



2nd Meeting of the European Rural Mobility Network



Bingen Am Rhein, Germany
11-12th October 2023
(and site visit on 10th October)

Meeting Report

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1. Event summary

The 2nd Meeting of the European Rural Mobility Network (ERMN), which was its first in-person event, took place on October 11th and 12th with a field visit on October 10th in Bingen Am Rhein, Germany. The event was developed in partnership with the Kusel District, one of the lighthouse sites of the SMARTA-NET project.

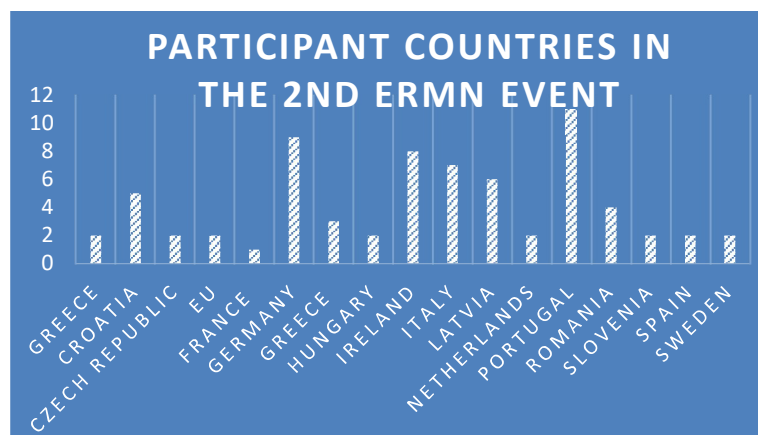


The primary objective of this event was to bring together representatives from municipalities and organisations across Europe to collaborate on enhancing rural mobility and promoting sustainable transportation solutions. The central focus of the conference was the exploration of how mobility can support and facilitate rural tourism.

This event offered a unique opportunity for members of the European Rural Mobility Network to convene, exchange experiences, and engage in discussions related to rural mobility. The primary target audience was municipalities and local authorities, in alignment with SMARTA-NET's commitment to its mandate from the European Commission. The conference also encouraged participation from other organisations involved in rural mobility planning and implementation.

1.1 Participants

During the two-day event, a total of 70 participants attended, with 70 participants on the first day and 58 participants on the second day. These attendees represented 15 different EU countries, which included Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands, in addition to EU representatives.



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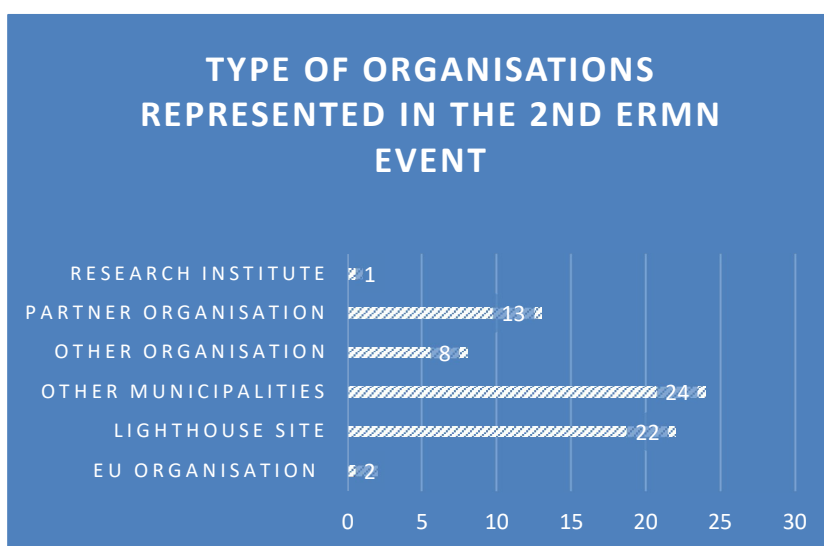
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31% of the participants were representatives of Lighthouse sites, 34 % of the participants represented other municipalities, 11 % of the participants were from other organisations (e.g. regional development agency, regional government, local mobility agency, tourism agency), 1 % were representatives of research institutes, 3% represented EU organisations and 19% of the participants were SMARTA-NET partner organisations. In total, 11 of the 14 confirmed lighthouse sites were present, being Kilkenny LEADER Partnership (Ireland), Alentejo and Madeira (Portugal), Kusel District (Germany), LAG Sdruzeni Ruze (Czechia), Vidzeme (Latvia), Municipality of Ramnicu Sarat (Romania), Municipality of Jastrebarsko (Croatia), Municipality of Rethymno (Greece), Municipality of Narni (Italy), and Šaleška Valley (Slovenia). Barcelona Municipality (Spain) was also present.



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1.2 First Day: 11 October

1.2.1 Opening plenary

Introduction to the European Rural Mobility Network (ERMN)

Presentation: [Link](#)

The meeting opened with a welcome speech from Mr. Karl-Heinz Schoon, Mobility Officer for the Kusel District and event co-organiser. Karl-Heinz recognised the privilege of having the first in-person EMRN event in Germany, emphasising how the Kusel District fully embraces SMARTA-NET's mission of improving the accessibility of rural areas by providing sustainable mobility and tourism.



Brendan Finn (MemEx),
SMARTA-NET Project Manager

Brendan Finn (MemEx), SMARTA-NET Project Manager, presented the main features of the SMARTA-NET Project. Brendan highlighted that the event is the first in-person meeting of the European Rural Mobility Network, i.e., the first pan-European network of authorities, practitioners, and other interested stakeholders who want to promote sustainable policies and strategies for improving the accessibility of rural territories across Europe. SMARTA-NET builds on the legacy of the previous SMARTA and SMARTA2 projects. It aims to bring rural mobility a step forward with a particular emphasis on those rural territories where tourism plays a significant role in the local economy. Brendan outlined that the Project aims to find a progression path for the ERMN, ensuring a future of the ERMN beyond the project to be shaped by the Members themselves during 2024. With the purpose of capacity building, SMARTA-NET will develop a structured set of training sessions over 2023 and 2024, in 15 EU countries, in their own languages.

Brendan emphasised that this event is bringing together participants from 16 European Countries. This is the beginning of something new and long-needed. It is the first forum dedicated to advancing rural mobility, centered on those who can make it happen. The European Rural Mobility Network is about bringing people together to share their experiences, learn from each other, find ways to improve things, and become a common voice for the sector. Over the next year, to the end of 2024, SMARTA-NET is committed to helping the knowledge sharing, and networking.

Andrea Lorenzini (MemEx), who chaired the session, introduced the Agenda for Day 1 and Day 2.

Policy perspective on rural mobility and tourism from the Rhineland Palatinate Federal State

Presentation: [Link](#)

Mr. Reiner Dölger, from the Rhineland-Palatinate Ministry of Traffic, introduced the policy perspective on rural mobility and tourism from the Rhineland Palatinate (RP) Federal State. Mr. Dölger highlighted that among the priorities of the Ministry, a major relevance is on development of cycling infrastructures and increase in the public transport provision. Target initiatives are being developed on e-bikes (through financial discounts for the purchase of the assets), ride sharing solutions and ride sharing hubs, updates of public transport stops, digitalisation and access to fast broadband, electrification and autonomous vehicles. He finally shared a great appreciation of being the hosting federal state for the event.



Mr. Reiner Dölger,
Rhineland-Palatinate Ministry of Traffic

European Commission policy on rural mobility

Presentation: [Link](#)

Mr. Rafal Stanecki introduced the main pillars of the European Commission (DG MOVE) policy on rural mobility. Mr Stanecki emphasised that the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy recognises the need to improve the connectivity of rural and remote areas, fostering a just transition towards sustainable mobility. Recent initiatives promoted by DG MOVE include the revised Regulation for the development of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T), digital mobility initiatives (including Mobility as a Service), previous SMARTA and SMARTA2 projects, and other EU projects (Interreg MAMBA, LAST-MILE, RUMOBIL). He concluded highlighting that the EU will not be able to address all the problems of transport in rural areas, or the lack of connectivity with nearby urban centres. This is fundamentally a competence of national, regional and local authorities, which are better placed to design policies tailored to their specific conditions. However, the European Commission can act as facilitator in sharing best practices and showcasing how local authorities are addressing similar problems of connectivity and transport across Europe. The European Rural Mobility Network, which enables the sharing of experiences and solutions by local and regional authorities, which can inspire others, is a tangible example of this and of the EU commitment for better rural mobility.



