

“Public Transport Promotion to School Children”

Rome, Italy

DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEM

Every day starts with the same situation before school: traffic congestion outside schools with kids jumping out of cars and having to weave their way through parked cars to reach the school gate.

The enormous increase in motorised traffic has resulted in an extremely one-sided use of urban public space, namely for car traffic and car parking. This has infringed massively on the space and sphere of children, who are faced with ever-increasing car lanes where once they had room to play or move about. Lack of space to play and wide car lanes tempting drivers to speed has significantly raised the risk of accidents involving children and young people, especially close to schools.

Linked with this, the number of children who are allowed to move around independently is dwindling and parents now spend a major part of their spare time driving children from one place to another.

The TAPESTRY project as a whole urges partners to develop travel awareness publicity and education programmes to support a sustainable transport strategy in Europe, and to assess the effectiveness of the campaigns implemented to enable the formulation of guidelines for future campaigns.

METHOD CHOSEN TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM

Process and Reason for Choice

The city of Rome is particularly aware of the problem and keen to address it. Therefore with the support of the municipality, ATAC SpA created a structured plan to stimulate and educate young people to a major use of public transport.

Objectives

Policy Level

The aim of the Italian case study in Rome was to reduce the use of private vehicles by modifying personal travel behaviour, resulting in an increase in the use of public transport modes. This information was then to be pooled with that from the other case studies to improve the knowledge and understanding of how effective communication programmes or campaigns can be developed to encourage sustainable travel behaviour throughout Europe.

Campaign Level

The objectives of the Rome campaign were:

- To examine how to influence the attitudes of a target group in the way it views traffic and pollution problems as well as vandalism.
- To reduce vandalism
- To reduce ticket-less travel / fare evasion

- To increase respect for passengers on public transport
- To enhance the perception of public transport staff
- To modify future behaviour towards reducing the use of private vehicles
- To increase the use of public transport and public vehicles
- To draw attention to the environmental impacts of transport use.

These objectives were set by ATAC's Marketing and Communication Department.

The objective of the campaign assessment in Rome was to examine how communication can influence the attitudes of a target group towards traffic and pollution problems as well as vandalism in all of its forms. This change in attitude was aimed at modifying future behaviour and reducing the use of private vehicles to the advantage of public transport; and also of nurturing respect for public vehicles.

Leaders and Partners

The organisation responsible for the campaign was ATAC SpA, the company that plans and monitors public mobility in Rome. It has always paid special attention to adopting company strategies aimed at developing environmentally-friendly policies to improve the quality of life of the city's inhabitants and protect the cultural heritage of the city.

Although ATAC was the lead organisation, it received the full backing of the municipality and was supported by a number of specialist external consultants such as psychologists/pedagogues and statisticians. Additionally, essential support came from the schools and from motivated teachers.

Details

The method chosen by ATAC to deal with the problem in Rome was an awareness campaign addressing a sample of 1200 pupils representative of the city's schoolchildren.

The project comprised three main phases:

- The 'before' phase: the analysis of the mobility behaviour of the child before the TAPESTRY campaign
- The campaign itself
- The 'after' phase: the evaluation of the impact of the TAPESTRY campaign on the child's behaviour and its perception of the pollution and traffic problems.

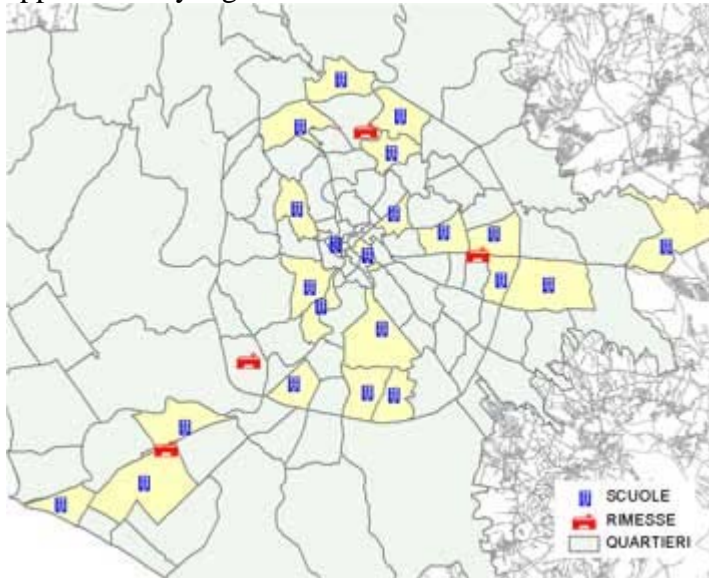
The analysis dealt with:

- Structural data
- Travel home-school
- Views of the transport network

Target Group

The target group was composed of pupils from nine to 15 years old, coming from 30 different schools in Rome. The schools were equally distributed across the city of Rome. This group was chosen because they were too young to have scooter licences, and so had not yet begun to become dependent on their own independent motorised means of transport.

