

## **BEST – Scandinavian Benchmarking Survey 1999-2005**

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### **Executive Summary**

#### **Background**

Back in 1999, the Stockholm public transport authority "SL" initiated this benchmark survey (previously: "SL-challenge") which focused on the attitudes of the citizens in the respective regions. **SL set their own objective: to be BEST in Europe in 2005.** The survey itself consisted of 36 questions dispersed on 10 categories. The four Nordic capitals – Oslo, Stockholm, Copenhagen and Helsinki - were recruited via the traditional close network between the managing directors of the companies. The first survey was carried out in spring 2000 – the idea was that a winning city of each of the 10 categories should present one of their success stories at a coming seminar in Stockholm. One problem – only Helsinki and Copenhagen won all categories! Four areas were presented by the cities anyway. After the seminar the steering group (one from each city) decided on four CIGs - **Common Interest Groups** - on the basis of the presentations/results of the survey.

#### **BEST 2001**

Next "round" included four new cities - Turin, Munich, Vienna and Munich were added. They were primarily recruited via our UITP network. A master questionnaire in English was formulated and the central poll institute in Stockholm contacted affiliated poll institutes in the participating cities. Further changes in the questions were not allowed. Cities may buy additional questions, but no changes!!

At the same time, the CIGs – in the Nordic countries - continued their work. **Key persons in the home organisations were appointed and the benchmarking process was kept decentrally in the organisations.** One important part of the survey is to create an international network in the different parts of the company. Thinking internationally should not only be limited to senior management.

Our goal has not been to make another large-scale quantitative benchmarking survey – lasting for several years. **This time it was to make something easy and quick to use and implement.** It demanded that it was kept **very focused.** As a side effect, the method has created a **good network that we use in other fields of public transport** (fare policy etc.) as well. This is, however, not to say that apples can only learn from apples. In some of the CIGs, **other industries have been used as role models**, e.g., the issue of branding, the group used experience from Arla Foods.

We believe the method has some clear advantages, - **it is easy to use and implement, it is network creating, it gives input to solutions, and it gives us a clue about the quality of our product at a European level.**