performance.
 - ▶ Promotes mental health.
 - ▶ Sets an example for the future toward sustainable mobility!

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Benefits of a Walking Bus

- ▶ For Parents:
 - ▶ Reduces the need for car trips and promotes community involvement.
- ▶ For the Environment:
 - ▶ Reduces traffic congestion and carbon emissions.
- ▶ For Schools:
 - ▶ Supports sustainable school travel initiatives and their identity.

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Benefits of a Walking Bus

▶ More of this:



▶ Means less of this:



Research shows that active kids are happier, have fewer health complications, and perform better in school!

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Roles and Responsibilities

- ▶ Drivers (Adults): Lead the walking bus and ensure safety.
- ▶ Conductors (Volunteers): Assist in supervision and ensure children follow safety rules, plan walking routes, maintain communication with parents and schools, and promote WalkingBus participation.
- ▶ Parents: Keep children punctual and prepare them for walking.
- ▶ Children: Follow instructions and behave responsibly.

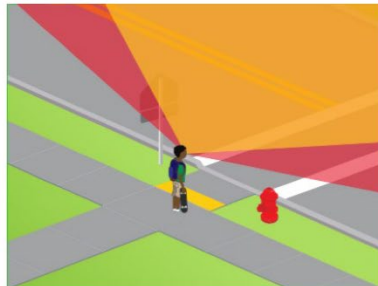
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Safety Guidelines

- ▶ Keep in mind!
 - ▶ Kids have a reduced risk perception.
 - ▶ Kids see differently.
 - ▶ Kids hear differently.
 - ▶ Kids lack traffic experience.



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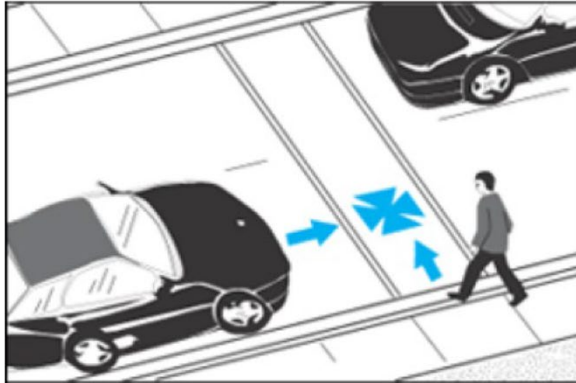
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Safety Guidelines

- Through vehicle at unsignalized location:



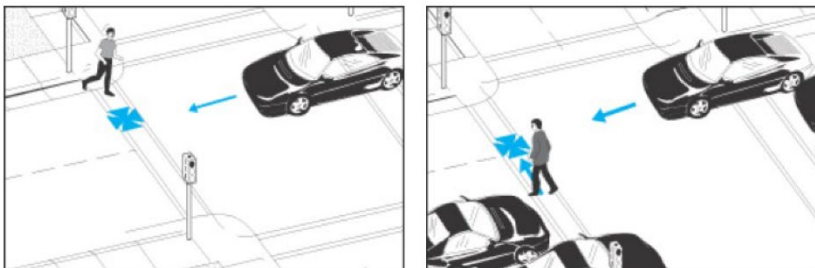
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Safety Guidelines

- Through vehicle at signalized location:



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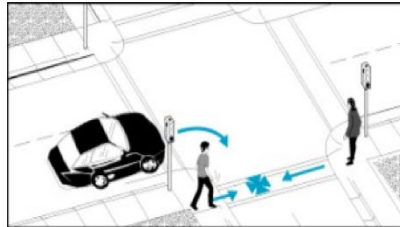
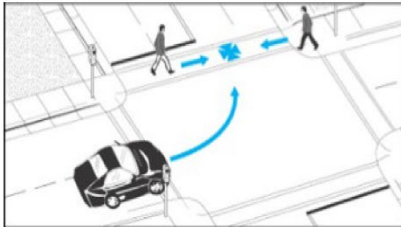
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Safety Guidelines