The next picture illustrates the location of the four company depots selected to host approximately eight schools each.



(*scuole* = schools; *rimesse* = depots; *quartieri* = districts)

Region Covered

Rome, the capital city of Italy and of the Region of Lazio, has a population of 2.8 million and a surface area of 1,286 sq. km. It is a large city that suffers the effects of traffic most severely in its precious historic centre. Every day, during the busiest periods, one million cars and 600,000 scooters drive into the historic centre.

Campaign Size

The number of pupils that participated defined the size of the campaign in Rome, namely just under 1200.

External Factors

No relevant external factors were recorded by ATAC.

Timescales

Evaluation / Campaign Element	Date
Before Evaluation	January 2002
Before questionnaire finalised	15/01/2002
Before questionnaire distributed	29/01/2002
Before questionnaire collected	25/02/2002
Case Study Implementation	February – May 2002
Visit schedule finalised	14/02/2002
Visits to ATAC depots	March 2002
CD-ROM video game prepared	28/02/2002
CD-ROM video game distributed	March 2002 (at the end of the depot visits)
Drawing competition	April / May 2002
Presentation to the competition winners	01/06/2002
After Evaluation & Campaign Recall	2002 - 2003
After questionnaire finalised	29/01/2002
After questionnaire distributed	25/02/2002
After questionnaire collected	29/05/2002
Campaign recall questionnaire finalised	Jan 2003
Campaign recall questionnaire distributed	Feb 2003
Analysis	March 2003
Final Report	April 2003

Funding

The project was resourced entirely by ATAC SpA with co-funding from the European Commission.

Campaign Message

The campaign message addressed the understanding of the traffic problem, and encouraged pupils to switch from using private cars to using the public transport network. The message also indirectly addressed the pupils' parents.

Campaign Tools

The tools used during the campaign were the following:

- The questionnaire, which as well as providing information for the 'before' and 'after' assessments was also designed to make the children think about their actions and the consequences
- The visit to ATAC depots
- Gifts such as the special cycle helmet, a TAPESTRY t-shirt and a package containing ATAC information material (maps, leaflets etc.)
- The interactive game ('TRAMMY'), which was made available on CD-ROM
- At the end of the campaign ATAC organised an exhibition of the best drawings by the participating children, on the theme: "Why choose public transport?"

The campaign ended with a party that raised a lot of interest among the children.

CAMPAIGN IMPLEMENTATION

The project consisted of three fundamental parts:

1) The visit

To give young students an understanding of the world of public transport, a number of classes were invited to visit a public transport depot and its maintenance workshops.



After a training period with the teachers, ATAC arranged buses to bring pupils from the schools to the depots. Once at the depots, the students were welcomed by ATAC personnel and accompanied during the visit.

Appointed staff explained to the pupils the goals of the visit and provided them all with information and promotional material. The different attributes and features of the Roman public transport company were explained to the pupils. The pupils were very interested in understanding how a public transport company works, and they were also informed about the difference between different operators (bus, metro, train).

The main issues discussed during the visit were pollution, traffic and vandalism. In particular:

- Pupils were informed about the effects of pollution on health, and shown tools for measuring the level of pollution in their town using practical examples and demonstrations.
- As direct proof of vandalism on public transport, children were shown broken windows from an ATAC bus and the depot staff explained how much effort the repair procedures take in terms of both time and cost.

2) The game

Students were provided with a CD-ROM called TRAMMY. A brief presentation by ATAC provided an introduction to the content of the CD-ROM.