Mr. Rafal Stanecki
Policy officer, DG MOVE

Enabling factors for change to boost rural development

Presentation: [Link](#)

Mrs. Pascale Van Doren, Team Leader of the EU Rural Pact Support Office (RPSO), introduced the framework of the EU Rural Pact. In order to support development of rural areas, the Commission launched its Long Term Vision for Rural Areas (LTVRA) up to 2040, identifying 4 main areas of action: for stronger, more connected, resilient and prosperous rural areas. The communication of the LTVRA proposed two main ways to implement this vision: i) The Rural Action Plan, which is what the European Commission proposes to do, starting from 2021; and ii) The Rural Pact, which is about joining forces with all national, regional and local governments and stakeholders. The Rural Pact is a formal space and framework to boost cooperation between national, regional and local governments, civil society organisations, businesses, academics and citizens to act towards the shared goals of the Vision, based on a participatory process. Participating in the Pact means committing to act for one or more of its objectives. Mrs. Van Doren kindly invited all participants to register to join the Rural Pact Community ([link](#)). The Rural Pact is being coordinated through: i) the Rural Pact Support Office (RPSO), that coordinates and implements the networking activities of the Rural Pact and its community with the ambition to achieve the Rural Pact objectives and the Long-term vision for EU's rural areas.; and ii) the Rural Pact Coordination Group, representative of the participants of the Pact, a special group of the European Commission which steers the Rural Pact process with a 3-year mandate. Information about the main events can be found at [this link](#). The RPSO set up the Rural Pact community platform. Participants can benefit from it in various ways, as well as contribute at different levels, from: i) Becoming a member by filling in the form; ii) Finding peers for projects; iii) Joining groups to share opinion in discussions rooms; iv) Creating a group; v) Suggesting good practices.



Mrs. Pascale Van Doren,
Team Leader of the EU Rural Pact Support

Supporting green rural mobility on state level

Presentation: [Link](#)

Mr. Martin Schiefelbusch, Centre for New Public Transport Concepts at the NVBW, the state mobility agency of Baden Württemberg, introduced the rural mobility framework in Baden-Württemberg. Responsibilities and competences on transport in Germany are divided at the National, Federal State, and Local authority level. The Centre for New Public Transport Concepts is an initiative sponsored by the



Mr. Martin Schiefelbusch
Centre for New Public Transport Concepts at the

Federal State, focused on the development of innovative strategies at the state level, with a focus on rural areas. The Centre has a clear agenda, based on four main goals:

- all communities to be served at least hourly, all days, until midnight
- coordinated network consisting of regional rail, regional trunk bus routes, other bus services and DRT
- comprehensive information and through-ticketing
- “public transport not just for the captives”
- The Centre is also promoting community-based form of DRTs (i.e., the Bürgerbus services). The Federal State promotes the development of these services through the provision of financial support, knowledge and tools, networking.

1.2.2 World Café session

During the World Café Session, participants explored five key questions related to tourist mobility in rural areas. Each question was assigned to a specific table, where SMARTA-NET project partners moderated and documented the discussions. Participants were free to choose tables and change after 15 minutes to ensure a well-rounded discussion. (See annex 2 for the summary reports of the individual World Café tables specific reports)



World Café session participants discussing key questions

The questions addressed were:

- *What is needed for mobility services in support of rural tourism to be at-scale, replicable and durable?*
- *Can tourism players take the initiative in developing mobility solutions – what examples in leadership, cooperation, and organisation do we see from practice?*
- *New, expanded or innovative services connecting to the main public transport - what examples do we see from practice in rural tourism areas?*
- *Who should pay for mobility in support of rural tourism? Assuming there is enhanced value, who benefits within the value chain – who is willing or should be required to contribute?*
- *How can we achieve better information for tourists on sustainable mobility options in rural regions? (pre-travel and on-site)? What examples from practice influence people to arrive without car, or to use it less on-site?*

Looking at the results from the individual tables, the following **challenges and key results** for rural regions can be noted overall:

Communication

- There is a lack of communication between public transport services and tourism stakeholders in rural areas
- Positive Communication is essential, there is the need to communicate better and promote available mobility services – also among tourism workers
- Communication between stakeholders is important, because they are partly responsible for the success of rural mobility initiatives

Information

- General acknowledgment that there is a lack of good and comprehensive information on how to get to rural tourism destinations and travel around with sustainable transport options
- Sustainable transport options should be promoted repeatedly and frequently, marketing techniques and push-up notifications can be used
- Information about how to arrive, mobility services at the destination, active mobility, accessible tourism, intermodality options and payment would be helpful
- Information should be available before and during the stay: in apps, leaflets, accommodation, online-databases, booking platforms, google maps, the tourist office
- In regions with a significant share of foreign tourists, mobility information in English/other languages is needed

Flexibility & Convenience

- Tourists in rural areas don't use the public transport services due to a lack of knowledge concerning the tariff, but also because of the less attractive schedule and the few departures
- An idea would be to offer integrated tickets for different modes of transport or the combination of transport and activity
- Services should be adapted to the specific situation of the rural region and to tourists' needs (pick-up service, carrying luggage, mobility hubs, facilities, additional bus stops, etc.)
- Cooperation
- Lack of collaboration between stakeholders is a key challenge (within the sectors and across sectors)
- Need to create connection between different administrative levels
- A well-moderated and lively network of various stakeholders with a common

vision is crucial for the successful development of mobility solutions for rural tourism

Financing

- Public and private entities have to be considered: Minimum service financed with public money, additional services with contribution by actors who will benefit
- Solidarity model for tourist mobility: Let all tourists or all tourism stakeholders pay for sustainable transport options, whether they/their guests use the service or not
- Funding possibilities must be easy to find and to be processed with little time expenditure

1.2.3 Afternoon plenary session

The afternoon plenary session focused on the showcase of several good practice examples of mobility services supporting rural tourism. Sites' representatives from different EU countries shared their mobility and transport challenges and the solutions they adopted to solve them.



Andrea Lorenzini, MemEx
SMARTA-NET technical coordinator

The session was divided in two main parts:

- a first introductory joint-presentation from Bente Grimm, from NIT and Andrea Lorenzini, SMARTA-NET technical coordinator, from MemEx;
- a second part, moderated by Andrea Lorenzini, with 6 practical presentations on mobility services supporting rural tourism from target ERMN members.

In the first part, Andrea Lorenzini introduced the objective of the session by specifying the meaning of “good practice”, its distinctive features, and the spectrum of rural shared mobility solutions, as presented in the SMARTA-NET “*atomium*” diagram. Bente Grimm followed with a presentation highlighting the main issues in rural tourist communities concerning mobility, accessibility and tourism and focusing in particular on the German situation. An overview of the main German tourist trends was also provided on the basis of Market Research data from the German Reiseanalyse.

In the second part, the six presentations introduced how mobility services provide connections to tourist destinations, and how stakeholders collaborate to make it happen in target areas.

Presentation of good practice examples: mobility services supporting rural tourism

Kusel county, Germany

Presentation: [Link](#)

Mr Karl Heinz Schoon, Responsible for Mobility in the District of Kusel (Germany) presented the main sustainable mobility initiatives in the Kusel District, and, in particular, the Bürgerbus Oberes Glantal volunteer-based community transport service operating in different areas of the District. The County aims to complement and integrate the public transport offer with on-demand sustainable services, including the Bürgerbus service, operated with voluntary drivers (minibus or large passenger cars), and the Ruf Taxi service. These shared mobility solutions allow the improvement of the accessibility of rural areas population, especially disadvantaged ones such as elderly and mobility-impaired people, to public services. In this way, it aims to reduce the feeling of social exclusion of inhabitants, improving the local living conditions and the sense of community of the united municipalities. On several occasions, the Bürgerbus service was also promoted to access cultural (e.g., museum) and recreational activities.

Šaleška Valley, Slovenia

Presentation: [Link](#); Video: [Link](#)

Mrs. Urska Rozik, from the Šaleška Valley Tourist Board, brought the audience to the charming northeastern part of Slovenia by presenting the main tourist features and attractions of Šaleška Valley.

The different initiatives, implemented and planned, on sustainable mobility services were introduced. Particular emphasis was given to the sustainable mobility plan of the Municipality of Velenje, currently under elaboration, that will support the adoption of solutions for the aggregation of tourist flows on public transport and the promotion of off-season tourism as well as the implementation of effective strategies to optimize the movement of visitors, reducing the strain on parking infrastructure, and enhancing the overall tourist experience in the region.

Dingle, Ireland

Presentation: [Link](#)

Brendan Finn, SMARTA-NET project manager, presented the interesting case of Dingle-hub, on behalf of local representatives who were unable to join the meeting in person. Dingle is a cultural and touristic destination town located in County Kerry in a western peninsula on the southwest coast of Ireland. The city hosts about 1.500 inhabitants.

Dingle-hub is an exemplar Rural Community Innovation and Transition hub. The main aim of Dingle Hub is to build a sustainable community by fostering an ecosystem that supports the creation of enterprise and employment on the Dingle Peninsula. Among other activities, it was emphasized the work of Dingle Hub with public and private sector

partners to reduce carbon emissions on the peninsula by providing realistic alternatives to private car journeys with their Sustainable Mobility Pathfinder Project, fostering the implementation of a package of measures for more sustainable mobility (e.g. e-mobility hubs, e-bikes initiatives). The presentation also focused on the main changes in Public Transport supply towards a more sustainable mobility.

Madeira, Portugal

Presentation: [Link](#)

Mrs Cristina Loreto, from the Regional Government of Madeira, presented some key figures on the mobility patterns of residents and tourists in recent years on the island of Madeira. Several aspects to promote the Public Transport offer to tourists and locals and achieve a mobility behavioural change were highlighted. In particular, target initiatives involving several stakeholders using tailor-made participatory methodologies such as targeted promotional campaigns and specific activities with schools, or cross sector business partnerships to establish win-win agreements to foster the use of sustainable transport modes (e.g. Hoteliers as PT ambassadors) were highlighted.