► Turning crashes:



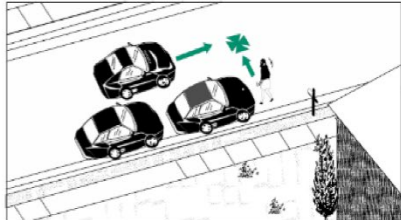
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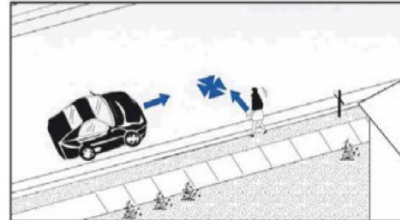
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Safety Guidelines

► Dart-out:



► Dash:



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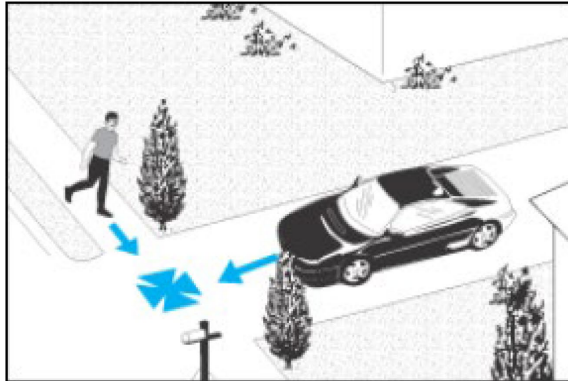
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Safety Guidelines

► Non-roadway:



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Safety Guidelines: 10 Tips

► 1. Student safety is the NUMBER ONE priority



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Safety Guidelines: 10 Tips

- 2. Be on time & stick to the schedule



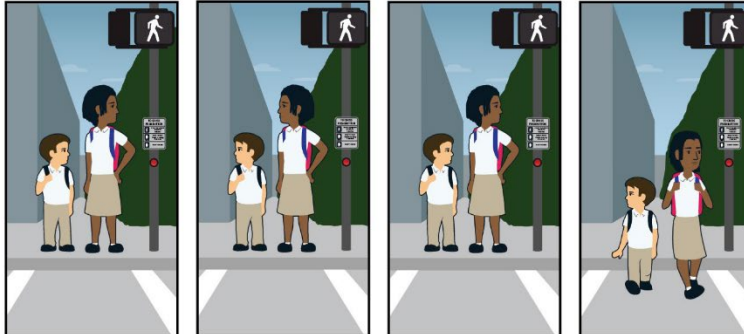
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Safety Guidelines: 10 Tips

- 3. Scan Left-Right-Left at every intersection



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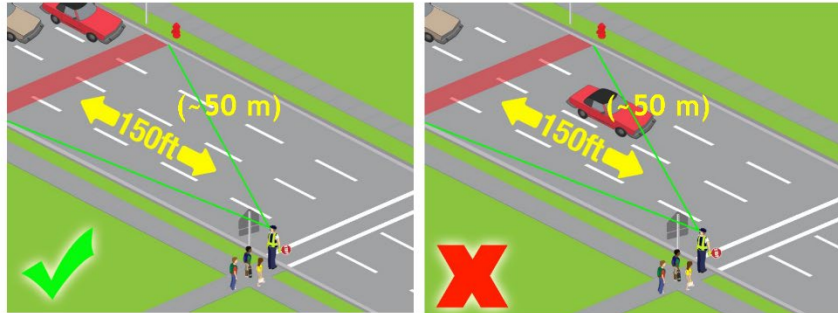
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Safety Guidelines: 10 Tips

- 4. Wait for 150ft (~50 m) gap in traffic



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Safety Guidelines: 10 Tips

- 5. Use a fresh walk signal at traffic light



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Safety Guidelines: 10 Tips

- ▶ 6. Keep students together as a group



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Safety Guidelines: 10 Tips

- ▶ 7. Changes only allowed if student safety is at risk



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Safety Guidelines: 10 Tips

- 8. Students must be registered with walking bus



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Safety Guidelines: 10 Tips

- 9. Follow cancellation and severe weather policy



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Safety Guidelines: 10 Tips

► 10. Have fun!!!