During the game, children are asked to play three different roles connected to public transport:

- 1) The agent responsible for the service
- 2) The driver
- 3) The passenger

For each of the roles played, the children were asked to make different choices according to what they had seen and learnt during the visit to the ATAC depots. Pupils had to choose from the following scenarios:

For Role One (**agent**) the choices were:

- 3 BUSES (ecological – polluting – unsafe)
- 3 ROUTE options (long trip collecting all passengers – long trip ignoring some passengers – short trip ignoring some users waiting for the bus)
- 3 FREQUENCY options (choosing between 3 time frames: 40 minutes, 15 minutes, 4 minutes)



For Role Two (**bus driver**) the choices were:



- 3 options on how to behave while driving (accelerate hard – stop sharply – accelerate and stop gently)
- 3 options on how to react to a tourist asking for information (apply the “do not talk to the driver” rule – provide the information – claim that the driver can’t speak English)
- 3 options on how to behave at a crowded bus stop (stop and wait until all passengers have come on board – stop and open and close the doors very fast – do not stop at all)

For Role Three (**passenger**) the choices were:

- 3 means of transport to be used to go in the city centre (CAR – SCOOTER – PUBLIC TRANSPORT)
- 3 types of reaction to vandalism (no reaction – join in – denounce the vandals)
- 3 ticket options (buy and validate it – buy and not validate it – don’t buy it at all)



For each right answer 1 point was awarded while for a wrong answer there was a penalty of 1 point less. At the end of the game, the bus comes back to the depot and the scores are added up.

3) The competition

The children who participated in the campaign were invited to take part in a competition to produce the best drawing on the theme “**Why should we pick public transport?**” Two winners were chosen, one by the students and one by the teachers. The reward for the winners was a ride on Line 110, which offers a sightseeing tour of Rome. The aim of the contest was to stimulate a constructive discussion in the various classes on the issues presented during their visit to ATAC.

The official award ceremony took place in Rome on May 30th at ATAC’s main premises. All students, teachers and parents were invited along with local authority representatives from the Municipality of Rome and from ATAC.

During the ceremony both paintings and pictures made by the children were shown on a screen. Then the children responsible for the three best drawings and three best paintings were rewarded with a PC.



The following material was distributed to the children:



- 1) TAPESTRY MATERIAL – pamphlet + CD-ROM titled TRAMMY + bicycle helmet with European certification to protect pupils.



- 2) ATAC S.p.A. material: map + timetable + booklet and leaflets.

The campaign measures were varied slightly depending on the target groups, but it was hoped they would influence individuals in many different ways. The measures were aimed at the following:

- Putting young students in touch with the world of public transport
- Encouraging indirectly the parents of pupils involved
- Creating a better image for public transport, and better attitudes towards it
- Informing individuals about the monitoring and control of exhaust gases
- Developing knowledge of the importance of public transport
- Improving civil education and social awareness
- Increasing knowledge of the efforts made by transport operators to provide a service while facing problems like vandalism, fare evasion, etc.



Process

ATAC was the lead organisation throughout, through its Marketing & Communication and European Project Management departments. The success of the campaign is also due to a pro-active collaboration with schools, teachers and parents.

Input – Output Analysis

Input indicators are used to describe how well certain aspects of the campaign are executed and accomplished, i.e. they reflect things we are trying to change. Indicators may be qualitative or quantitative, but are more often the former. A key function of the descriptors is to describe the context of changes observed in the indicators.

Medium	(✓) tick those which apply	Design costs	Production costs	Distribution costs
Geared to specific outputs (see Table under 'Outputs')				
newspaper – national				
newspaper – local	✓	-	-	No cost
magazine – national				
magazine – local				
radio – national				
radio – local				
television – national				
television – local	✓	-	-	No cost
telephone call				
personal visit				
Poster	✓	-	-	2143,2
Leaflet	✓	-	-	361,52
Postcard/calendar	✓	3000	7710,05	10710,05
Info pack				
Letter	✓	-	-	919,29
ad other product	✓	-	-	21153,00
CD	✓	-	-	7746,85
Diskette				
Website				
WAP site	✓	-	-	-
mob. phone text				
press conf.				
drama event (school competition)	✓	-	-	34230,41
Roadshow				
other pub. Meet	✓	-	-	9761,10
Ad hoc inputs				
bus ticket offer				
bicycle offer				

Output indicators are used to describe how well certain aspects of the campaign are executed and accomplished, i.e. they reflect things we are trying to change. Indicators may be qualitative or quantitative, but are more often the former. A key function of the descriptors is to describe the context of changes observed in the indicators.