Mrs Cristina Loreto,
Regional Government of Madeira

Jastrebarsko, Croatia

Presentation: [Link](#)

Mr Dražen Vinščak, from the municipality of Jastrebarsko, presented the main mobility challenges in the area and the relevant tourist attractions, including a wine road connecting several rural settlements. He presented the regional transport offer and the strategies and plans to improve the provision of sustainable mobility services to tourist attractions, which include the development of eight main cycling routes and the consequent increase of the cycle lines from 20 to 53 Km. He also pointed out how the municipal plan to extend the coverage of the public transport offer, to reach many of the hamlets and villages.

Sopotniki, Slovenia

Presentation: [Link](#)

Marko Zevnik, Director of the Sopotniki NGO, presented the Sopotniki community-based service implemented in Slovenia. The service covers 16 Municipalities and small villages outside Ljubljana Urban Region. It is a successful door-to-door transport service targeting elderly people aged 65 and over and



Marko Zevnik,
Director of the Sopotniki NGO

living within the area of the served municipalities. The service allows its users to attend cultural events, visit friends, to go to the doctor, shopping, etc. at no cost. The organisational structure consists of a central management team at the headquarters, which is responsible for strategic planning, regulatory compliance, fundraising, and coordination with municipalities, and the local units (13 people, located in different municipalities), supported by a network of volunteer drivers (almost 270 people with almost 19,000 hours year offered). Insights about the characteristics of the service (such as infrastructures, volunteers training programmes, incentives, public-private collaborations, community involvement and flexibility), the main difficulties, weaknesses, success factors and lessons learnt were deeply described.

1.2.4 Afternoon parallel workshop session

The parallel workshop sessions at the SMARTA-NET meeting aimed to achieve several key objectives. These workshops contributed to ongoing SMARTA-NET tasks by validating existing guidance and preliminary findings in cases where guidance was under development. They provided a platform for participants to express their specific needs, ensuring that their issues were addressed. Furthermore, the workshops were a venue to identify relevant cases and practices in line with the workshop topics. They allowed participants to engage with one another and share their experiences and insights from various countries, promoting discussions on common interests.

Four parallel workshops were organised, each led by a partner organisation of the SMARTA-NET consortium, around the following topics (See annex 3 for the outcomes of the individual workshops):

Delivering good practice solutions in shared mobility,

led by MemEx: The Task 1 workshop aimed to validate SMARTA-NET Guidance for rural shared mobility solutions. Participants discussed short- and medium-term mobility packages, highlighting the expansion of existing services and new volunteer-driven or IT-based solutions. Long-term goals involved integrating services and creating multimodal hubs. Stakeholder identification for shared rural mobility was a key focus, with participants welcoming the clear information in the guidance and suggesting user group highlights and insights on implementation barriers and drivers.



Delivering good practice solutions workshop session led by Memex

Rural-sensitive ‘Strategy & Development’ of a SUMP, led by TIS:

The workshop introduced and presented outlining rural mobility aspects crucial for SUMP development. Participants split into two groups to brainstorm actions and concerns for integrating rural aspects into the strategy development stage of the SUMP lifecycle. Key findings included the need to consider external factors that could impact rural areas in the medium-term, with a focus on tourism as a key driver. Participants highlighted the role of shared assets for improving rural connectivity in an ideal scenario. The workshop aimed to encourage further discussion on making SUMPs rural-sensitive in the subsequent phases of the SUMP lifecycle.



André Freitas (TIS) leading the Rural sensitive ‘Strategy & Development’ workshop session

Sustainable tourist mobility in rural regions, led by NIT:

The workshop centered on presenting a guideline for more sustainable mobility in rural tourism regions, with a focus on integrating tourist destinations with resilient sustainable mobility networks. Participants discussed aspects such as the identification of key external factors influencing rural areas and the need to think about prospective scenarios in the medium-term, particularly the impact of tourism on sustainable mobility. Key findings included the significance of considering integrated package mobility options and tourism activities and improving last-mile travel solutions. The workshop aimed to gather feedback for refining the existing guideline.



Sustainable tourist mobility in rural regions workshop session led by NIT

Exploring mobility challenges in rural areas, led by Panteia:

The workshop began with a presentation by Panteia highlighting the challenges faced by rural areas, including population decline, increased tourism, and limited public transport, resulting in greater car dependency. A presentation on the Czech Lighthouse Site focused on existing and missing mobility solutions. In an interactive exercise, participants divided into groups to identify potential solutions on a map, emphasizing the need for data in establishing an effective transport network. Key findings included the importance of inter-municipal cooperation, funding, and data collection for planning. Although suggestions for improvement were not discussed due to time constraints, SMARTA-NET (Panteia) plans to offer a service to Lighthouse sites for data collection to enhance understanding of local mobility conditions and potential enhancements.



Exploring mobility challenges in rural areas workshop session led by Panteia

1.3 Second day: 12 October

1.3.1 Parallel session

This session was designed to foster a discussion with the ERMN members about different key topics that were either proposed by ERMN members themselves or that emerged during the discussions of the previous sessions. The SMARTA-NET team clustered all these topics into four main groups, namely: (i) Integration and standards; (ii) Institutional and organisational framework; (iii) Rural tourism and mobility; (iv) Communication and behavioural change.

Participants were therefore split into four groups according to their preference.

The discussion in each group was facilitated and guided by two SMARTA-NET team members.

The cluster on **integration and standards** was moderated by André Freitas (TIS) and Brendan Finn (MemEx) and aimed to address the importance of transport services and modes integration to better meet mobility needs. The discussion started with an analysis of how to determine the minimum level of transport services needed in an area to answer the mobility needs and how to estimate the funding needed for reaching this minimum level. Participants agreed on the need to have common standards within Europe and a good example from Ireland was shared, where a Sustainable Mobility Index (e.g. Readiness for the Low Carbon Transition, Access to Employment and Economic Opportunities and Access to Services and Social Facilities) was developed to measure transport services and accessibility in rural centres. Another key point of the discussion was the importance of integrating mobility and tourism, in order to ensure a better tourist experience and avoid mobility problems in tourist areas, especially during peak seasons. The importance was highlighted of providing clear and detailed information to tourists on available accommodation and transport options (e.g. tourists info panels) and also to incorporate tourism perspective in the mobility sector. The final point of the discussion was related to the integration of rural transport and funding: flexible services were pointed out as a suitable, proper solution to answer people changing mobility behaviours; moreover, the importance was underlined of the use of the technology for better understanding needs and thus fine-tuning the available transport services. Participants would like SMARTA-NET project to focus more on the methodologies implemented in the different involved countries/regions, on the main issues faced by each region and how to address them as well as to advocate for rural mobility at the European level highlighting the main local problems and concerns to supranational decision-making forums.

The cluster on **institutional and organisational framework** was moderated by Daniela Mattiuz (Panteia) and Andrea Lorenzini (MemEx). The discussion was mostly focused on the challenges of cooperation between municipalities and private actors in the implementation of mobility solution and in overcoming bureaucratic barriers related to the setting-up of new mobility services and policies. From the conversation, it emerged that the main challenges to be overcome are related to a lack of clear frameworks within which public and private actors can collaborate at the municipal level, a lack of flexibility in the framework themselves, a lack of a unified approach between the two different sectors as well as a general feeling of mistrust towards the private sectors often perceived as not owning the needed competence or just

following their business interest. Policy guidance, regulatory frameworks, flexible schemes and the adoption of service Key Performance Indicators (KPI) to be respected were therefore highlighted as the key elements on which a good public-private collaboration could be established. A change in mentality in public authorities with regards to the involvement of private actors could also help.

The cluster on **Rural tourism and mobility** was moderated by Bente Grimm and Rieka Oldsen (NIT). Participants agreed on the fact that tourists in rural regions often choose to move around with a car (either own or rented) since other more sustainable mobility options are, in some cases, poor/not available or not easily accessible. In terms of solutions, targeted marketing and communication campaigns on available sustainable mobility options (e.g. minibuses, bikes, bus services, ridesharing, etc.) and public transport services can certainly be a boost to promote their use. Tourists shall be able to easily obtain clear information on available mobility options at destinations and know about the benefits of opting for sustainable services in order to change their mobility behaviour. Several ideas came out from the discussion, from involving hoteliers in providing accommodation/mobility packages or shuttles services for their guests, to expanding carsharing or bike rentals wherever available, to developing package tours with different modes of transport and involving local stakeholders and guests in sustainable mobility contests or in co-participatory actions to improve the offer of public transport. Participants would like SMARTA-NET to focus specifically on how to overcome the last-mile problem. Other suggestions for future activities within the project were also provided (such as the setting-up of a competition on the nicest bus stop in the region and the participation to the European Mobility Week 2024).



Rural tourism and mobility cluster, led by NIT

The session on **Communication and behavioural change** was moderated by Edina Ockso and Anita Balogh (e40). The discussion focused on key aspects about an effective and efficient communication of tourism services (to tourists) and mobility services (to inhabitants and tourists). Participants agreed that an efficient communication with relevant stakeholders and target users should be set up for understanding and assessing the main needs of a community, identifying and planning the right solution(s), promoting the use of the implemented services, collecting data and feedback on the services. Another key message that came out from the discussion was the importance of encouraging people to use public transport. Smart technology can certainly improve mobility/tourism service offers; however, it is extremely important to first assess the real needs for technology (e.g. if people will be using it, if the right skills are in place, etc.).