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A to B

- 1. Assemble a list of participating children
- 2. Confirm children NOT walking with the walking bus
- 3. Arrive at the first stop
- 4. Complete route to B



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B to A

- ▶ 1. Assemble a list of participating children
- ▶ 2. Confirm children NOT walking with the walking bus
- ▶ 3. Assemble children at the dismissal area
- ▶ 4. Roll call to confirm all students are ready
- ▶ 5. Lead route from B to A



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Safety Guidelines

- ▶ Ensure appropriate adult-to-child ratios (suggested 1 adult per 6 children).
- ▶ Keep children in pairs.
- ▶ Walkers should always watch the children; e.g., if there are two walkers, one should be at the end of the walking bus.
- ▶ Use designated crosswalks and pedestrian paths.



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Safety Guidelines

- ▶ Regularly check for oncoming traffic and follow pedestrian signals.
- ▶ Wear high-visibility clothing or reflective gear.
- ▶ Teach children about road safety (e.g., stop, look, and listen).
- ▶ Tip: Consider demonstrating key safety actions (e.g., crossing safely) with images or video clips before the realization of a walking bus.



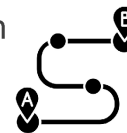
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Route Planning

- ▶ Choose safe, well-lit routes with minimal traffic.
- ▶ Identify safe crossing points and pick-up/drop-off stops.
- ▶ Avoid complex intersections and ensure safety at crossings.
- ▶ Ensure routes are accessible for all children (consider special needs).
- ▶ Conduct route risk assessments regularly.
- ▶ Plan rest points and safe gathering areas along the route.



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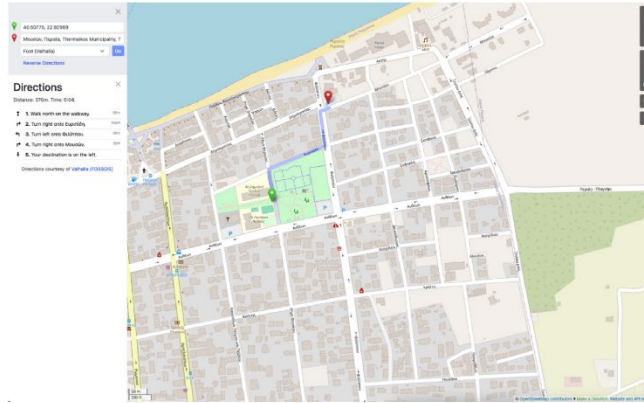
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Route Planning (Greece)



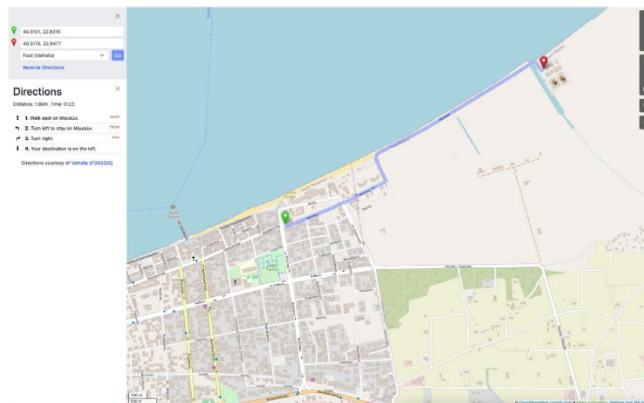
Pilot route No. 1: From the 4th Elementary School to CCAC “Kids Athletics

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Route Planning (Greece)



Pilot route No. 2: From CCAC “Kids Athletics” to KAPPA.