Medium	Tick those which apply (✓)	Pre-tested (✓ if yes)	Personalised (✓ if yes)	Where*	Total exposures (estimated)	Target group exposures (estimated)	Duration (e.g. hours or days)
n'paper – national							
newspaper – local	✓						Article on local newspaper
magazine – national							
magazine – local							
Radio – national							
Radio – local							

Medium	Tick those which apply (✓)	Pre-tested (✓ if yes)	Personalised (✓ if yes)	Where*	Total exposures (estimated)	Target group exposures (estimated)	Duration (e.g. hours or days)
television – national							
television – local	✓						A service of 4 minutes on TG3 News (regional news)
telephone call							
personal visit							
poster	✓				500	500	Distributed during the event
leaflet	✓			3	1350	1350	Distributed during the visit - 30 appointments of 4 hours each)
Postcard/calendar	✓				2500		Distributed to representative person of each school, Atac and Municipality employees
info pack							
Letter	✓			3/7	300	200	Distributed to representative person of schools, Atac and Municipality
ad other product							
CD	✓			3	1350	1350	Distributed during the visit - 30 appointments of 4 hours each)
diskette							
website	✓						Description of project – lasted throughout
WAP site							
mob. phone text							
Press conf.							
drama event	✓			3	1350	1350	Distributed during the visit - 30 appointments of 4 hours each)
roadshow							
Other pub. meet	✓			7	1350	1350	Distributed during the visit - 30 appointments of 4 hours each)

* 'where' coding list

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1) households (personalised) | 12) shopping centre / supermarket |
| 2) households (general drop) | 13) doctors' / dentists' surgery etc |
| 3) school / college | 14) park / other outdoor venue |
| 4) workplace | 15) pub / café / bar |
| 5) on bus | 16) petrol / service station |
| 6) on tram | 17) television |
| 7) bus station / stop | 18) radio |
| 8) tram station / stop | 19) newspaper |
| 9) library | 20) magazine |
| 10) billboard/hoarding | 21) phone (fixed) |
| 11) leisure/community centre | 22) phone (mobile) |

CAMPAIGN ASSESSMENT

Methodology

The TAPESTRY survey questionnaires were based on the core questions in the TAPESTRY Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and covered the following issues:

- Attitudes towards public transport
- Attitudes towards public transport facilities currently available to use
- Reasons for travel and the need to travel
- Level of awareness of transport & environmental issues
- Need for information on travel, transport and facilities
- Willingness / ability to change (by target groups)

As for several of the TAPESTRY campaigns, it was necessary to modify this questionnaire into a simpler format because it was to be completed by children. Hence the format actually followed a simplified “children’s CAF”.

Sampling & Sample Size

In total 1200 questionnaires were distributed in both the ‘before’ and ‘after’ assessment periods. However, in order to try to achieve direct comparability, questionnaires were only included in the analysis if they were from a school class that was sent the questionnaire both before and after the campaign. (Due to problems distributing the questionnaires some classes only received the ‘before’ questionnaire and some classes only received the ‘after’ questionnaire.)

As a result the analysis is based on 660 ‘before’ questionnaires and 679 ‘after’ questionnaires.

Within these groups, although there is a match between the classes included in the ‘before’ and ‘after’ assessments there is not a guaranteed match between the pupils who returned the questionnaires.

During the campaign recall questionnaire period, 609 questionnaires were distributed to and returned by children who had participated in the campaign and 627 questionnaires were distributed to and returned by children who had not participated in the campaign; i.e. a control group.

Comparison of ‘Before’ and ‘After’ Results

The means of transport mostly used for home/school trips was:

- ❖ Private car
- ❖ Walking
- ❖ Bus

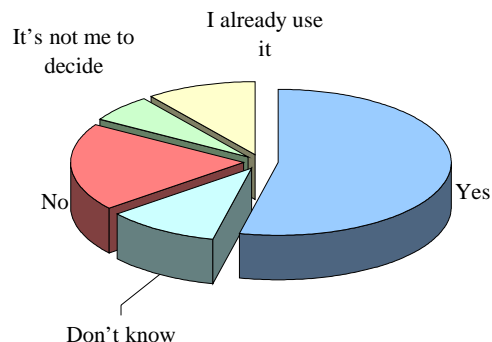
In the ‘before’ and ‘after’ surveys, pupils travelled by sustainable modes from school to home more frequently than from home to school:

- ❖ + 5% walking
- ❖ + 2% bus

Comparing data between the 'after' and the 'before' questionnaire we have:

- ❖ Mean increase of 2% for walking
- ❖ Mean increase of 5% for public transport (+3% by bus)
- ❖ Use of car remained constant
- ❖ Responses from 'before' and 'after' phase

After the campaign, the percentage of pupils who thought public transport was "boring" dropped from 85% to 68% (a decrease of 17%!), and public transport was seen as safe, cheap and a good way to avoid traffic problems. And 58% of them said that they would be ready to use public transport if they could travel together with their friends (as shown in the graph).