1.3.2 Panel discussions

The panel discussion session comprised two consecutive sessions, both led by the partner company Panteia.

Speakers of the 1st panel discussion:

- Helen Mc Henry, Western Development Commission, Ireland
- Alexandra Correira, Alentejo Regional Development Agency, Portugal
- Maria Siti, Technical University of Athens, Greece



The first discussion focused on rural mobility and sustainability, emphasizing the need for tailored solutions, data-driven assessments, and enhanced connectivity between rural communities. It highlighted the role of both technology and personal interactions in achieving these objectives. The discussion recognized that rural regions are diverse, and there is no one-size-fits-all solution to mobility challenges. The importance of a guaranteed right to minimum mobility connectivity was emphasized. Additionally, the session discussed the use of mobility indices to assess access to services and sustainability, noting that less affluent areas tend to be more environmentally friendly. Efforts to revive carpooling and adapt urban planning for sustainable mobility were discussed, along with the challenges of interconnecting rural villages. The session concluded by highlighting the need to strike a balance between new technologies and face-to-face interactions to maintain community cohesion.

Speakers of the 2nd panel discussion:

- Carmelo Rivero, Barcelona Provincial Council, Spain
- Declan Rice, Kilkenny LEADER Partnership, Ireland
- Florin Ceparu, Municipality of Ramincusarat, Romania



In the second panel discussion, the practical aspects of enhancing rural mobility were explored. The conversation underscored the important role of municipalities in instigating change, stressed the need for cooperation and dialogue, and highlighted the importance of projects that promote sustainability. Funding, subsidiarity, and a shift in mentalities were identified as key elements to support rural mobility initiatives. The discussion delved into topics like implementation, responsible parties, funding mechanisms, and the facilitation of cross-border transport. Municipalities were highlighted as

a starting point, where the focus should be on understanding residents' needs and initiating dialogues with neighbouring regions. Authority primarily rests with municipalities, and the alignment of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs) with functional zones was emphasized. Coordination among different communities, proactive measures, and the role of projects like SMARTA-NET in changing mindsets were also discussed. The allocation of funds was connected to sustainability-enhancing projects in municipal plans, and a focus on subsidiarity was deemed essential, empowering local actors to initiate action based on national guidelines

1.3.3 Closing session

The closing plenary aimed to introduce two key aspects that will influence the project's next steps: the training programme and the next ERMN meeting. Brendan Finn (Memex) was the first speaker, briefly sharing a "save the date" for upcoming meetings until the project's end. He reiterated the project's goal, emphasizing the need to enhance the capacity of rural municipalities and other influential stakeholders forming the ERMN network, facilitating their voices and encouraging networking among them.

Following these remarks, Luciana Pereira (NIT) began her intervention on stage by providing a comprehensive overview of the training programme. She stressed that training is a critical project activity, as it will be the cornerstone for disseminating and implementing the guidelines being developed. The presentation covered training objectives, target audience, and practical details. Luciana introduced the trainers in each country to familiarize ERMN members with these experts and facilitators. Additionally, during her presentation, she initiated a Mentimeter session to gather feedback on aspects participants wished to see further developed in the training.

In conclusion, André Freitas (NIT) announced that the next ERMN meeting, to be conducted online, would focus on Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs). He shared preliminary findings highlighting the consensus among ERMN members on the significance of planning for the extended rural hinterland and the practical challenges faced. Key discussion points to be addressed during the meeting were presented, and a Mentimeter session was opened to collect input from participants regarding specific interests they would like to see covered in the upcoming meeting.

Key findings and discussion points regarding the training modules and the upcoming ERMN meeting on Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs) are as follows:

Participants expressed their interest in practical knowledge and insights, good practice examples, and guidance on how to combine and integrate different types of transport solutions. In particular, the experience in the set up of multimodal hubs in major transport corridors could be relevant for target practitioners and local authorities. Participants are eager for community-based initiatives, such as the Bürgerbus initiative in Germany and the Sopotniki DRT in Slovenia. Public-sector-led solutions focused on e-car sharing schemes, in which the

vehicles are owned by the local authorities and are made available for users on weekdays, are considered notable. A specific point for ERMN consideration concerns freight transport and logistics operations in rural areas, and how to increase their efficiency.

In the second module of our Mobility and Tourism training, participants expressed interest in several key discussion topics. Some aim to delve into the influence of attitudes and cultural perspectives on travel behaviour. Additionally, there is curiosity about improving ticketing systems for a more seamless travel experience. Participants would like to engage in conversations about accommodating the diverse needs and perspectives of everyone involved in travel and tourism. The exploration of eco-friendly vacation planning through mobile apps is also a focal point. Moreover, there is a shared desire to establish a standardized method for measuring and tracking tourist movements, with the aim of enhancing the management of tourism's impact

Participants expressed several key areas they want to see addressed in our upcoming meeting regarding the development and integration of rural areas in the context of Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning. Firstly, they have expressed interest to explore the challenges of integrating rural mobility into an ongoing or evolving SUMP. Another pressing concern raised was the inclusion of rural representation in the governance and steering groups right from the outset of scoping. In this regard, participants emphasised the importance of rural actors having a voice across all stages of the SUMP lifecycle, not just in later phases once plans are in motion or completed.

The discussion of SUMP in the context of the TEN-T policy was also identified as a crucial topic. With the upcoming requirements of the new TEN-T policy, mandating SUMP for all urban nodes as from 2025, participants call for a discussion to explore how these policies will impact planning for the rural hinterland of the TEN-T urban nodes.

Efficient short-term goal planning emerged as an area participants wished to delve into further. This issue refers to the implementation of measures that yield immediate and short-term results, addressing pressing issues swiftly within the mobility planning framework. Finally, participants highlighted the significance of understanding differences across various countries and regions, seeking insights into good practices across Europe to draw inspiration from diverse experiences.

With regard to the horizontal activity of the SMARTA-NET training program, attendees of the meeting in Bingen voiced several critical points they wish to explore further. Firstly, there's a keen interest in understanding how to navigate the complexities of applying for funding. Participants emphasised the need for guidance and support in the application process to secure essential funding for mobility projects.

Secondly, they highlighted the importance of delivering clear and concrete schemes and examples as part of the project training program. Such effort and illustration of funding schemes and real-world examples of successful applications were deemed valuable to support and inspire new projects and initiatives for rural mobility.

Participants also expressed a strong desire to delve into strategies for building ridership and revenue in the initial years of a project. In particular, they want that the training program can offer insights on overcoming initial deficits and structuring plans to grow ridership while ensuring financial sustainability.

Still on the topic of funding, it was recommended that structural changes related to funding allocation based on travel needs rather than just population size can emerge as a significant point of the corresponding training module. In this regard, participants wish to explore new frameworks that accurately reflect the mobility demands of different regions and demographics. Lastly, the need for multi-year funding commitments was also emphasised. In concrete, participants seek insights into establishing long-term funding agreements that offer stability and continuity for sustained mobility initiatives.

1.4 Field visits on 10th October

The SMARTA-NET Project organized site visits in Bingen am Rhein on October 10th, one day before the meeting of the European Rural Mobility Network (ERMN) with 35 participants. The aim of the field visits was to provide members of the European Rural Mobility Network (ERMN) with insights into how mobility and tourism issues are managed and organized in Germany. The visits were categorized into four options, each offering a unique focus: transport-oriented, rural tourism-oriented, rural development-oriented, and leisure or activity-oriented, allowing participants to choose based on their interests.

The first option featured a walking tour to Kulturufer and a visit to the former National Horticultural Show site, with a focus on sustainable development and renovation. Six participants took part in this option.

The second option included a walking tour, ferry ride, and cable car experience to Assmannshausen, Niederwald monument, and Rudesheim, providing insights into rural areas, tourist offers, and local public transport. It was attended by 24 participants. Among other things, it was observed how all of this has been packaged and promoted as a comprehensive product with combined ticket, due to the cooperation of the tourist organisations and transport service providers.



The third option covered LEADER projects centred on Hildegard von Bingen, offering multimedia experiences related to Saint Hildegard and her works. Six participants attended this option.



The fourth option presented a virtual tour of Lichtenberg Castle in the Kusel district, showcasing cultural treasures and the SMART CITY model project. All participants had the opportunity to explore this option before departing on the field visit.



