Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in Istanbul, Turkey: Metrobüs.

An example of a successful BRT solution in a Eurasian metropolis.

The Metrobüs BRT system in Istanbul is a successful response to the specific requirements of the city of Istanbul. The city’s population explosion, its unique location on the Bosporus and the risk of earthquakes are just some of the special challenges that were met by the BRT transport solution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key data for the BRT concept*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inauguration</td>
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<td>September 2007</td>
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<th>Daily passenger load (total)</th>
<th>Average daily passenger load (per bus)</th>
<th>Maximum passenger load (per hour per direction)</th>
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<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>1,900</td>
<td>45,000</td>
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*as of 07/2018

Istanbul in brief*

Population: 15,000,000 (city)

Population density: 2,900 inhabitants/km²
The initial situation.

Istanbul has experienced a considerable urban growth as the population has increased ten-fold within the last 50 years. Its topographic location on the Bosporus presents unique challenges in terms of traffic planning. The various options for setting up a subway network were not pursued or were hindered by changes in the political leadership.

The result: incoherent individual services that used different technology and did not provide a continuous service within the city center. This prompted an increase in travel by private cars leading to teething massive congestion problems.

The solution: BRT.

As Istanbul had to respond urgently to the extreme congestion problems and the increase of car usage, which exceeded the growth of population, a local transport system that could be implemented quickly was envisaged. In such a scenario, a BRT system was apprehended as the most suitable option and, subsequently the authorities started planning the so-called Metrobüs. BRT, in comparison to other transport systems, brought further advantages such as low investment costs and a flexible infrastructure design. Given its apparent flexibility, a system could be developed that met the specific requirements of Istanbul while providing direct links to existing transport systems.

The result: Metrobüs in Istanbul.

The comprehensive success of Metrobüs has spurred further expansion of the BRT system. From 2007 to 2012, the length of the BRT system has been prolonged from 18 km to 52 km. This made the system even more attractive and led to a notable passenger increase. Today, Metrobüs serves 1,000,000 passengers per day. The Mercedes-Benz CapaCity, with its high transport capacity, reliability and comfort, has played an important role in this respect. The implementation of Metrobüs in Istanbul’s challenging geographical situation, without any major construction works, illustrates the relative ease of integrating BRT into different city structures and existing transport systems.

Key success factors for Metrobüs.

- High transport capacity and ride comfort with the CapaCity, appealing and individual design.
- Exclusive, completely separated bus lanes enable restriction-free driving without delays (average speed of 35 km/h).
- Enhanced consumer satisfaction has rendered Metrobüs into a vital cog of the transport system of the city.
- Pre-board fare collection (payment before boarding the bus) with turnstiles access reduces processing time, thereby increasing the overall transport speed and providing stability of income.

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