



**PROJECT NUMBER - 504970-LLP-1-2009-1-UK-KA3-KA3MP**  
**Location Based Services - Reconnecting Excluded Communities and Lifelong Learning**

**Usability trial in Romania**

The usability of Route mate was tested first by CPPC team and then by stakeholders. The testing took place only in visual mode, and many observations and conclusions are in direct relation with this aspect. Many questions remain regarding the stakeholders' reactions and behaviours if the application would have been available in audio mode, in Romanian. The testing involved both planning the route by the users and then taking in, using the Route Mate as guiding instrument. During the testing (by CPPC team and by users) following elements could be observed:

- the maps function only if the telephones are connected to the internet, consequently it requires having a SIM with internet connections, which increases the associated costs for the users;
- the Google maps are not enough accurate; there are areas where the maps are of better quality (like the city center of Bucharest), and areas where they are offering scarce information about streets and locations (like it was proved by the testing that took place in a village just next to Bucharest).
- the planning mode is not so easy to use, the routes already saved cannot be deleted from the application;
- it is difficult to use the virtual keyboard for writing texts (when in Plan mode), the user needs to use a stick, a pen or a slim object to type the words. The buttons of the virtual keyboard are too small.
- it is not so easy to modify a route (the plan) while you are on the route (you are walking by it);
- Route Mate application quits unexpectedly when the subject is close to the point of destination (this happened several times, so it was no accident);
- The application allows taking pictures only from the intermediary points of a route, but not from the starting and ending point.
- When sunny outside, the screen of the telephone becomes hard to see, and consequently to use, particularly if one need to change some element in the planning of the route.
- in the trial in Bucharest the following problems occurred: the application could not identify the location, meaning that in the Practice mode the application did not recognized that testers (the device) were actually in the location specified. We walked the whole street from one bottom to the other, but the application still didn't identify the location number specified.
- there is the possibility (discovered by accident) to "start" simultaneously a route automatically and also activated manually. The route is running simultaneously, although

the user doesn't notice this. What happened was that on the screen the user could see the route as active and walking on it, while the alarm sound ringed continuously, signalling that the user should go to the start location. At the half-way of the route the application crashed, an error message being issued repeatedly.