2. Annexes

Annex 1: Agenda and presentations

11 October 2023

8:30-9:00 Meet and greet, Check-in

9:00-9:15 Welcome by the host Bingen am Rhein

9:15-10:30 Opening plenary

- [Introduction to the European Rural Mobility Network \(ERMN\)](#)
Mr. Brendan Finn, SMARTA-NET Project Manager, MemEx
- [Policy perspective on rural mobility and tourism](#)
Mr. Reiner Dölger, Rhineland Palatinate Ministry of Traffic
- [European Commission policy on rural mobility](#)
- *Mr. Rafal Stanecki, European Commission DG MOVE*
- [Enabling factors for change to boost rural development](#)
Mrs. Pascale Van Doren, EU Rural Pact Support Office, Team Leader
- [Supporting green rural mobility on state level](#)
Martin Schiefelbusch, NVBW

Q&A

10:30-11:00 Coffee and networking

11:00-13:00 World Café session

- [Mobility in support of sustainable rural tourism](#)
- Challenges of access from city/town to rural tourism destinations
- Bundling of tourism and mobility into integrated service offer and pricing
- Workers and locals needs in a tourist-oriented area

13:00-14:00 Lunch break

14:00-15:30 Plenary Session

- [Introducing rural mobility services supporting tourism](#) *Andrea Lorenzini (Memex) and Bente Grimm (NIT)*
- Presentation of good practice examples:
 - [Kusel, Germany](#)
 - [Šalek Valley, Slovenia](#)
 - [Dingle, Ireland](#)
 - [Madeira, Portugal](#)
 - [Jastrebarsko, Croatia](#)
 - [Sopotniki, Slovenia](#)





15:30-16:00 Coffee and networking

16:00-17:30 Parallel Thematic Workshop session

- Delivering good practice solutions in shared mobility, led by MemEx
[Introduction-Green workshop](#)
[Sopotniki- Good practice](#)
[Ring a Link- Good practice](#)
- Sustainable tourist mobility in rural regions, led by NIT
[Introduction Sustainable-Tourism-Mobility](#)
[Kalmar, Sweden](#)
[Normandy, France](#)
- Rural sensitive 'Strategy & Development' of a SUMP, led by TIS
[Rural sensitive 'Strategy & Development' of a SUMP](#)
- Exploring mobility challenges in rural areas, led by Panteia
[Introduction – Exploring mobility challenges in rural Areas](#)
[LAG Sdruzeni Ruze, Czechia](#)

12 October 2023

8:30-9:00 Meet and greet, Check-in

9:00-9:15 Introduction to Day 2

9:15-10:30 [Parallel Sessions](#)

10:30-11:00 Coffee and networking

11:00-11:45 Panel sessions

- [How to bring about implementation at sufficient scale to meet rural mobility needs](#)

The discussion focused on the following issues:

Understanding the scale of what is needed and related implications

How to measure rural mobility and identify areas of particular need

Delivery: what is the delivery structure needed to address rural mobility, at the level of national, regional, and local authorities

11:45-12:30 Closing plenary

- [Building Capacity](#)
André Freitas, NIT
- [Training, thematic networking and exchange among the ERMN members](#)
André Freitas and Luciana Perreira, NIT



Annex 2: Reports on the World Café sessions

Table 1

Key question:	What is needed for mobility services in support of rural tourism to be at-scale, replicable and durable?
Table Lead	Geert Koops (Panteia) and Elena Bargagna (MemEx)
Key findings on developing mobility in support of rural tourism	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of schedule of public transport services with the opening hours of monuments, parks and touristic points to encourage the rise of tourism through the use of public transport. • Communication of the existing public transport services. • Establish a services structure well-define. • Restriction on the use of the car in touristic areas to encourage the use of public transport services by tourist (SP, PT, FR, IT, EL). • Making the use of public transport an experience (e.g. tourist train in Latvia). • Creation of slow tourist experiences, and collaboration with local stakeholders. • Promote the territory heritage, and the existing public transport services using tourist information offices (LV, SW). • Decentralization of information through decentralized tourism offices, and collaborations with hotels and other stakeholders. 	
Specific findings on challenges of access from city/town to rural tourism destinations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users don't use the public transport services due to the schedule (only rush hours) and the few rides (PT). • Lack of communication of existing public transport services. • Relationship with private transport operators. • Large use of rental car to visit touristic areas in island (Madeira, PT). Tourists don't take into account the utilization of public transport. • Conservation of the management structure and service in the long term. • Information in English is required for tourist (language barriers) 	
Specific findings on bundling of tourism and mobility into integrated service offer and pricing	



- Offering an integrated ticket through an online platform where the user can book 1 ticket to use more types of public transport services, and more means of transport (e.g. Narni Link, Italy).
- In France, the tourist shall book a parking place, and the shuttle bus ticket to visit Mont Saint Michelle. The tickets are sold together (integrated ticket), and their price change based to the hour of the day of the reservation, and the anticipation of the purchase.
- Creation of 'tourist pass', that include the use of public transport services and the visit of the cultural and natural heritage (SW).

Key findings on workers and locals in a tourist-oriented area

- Balance public transport tourists' services and public transport inhabitants' services.
- Slow public transport services for tourists aren't used by residence because of too much time to travel (LV): 'Fast is more important for locals'.
- In Heraklion, the Municipality had redevelopment the city centre, and removed street parking. It encourages the use of small electric buses to travel inside the city centre. Presence of private parking only for inhabitants (EL).

Next steps and action points, i.e. how SMARTA-NET will use information on experiences of partners and how suggestions will be addressed

SMARTA-NET shall provide a Guidance on tourism and on the utilization of sustainable mobility solutions to improve it in rural areas based on participants experiences. The Guidance shall be focused on the development of communication of the existed mobility solutions by the public transport operators, public entities and tourism organisation to tourists and inhabitants of the territory. The lack of communication, presents in all the studied territories, shows the need of communication plan to address the mobility choices of the users. In particular, the Guidance must present how tourist mobility in rural areas shall be communicated and how the information shall be disseminated among the population and tourists. In this way, tourists can choose for sustainable modes of transportation rather than ride a car, and inhabitants can use public transport for their intra-district trip, reducing the utilization of their own car. The Guidance shall deepen the policies restrictions on the use of the car in touristic areas, as solution to encourage the use of public transport services by tourists.