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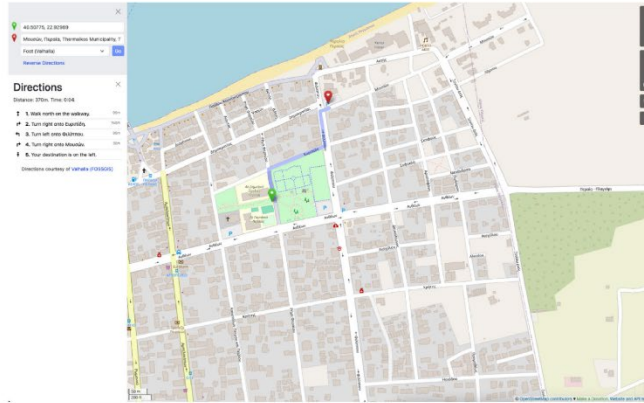
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Route Planning (Greece)



Pilot route No. 3: From the 5th Elementary School to CCAC "Kids Athletics."

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Risk Assessment

- ▶ Regularly review potential hazards such as busy roads, weather conditions, construction sites, etc.
- ▶ Adjust routes or times if necessary.
- ▶ Encourage feedback from volunteers and parents regarding safety concerns.



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Communication Protocols

- ▶ Pre-walk Briefing: Ensure all volunteers know the route and safety procedures.
- ▶ During the Walk: Have clear communication lines (e.g., walkie-talkies or mobile phones).
- ▶ Emergency Protocols: Define what to do in case of accidents, unexpected delays, or bad weather.
- ▶ Maintain a list of emergency contacts for each child.



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Emergency Protocols

- ▶ Minor Injuries: Carry basic first aid kits and know first-aid steps.
- ▶ Serious Emergencies: Call emergency services and know the nearest safe locations.
- ▶ Evacuation Plan: Have a procedure in case of an emergency, such as a route change or group splitting up.



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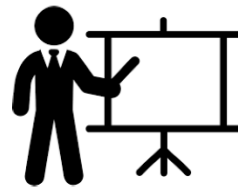
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Training for Volunteers

- ▶ Brief volunteers on their duties and responsibilities.
- ▶ Run mock walking bus sessions to prepare volunteers.
- ▶ Continuous feedback and training sessions (monthly or quarterly).



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Managing Children's Behavior

- ▶ Establish clear behavior expectations (staying in line, listening to instructions).
- ▶ Encourage positive reinforcement (praise good behavior).
- ▶ Have a system for managing disruptive behavior (e.g., warnings, contacting parents).



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Digital & Communication Tools

- ▶ Route mapping: e.g., Google Maps or apps like Strava to map safe routes and track progress.
- ▶ Instant Messaging: e.g., WhatsApp, Viber, etc., groups for communication with walkers, parents, and schools.
- ▶ Dissemination: e.g., Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, for dissemination.
- ▶ Communication (voice): e.g., VHF's (license required), walkie-talkies, etc.



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FAQs

- ▶ How long does the walking bus take?
- ▶ What happens if it's raining or there's bad weather?
- ▶ Can younger children join the walking bus?
- ▶ What should children bring with them?

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Open Discussion

- ▶ Questions?
- ▶ Concerns?
- ▶ Suggestions?

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Conclusion and Next Steps

- ▶ Key points.
- ▶ Volunteers sign up!
- ▶ Next steps.
- ▶ Contact information.

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Sources

- ▶ D2.1: WalkingBus Repository (Case Studies)
- ▶ D2.2: WalkingBus Manual
- ▶ <https://walkingbus.eu/>
- ▶ <https://www.saferoutesinfo.org/>

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Acknowledgments

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WalkingBus D3.1: Train the Walkers Seminar



Thank you!

1, 2, 3... 1000 Walking Buses!!!

<https://walkingbus.eu/>
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