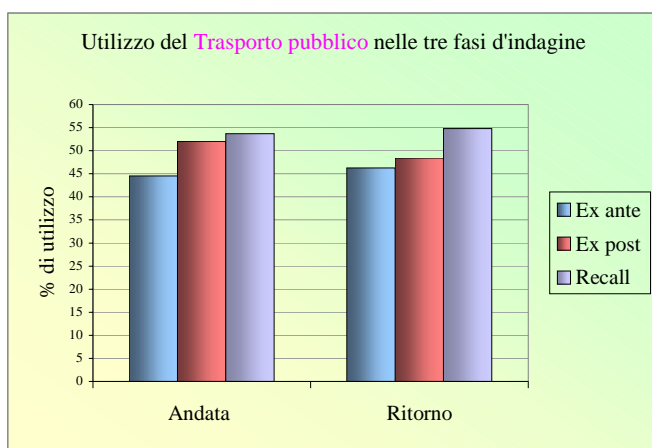
After the first month of the campaign, pupils were already changing their habits. In order to reduce pollution, pupils suggested as solutions walking (93%), not using cars (89%), and using public transport (84%). In general, the data analysis on the use of public transport revealed a positive trend:

- ❖ + 4% from the 'after' to the 'recall' phase
- ❖ + 9% from the 'before' to the 'recall' phase

The 'recall' was held eight months after the 'after' survey. ATAC personnel went back to the schools in order to distribute new questionnaires and to find out what pupils felt about the visits and the campaign in general. Both the children and the teachers were enthusiastic about the initiative and asked to participate in any future ones.

The selected target and sample does not allow us to give a consolidated version of the mobility habits of the children, but the use of public transport had a positive trend that exceeded expectation, as the following data and graphs show:

- ❖ Home-school: + 2% (from "ex-post" to "recall" phase)
- ❖ School-home: + 6% (bus: + 5%) - (from "ex-post" to "recall" phase)
- ❖ Home-school/school-home + 9% (from "ex-post" to "recall" phase)



Campaign Message Analysis

The campaign addressed the understanding of the traffic problem, and encouraged pupils and their parents to switch from using private cars to using the public transport network. It also taught them more about public transport.

Throughout the three phases of the campaign, the opinion of the children about public transport changed for the better.

At the beginning most of the children did not even know that a public transport route towards their schools passed right by their homes, and their general opinion about public transport was strongly influenced by their parents. Prior to the start of the TAPESTRY campaign, pupils said they were “annoyed” by public transport. After the campaign a large element still believed that “public transport is boring”, but it was also seen as cheaper, safer in traffic, reliable... and as a means of transport that brings you right to your school.

These results showed that the TAPESTRY education campaign contributed to the increase in awareness of these young pupils about the benefits of public transport, and the positive effect it has on the urban quality of life. This was further shown by the success of the TRAMMY interactive game, distributed to the children on a CD Rom after the visits to the ATAC depots. The feedback received on the game was quite positive: 67% of the pupils had played with it (27% of them with other friends); they said they found the game interesting and instructive.

CONCLUSIONS

Pupils agreed that the best way to reduce pollution and traffic problems in their neighbourhood was to use public transport, with the results being 12% higher after the campaign (from 72% to 84%). This is just one of the statistics which led us to conclude that our campaign was successful. But further qualitative data support the success of our campaign in Rome. First of all ATAC intends to run a repeat TAPESTRY TWO campaign in the next school year. And, what is more important, this stems from a request coming from students and teachers. The campaign initiated partnerships with some schools in Rome, which will continue with other similar national and European projects. One example is the PROVIDER project (www.schoolway.net) co-funded by the SAVE programme, for which some school mobility plans will be developed for some of the pupils who have been involved in TAPESTRY.