Photos

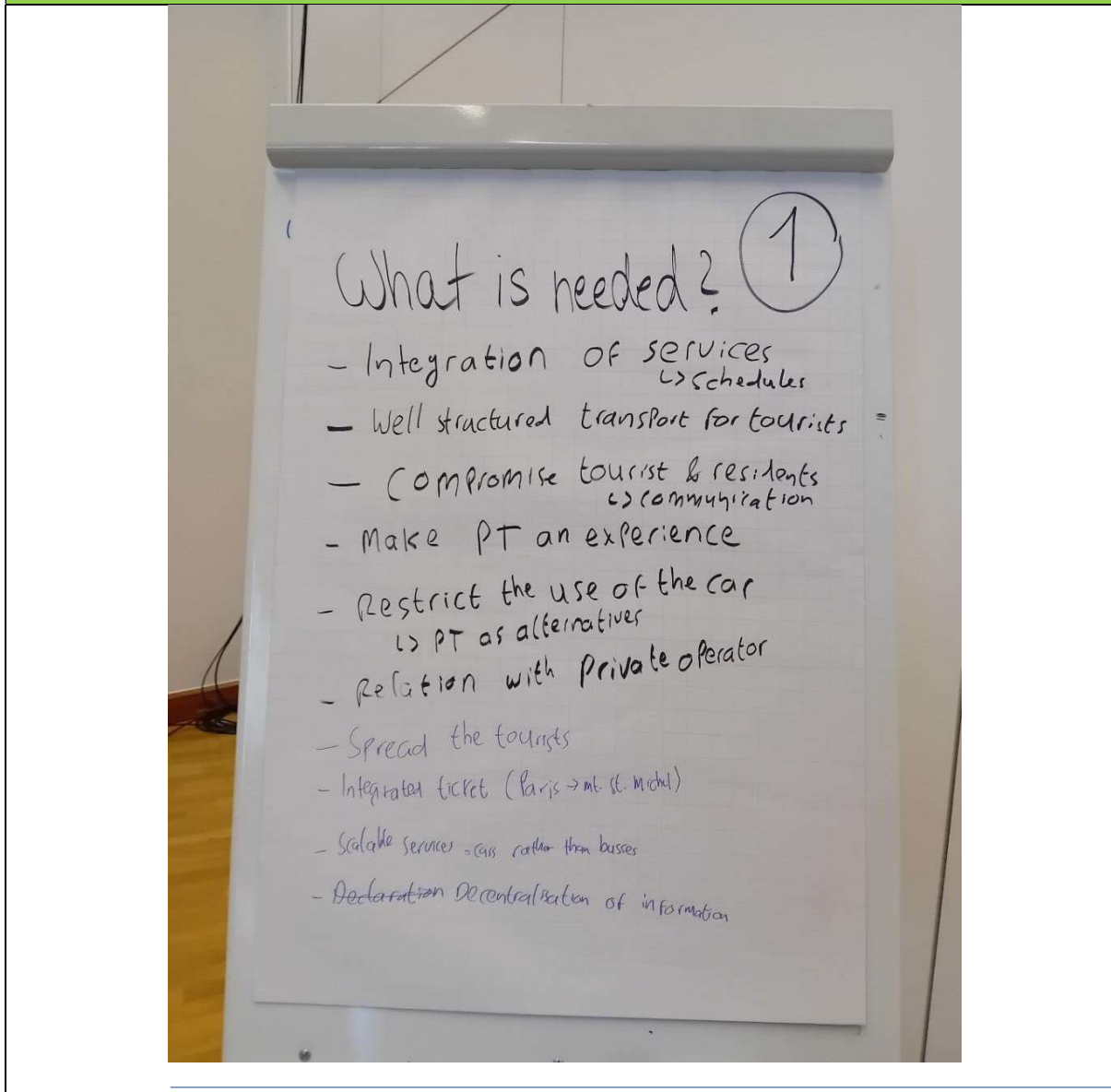


Table 2

Key question:	Can tourism players take the initiative in developing mobility solutions – what examples in leadership, cooperation, and organisation do we see from practice?
Table Lead	Edina Ocsko (E40), Daniela Mattiuz (Panteia)
Key findings on developing mobility in support of rural tourism	
<p>The key findings can be summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cooperation is essential: Collaboration among various stakeholders, including private actors (e.g., hotel owners and tourism agencies) and public entities (municipalities and NGOs), is crucial for the successful development of mobility solutions for rural tourism. For example, in the case of Crete, individual hotel owners have their own transportation fleets, which can result in inefficiencies and empty buses. Private actors often need to work together and coordinate their efforts to create cost-effective and efficient transportation networks. - Initiators and Financial Support: Initiators, such as municipalities and associations, play a vital role in driving the development of mobility solutions. They can coordinate efforts, offer examples, and provide initial financial support. This support is particularly important in areas with a seasonal tourism economy where services are needed during peak seasons. - Clear Boundaries and Regulations: Setting clear boundaries and regulations is necessary to guide the collaboration between private and public actors. For example, laws can help prevent issues like the uncontrolled proliferation of private transport services in urban areas that could lead to congestion. - Importance of Communication: Effective communication and coordination are critical to the success of mobility initiatives. The example of the Narni tourist visits package (see below) highlights how a lack of communication between tourism agencies, private actors, and municipalities can hinder the implementation of transportation services for tourists. - Incentives and Policies: Tourism players need incentives and clear policies to motivate them to participate in developing mobility solutions. Municipalities and higher-level governments should provide guidance and support to private actors, helping them invest in transportation initiatives. Furthermore, entrepreneurs may face obstacles, such as initial insurance costs, when entering the mobility services sector. Policymakers should consider ways to remove these barriers and encourage entrepreneurial participation. - Adaptation to Tourists' Needs: Mobility services should be adaptable to meet the specific needs of tourists. Flexibility and collaboration are essential to bridge the gap between the rules of the transport sector and the unique requirements of the tourism industry. - Variability by Region: The role and nature of private actors in developing rural tourism mobility solutions can vary by region, depending on the characteristics and interests of the 	



area. Some regions may have highly independent private actors, while others may require more coordination.

Specific findings on challenges of access from city/town to rural tourism destinations

Some findings were:

- Often times transportation to tourist areas is organised by private actors (e.g. hotels).
- The absence of clear regulations and boundaries can lead to challenges. For instance, in Crete, a law allowing each hotel to have its own bus parking spot in front has led to issues with overcrowded streets. Proper regulations are necessary to guide and control private actors in the tourism transport sector.
- Effective communication and coordination among stakeholders, including tourism agencies, private actors, and municipalities, are vital for successful transportation initiatives. The Narni example (below) highlights the importance of communication in ensuring the success of transportation services provided by municipalities.

Specific findings on bundling of tourism and mobility into integrated service offer and pricing

Very interesting is the case of Narni. During the summer, there was a ticket that could be bought for 5€ that would give you access to a series of tourist locations/visits. However, if you bought a transport ticket of 1.30€ those visits were already included. Narni found that the 5€ ticket was very successful, but not the 1.30€, even though the latter was cheaper. So why did it not work? Lack of communication of the offer to the consumer? Lack of communication between the tourism agency and the transport department?

This example further highlights the importance of Coordination and Communication between the entities active in the sector.

Key findings on workers and locals in a tourist-oriented area

Local governments and authorities can play a role in providing incentives and regulations to ensure that the interests of workers and residents are considered. For example, regulations can help manage issues like transportation, parking, and environmental impact.

Next steps and action points, i.e. how SMARTA-NET will use information on experiences of partners and how suggestions will be addressed

SMARTA-NET could provide examples about cooperation between municipalities and tourism actors in implementing mobility solutions.

Photos





Table 3

Key question:	New, expanded or innovative services connecting to the main public transport - what examples do we see from practice in rural tourism areas?
Table Lead	Brendan Finn (MemEx) and Anita Ballogh (E40)
Key findings on current and emerging practice in mobility services in support of rural tourism	
<p>Many practices were identified across Europe. These were clustered along five themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of information prior to coming to an area, so people can already make choices about their mobility at the destination, and can plan specific trips; • Provision of information at the destination about mobility services, including how to use them, where to find them, prices, timetables, etc.; • Use of apps, both specific for mobility and inclusion of mobility service information in general apps about the area or the tourism offers; • Provision of information, leaflets, etc. where people stay – hotels, guesthouses, rental accommodation; • Informal/verbal provision of information, such as hotel workers advising visitors about places to go, how to get around, making suggestions/recommendations, ... • Improved on-line databases on cycling trails, networks, facilities; suggested touring routes; • Incentives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers to improve the convenience and affordability of mobility services, such as family day tickets that may be used on all the local modes of transport; 	



- Combining mobility and activities, for example including mobility on visitor tickets, or providing discounts for admission/use on production of the mobility ticket;
- Impose/increase parking charges at sensitive/overloaded sites or closing of touristic roads from car traffic to get people to consider alternatives;
- Provision of free public transport for an initial period of time, to overcome the culture of people not using PT – but, must consider the challenge to keep it going;
- Make bike services available as a “loss leader” to where tourists will spend time and money;
- **Convenience**
 - Provision of bike trailers on buses, so they don’t need to cycle the long distances (or long uphill) and can then get around by bike where they wish to. Can also carry the luggage.
 - Drop-off and pick-up service for walkers, hikers, cyclists, so they don’t have to come back to their starting point;
 - Mobility hubs, where different types of mobility service are co-located – for example, bicycles or hire-cars available at the train/bus station. Other services and facilities may also be located there – café, shop, toilets, ...
 - Provide additional bus stops where there are many tourists, activities.
- **Mobility Services**
 - By far, the most reported measure is just to strengthen the general public transport system. This can be to increase frequency, provide service during the day at not only at commuting times, extend operating hours to evening and weekend, adjust services to bring them closer to the tourist/visitor destinations, ...
 - Establish new routes initially to serve a defined tourism/visitor need, then build up the ridership from the general population as they become aware of it, so it has the usage levels to retain it. Two examples of interest were provided:
 - In Latvia, service was restored on a narrow gauge railway, three days a week for cyclists. As popularity grew, the service was extended to all seven days. As it was available, general tourists, student and some local people now use it as well. The service now connects with regular PT.
 - In Ireland, the Country Life part of the National Museum is located about 5km from the town of Castlebar, not accessible without a car. A connecting bus service was implemented for visitors. Workers at the Museum also started to use, as did people in the area to go to Castlebar. It is now an established route.
 - Bus services to link valleys, allowing visitors to spend time in one, then take the bus to another which would have been too far/difficult to reach by walking or bike. A case from Slovenia was reported.
 - Provide occasional events using the PT/DRT resources – e.g. “Museum Day” organized by BurgerBus in Kusel
 - Develop shared-taxi services so mobility is available at a price-point less than the high-cost individual taxi fare;





- Establish bike hiring services;
- Mobility itself as the attraction – steam trains, scenic routes, double-deck buses, ...;
- **Private initiative**
 - Throughout Europe, services for tourists/visitors are provided at own initiative, whether by the mobility service providers, destinations/attractions, or the places where people stay. This includes shuttle buses to accommodation and attractions, tours, activity trips, etc.
 - Clearly there is value in doing so, as it is worth someone’s while to carry the cost of the mobility services. We should understand the business case underpinning such services, where the value arises and who is willing to incur the costs.

Table 4

Key question:	Who should pay for mobility in support of rural tourism? Assuming there is enhanced value, who benefits within the value chain – who is willing or should be required to contribute?
Table Lead	André Freitas (TIS), Eleonora Ercoli and Giorgio Ambrosino (Memex)
Key findings on who should pay for mobility in support of rural tourism	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When delivering mobility solutions in rural areas, there has been consensus around the idea that money needs to be pulled out both from public and private entities • As a starting point, minimum level of services need to be established for linking rural areas, to guarantee minimum level of accessibility for rural communities. • On top of this, complementary transport services might be offered if there is private interest. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o But here, concession of services should be linked to a research on who exactly the new enhanced transport services will beneficiate (restaurants, shops, etc.) so than they too can financially contribute to finance e.g. the PSOs that authorities need to pay to sustain services that are not financially sustainable by themselves. o So there is a redistribution of money which ensure that profitable services finance others that are not profitable (this should foresee that we don’t have free riders) • Concrete example of channeling funding from tourism activity to help financially sustain transport services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o In Germany, tourism charges for overnight stays are in place in several states in Germany, revenues are collected by the state government and in turn tourists have access to several transport options during their stay. o The example of France with the “versement of mobility” is a good example of companies paying for transport services (as increased transport services help to make the working vacancies more attractive) 	

Table 5

Key question:	How can we achieve better information for tourists on sustainable mobility options in rural regions? (pre-travel and on-site)? What examples from practice influence people to arrive without car, or to use it less on-site?
Table Lead	Luciana Pereira (TIS) and Andrea Lorenzini (MemEx)
Key findings on developing mobility in support of rural tourism	
<p>Main outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a general acknowledgment that that there is a lack of good and comprehensive information on how to get to tourism destinations and travel around with sustainable transport options • Communication is essential. Transportation “is not sexy”, so the communication on sustainable transport is a challenge. • There is a good level of advertisement about tourism, but not regarding transportation. • People shall be informed a lot of time. Sustainable transport options shall be promoted repeatedly and frequently, so that visitors can be persuaded to leave their car and try other modes of transport. Social media can be a good “enabler”. • Information on how to arrive at the destination and how to travel around shall be provided when the tourist is planning the trip. Booking platforms should provide such information to visitors, before they arrive at destination. • Usage of proximity marketing techniques and push-up notifications (online information) at the destination can be a good tool to inform users on the available transport options. • Google Maps is increasingly used as journey planner. There is a lack on PT information in rural areas. Transport authorities shall provide better information. Also, the platform should promote sustainable transport options. Municipalities should feed Google Maps with that information. 	
Specific findings on challenges of access from city/town to rural tourism destinations	



- Assumption is made that people will travel by car (IE)
- The information is not integrated (PT). However, this is improving - there is information on how to arrive, but less on how to travel around (FR).
- Better Information about active mobility is needed. Where to go by bicycle, what to visit, signalling, etc.
- The tourist office on site shall provide information not only about the places, areas, and attractions to visit, but also on the sustainable transport options that can be used to reach such destinations.
- Information about crowding in public transport is relevant.
- Accessible tourism. Information for disabled people should be provided (e.g., on how to use the infrastructure), as well as information in braille.
- Information in English is required apart from the local language
- In RO, most villages don't provide rural transport. There are perception issues due to political connotations, on the "rural transport" terminology. Finding a better way to communicate it is required.
- Municipalities should be more involved than they are now (RO). For example, they shall coordinate the responsible actors (including public transport and other mobility operators).

Specific findings on bundling of tourism and mobility into integrated service offer and pricing

- Local websites shall be linked to PT websites.
- Information on intermodality is needed.
- Information about payment: how to pay? Card, Cash?
- Rural municipalities could promote a package of transport solutions to get around at the level of the whole region. This shall be based on the integration on information, tariffs, etc. Hotels could be the vendors of these packages.
- Integration of mobility and tourism. Integration of mobility options with tourist products information
- Tourist offices also play an important role, as they shall provide on-site information.

Key findings on workers and locals in a tourist-oriented area



Annex 3: Parallel workshops

Title of workshop:	Delivering good practice solutions in shared mobility
Workshop Lead	MemEx
Summary of presentation / guidance or tool	
<p>The Task 1 workshop aimed to validate the SMARTA-NET Guidance for the implementation of shared mobility solutions and the transferability of target good practices in rural areas. Sustainable and Shared Mobility and Transport Good Practices are currently operated in different rural EU contexts exist and this can be inspirational for other territories in Europe in which accessibility and connectivity are major issues.</p> <p><u>Introduction to the guidance & workshop</u></p> <p>The workshop started with a first round of introduction in which participants briefly introduced themselves (country & organisation). Andrea Lorenzini (MemEx Srl) presented the main objective of the workshop that was to provide participants with practical knowledge and information about different mobility and transport practices implemented in different EU territories, including their success factors and transferability potential. During this first part of the WS, participants were guided to share what practices they have already in place in their contexts, who were the targets groups, what could have been future implementation plans. In particular, participants were asked to reflect on the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>What package of mobility solution could be implemented, in the short, medium, and long term, best suited to the needs of your area?</i> 2. <i>Who are the target stakeholders (including private companies) to be engaged in a shared vision for better rural mobility?</i> <p>Participants expressed their specific needs and indicated the type of support needed at their own level.</p> <p><u>Discussion on the guidance/tool</u></p> <p>In this part, Andrea Lorenzini introduced the “<u>Guidance for the implementation of shared mobility solutions and the transferability of target good practices</u>”.</p> <p>The Guidance is composed of three main documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>Catalogue</i> of mobility solutions (more than 30 practices) • The <i>Guidance document</i>, including the transferability assessment of target practices; • The <i>presentations</i>, that will feed the first module of the training session. <p>The main target users of the guidance and suggestions about how the guidance could be used by them were also highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Rural municipalities</i>: the Guidance will provide data and details on successful local shared mobility schemes; • <i>Regional Authorities</i>: the Guidance will provide information on transferability approaches to a provincial/ regional level; 	



- *Mobility and Transport Operators*: the guidance will summarise experience/ insights from the peers about the operational level;
- *Community representatives*: the guidance will provide advice on the engagement of communities in the provision of mobility services.

Discussion on existing experience of participants

In this part, two good practices were presented by target participants:

- the Ring a Link DRT service a mix of demand responsive transport services some fixed-route services implemented in three adjoining counties in the southeast of Ireland (Kilkenny, Carlow and Wicklow). The solution was presented by Mr. Jackie Meally and Mr. Barry Doyle;
- the Sopotniki Community based door to door lift service, presented by Mr. Marko Zevnik

The speakers introduced the two solutions as they are presented in the Catalogue and in the presentation of the first training module in the framework of SMARTA-NET Task 4 (SMARTA-NET training programme).

List of relevant experience collected from participants (structured), including country/ type of organisation/ title of initiative presented/ short description (if available name of person)

The most relevant experiences that were cited during the discussions were:

- Chiamabus, an on-demand bus service in the Municipality of Narni, in Umbria region (Italy) that connects low demand areas and sparsely hamlets within the municipality with the historic centre of Narni. The service is active since 2017, and it was offered by the Municipality of Narni in collaboration with Busitalia, the public transport operator.
- The above-mentioned good practices of Ring a Link and Sopotniki Community

Key findings / discussion points on guidance/ tool/ preliminary ideas

As previously indicated, the first part of the workshop was dedicated to a discussion about Mobility Packages that could be implemented in the areas/regions of the participants in the short, medium and long term. The main outcomes, for the short and medium term, were:

- the possibility/opportunity to increase and expand the already existing successful services (in particular DRT services as in the case of Ireland and Italy); the wide range of demand-responsive transport services reported in the Catalogue can provide relevant information and advice on which service scheme to implement based on the needs of the area.
- the setting up of brand new services with volunteers schemes, and the possibility to implement IT solutions for the management and booking. The experiences of Bürgerbus in Germany and the Sopotniki service can be inspirational and lessons can be learnt from them.
- the increase of shared mobility solutions, including carsharing and, eventually, bike-sharing services;
- the possibility to raise awareness about new mobility solutions and create an open-minded team at the municipal or county level, available to “make the change” and implement new solutions.



In the long-term, participants recognised the need to work on the integration of different services. This could start from the physical integration (i.e., the development of multimodal hubs) to then improve the operational and organisational layers.

The following discussion focused on the identification of the target stakeholders (including private companies) to be engaged in a shared vision for better rural mobility.

Participants started to list the main stakeholders that could be engaged at their local level. It was commonly recognised that much can be done by involving a wide range of stakeholders in order to have the possibility to develop the “desired” mobility solutions and the long-term vision previously discussed. Actually, it was agreed that each site shall engage as many stakeholders as needed, by close working together and setting up partnerships and common working methods. The importance of involving stakeholders from all the sectors (private sectors, public and the community) was also highlighted. In most cases, the public transport operator and the municipality shall take the initiative to mobilise the discussion, although bottom up approaches can be implemented as well.

What were the main suggestions for improvements?

Participants appreciated the way in which the main information on target mobility solutions are presented. Despite there wasn't a chance to see the detailed description of the practice, the information was deemed to be useful and clear.

It was suggested to highlight the main target users each good practice is addressing.

Information about barriers and drivers for implementation and/or the transferability of target solutions would be appreciated as well.

Next steps and action points, i.e. how SMARTA-NET will use information on experiences of partners and how suggestions will be addressed

SMARTA-NET is planning to finalise the Task 1 guidance (i.e., the Catalogue, the Guidance document, and the presentation for the first training module) in the coming weeks.

SMARTA-NET will elaborate an additional good practice case on the Chiamabus Service. The municipality of Narni agreed to provide the information needed to compile the template.

List of participants (Name of participant - Organisation – Country)

Andrea Lorenzini, MemEx Srl, Italy

Elena Bargagna, MemEx Srl, Italy

Eleonora Ercoli, MemEx Srl, Italy

Jackie Meally – Ring a Link Rural Transport – Kilkenny, Ireland

Barry Doyle – Ring a Link Rural Transport – Kilkenny, Ireland

Pietro Flori - Municipality of Narni, Italy



Marko Zevnik - Zavod Sopotniki (Sopotniki Institute) - Slovenia

Eva Lišková - Municipality of Ledenice – Czech Republic

Declan Turnbull - Mayo County Council - Ireland

Dinu Adrian Eugen - UAT Municipality of Ramnicu Sarat - Romania

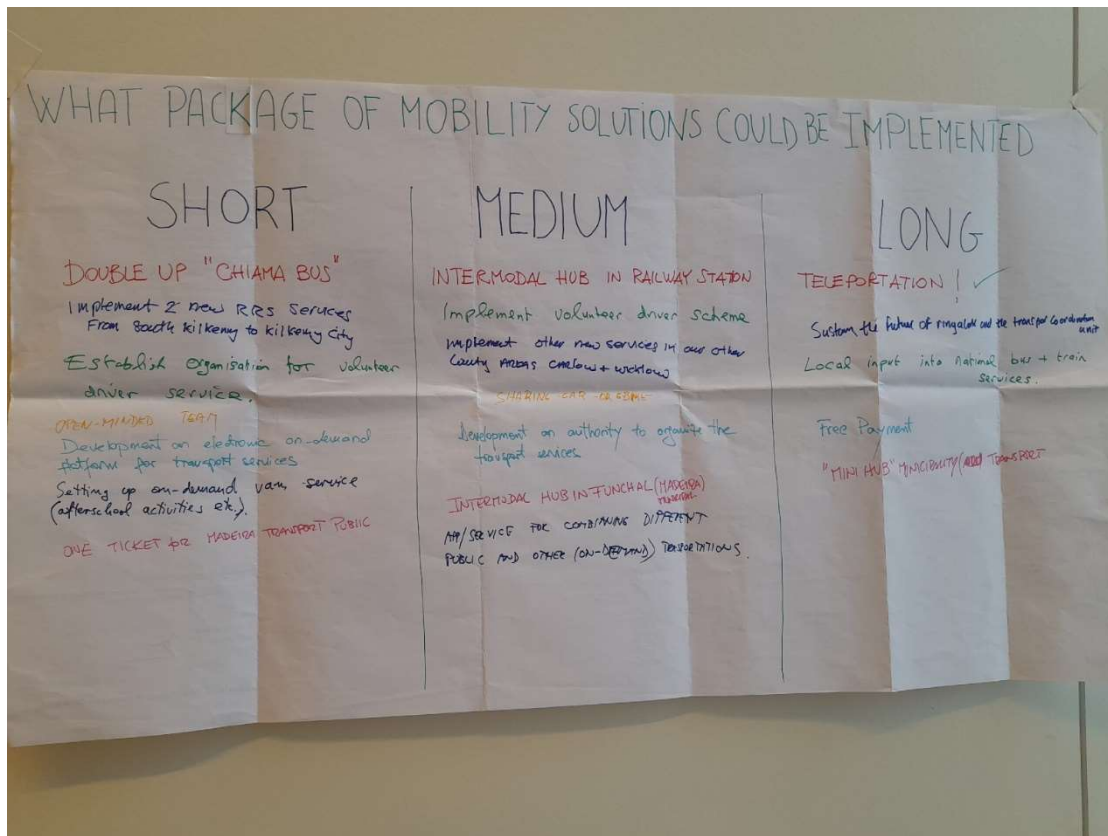
Ana Catarina Aguiar – Regional Government of Madeira – Portugal

Aleixo Abreu – Municipality of Calheta, Madeira - Portugal

Paulo Jardim – Municipality of Ribeira Brava, Madeira - Portugal

Photos







Title of workshop:	Sustainable Tourism & Mobility
Workshop Lead	NIT, Bente Grimm and Rieka Oldsen
Summary of presentation / guidance or tool	
<p>The intention and selected content of the almost completed guideline for a more sustainable mobility in rural tourism regions was presented. Feedback was requested from participants, which is still being incorporated.</p> <p>The purpose of the guidance is to inform about how to connect tourist destinations to resilient sustainable mobility networks. Main target groups are local authorities and rural tourism providers. It helps users to gain knowledge of sustainable mobility in rural tourism communities, gives good practice examples of inspiring and sustainable touristic mobility offers and provides guidance on how to implement sustainable mobility solutions in their regions. The guide covers the situation, challenges and goals of tourist mobility in rural areas, networking, inspiration and information, arrival, last mile, mobility on site and collecting data and evaluation.</p> <p>The presentation also included some information about the self-diagnostic tool on sustainable tourist mobility for rural areas:</p> <p>https://www.nit-research.de/surveys/index.php/628763?lang=en</p>	
List of relevant experience collected from participants (structured), including country/ type of organisation/ title of initiative presented/ short description (if available name of person)	
<p>Presentation on “Tourism & Mobility, Challenges for more sustainability” by Emilie Ursule from Normandy, France:</p> <p>A study from October 2021 showed that 77 % of greenhouse gas emissions of France are due to mobility. A second study (March 2022) was conducted about consequences of tourism mobility by 2030 in different French regions. They came to the conclusion that any strategy for a more sustainable tourism should rely on actions for a more sustainable tourism mobility.</p> <p>Normandy is located in the northwest of France and there were more than 79 million overnight stays from tourists in 2022. Normandy is linked to Paris by train, so there are lots of weekend stays. In summer, the destination is overcrowded. Visitors mainly come from France or other European countries. In 2019, most people arrived by car (86,9%), meaning the car is responsible in the destination for the major part of the greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>They are organising a common governance on mobility and tourism actors and created some input about how to visit Normandy without a car. This includes city trips by train from Paris and hiking between different train stations. Content information that they provide for city trips by train from Paris is an article, a map and some mobility information to book the trip. For the cycling/hiking tours from train station to train station, information is given in the form</p>	



of an article, a map of the route, precise information about the trip, favourite spots and the route step by step. The aim is to change people's mind to do tours without the car. For this reason, there is a discount at museums for people arriving with bikes.

Presentation on "Climate-smart travel in the tourism industry" by Weronica Stålered and Susanne Stockman from Kalmar, Sweden:

Tourism in the region Kalmar mainly takes place in the countryside and between May and September, so there is the need to extend the season. It is difficult to get around without a car. There are four municipalities within the region of Glasriket, the area is famous for glassblowing.

Over three years, the project "Climate-smart travel in the tourism industry - examples from Småland and Öland" has tested solutions for climate-smart and attractive travel to, from, and within three destinations in the Kalmar region, like the campaigns "plan trip" and "on a bike ride". During the project they tested different things, e.g. matchmaking coach tours, new cycling routes as well as package offer train travel and accommodation. They also developed "Ruttplaneraren", a website tool that gives you route suggestions, based on information about date, type of vehicle, type of living and interests.

Key findings / discussion points on guidance/ tool/ preliminary ideas

Which aspects should the guideline cover?

- Horse routes & horse tourism
- Consider target groups (family, single, couple, age, etc.)
- Maintenance of hiking routes
- Market change, well-established market of operators (☐ How to shift to sustainable mobility?, How to include them in the new vision)
- In order to make an analysis, look at topography, tourist flow, seasonality, concentrated or expanded tourist offer, infrastructure, target groups
- Enlarge the tourist season (not only mobility solution in summer)
- Innovative digital solutions

Which are the favourite good practice examples of the participants?

- Integrated package mobility options + tourism activities)
- Safety places for bikes
- Mountainous or Alpine solutions: cable car combined with other transport modes
- Offer to bikers/hikers a protocol to follow if they encounter wild animals
- Assistance for e-bikers
- Something like the excursion within the programme of this meeting, combining ferry and walking and cable car
- Is it possible to do Uber in rural areas? You can also use the existing stakeholders to pilot
- Last mile travel solutions ☐ arrive at destination, but how to move around
- Shared cars for tourists
- Car rental fleet can be carsharing during winter





- Mobility greeters ☞ local people pick you up and drive you, visitors can book in advance
- Public transport ticket discount in exchange of recycling waste

Next steps and action points, i.e. how SMARTA-NET will use information on experiences of partners and how suggestions will be addressed

The information on experiences from the participants of the workshop will be used to improve the existing guideline on sustainable tourism mobility in rural areas. The NIT team will integrate results and add examples of good practices as well as aspects that the guideline should cover to ensure that the guide covers all topics that are important to the participants.

List of participants

Project Team:

Bente Grimm, NIT, Germany

Rieka Oldsen, NIT, Germany

Participants:

1. Carmen Caetano
2. Anita Balogh
3. Martina Comerford
4. Maria Mousteraki
5. Afroditi Papadaki
6. Maria Siti
7. Antonio Ferreira
8. Ilze Amerika
9. Dace Pinupe
10. Pascale van Soren
11. Emilie Ursule
12. Filippo Andrea Rossi
13. Luca Tramini
14. Ize Millere
15. Urska Rozic

Photos







Title of workshop:	Rural sensitive 'Strategy & Development' of a SUMP
Workshop Lead	André Freitas, Luciana Pereira (TIS)
Summary of presentation / guidance or tool	
<p>The workshop started with a brief introduction by TIS. André Freitas invited all participants to briefly introduce themselves and share any past involvement in a SUMP or other planning activities. Following this tour-of-table, he presented some slides outlining the work that has been carried out under one of the SMARTA-NET working streams, focusing on exploring rural mobility aspects essential for SUMP development.</p> <p>Subsequently, participants were split into two groups, one of which moderated by André Freitas and the other by Luciana Pereira. Both groups brainstormed concrete actions and concerns that ought to be taken into consideration when designing an approach for integrating rural aspects as part of the 'Strategy Development' stage of the SUMP lifecycle. They delve into:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The identification of key external factors that are currently changing or are likely to change the urban/rural connections • Discuss scenarios of rural-urban transport connectivity • Define long-term vision(s) for rural areas • Share good practices of (rural) stakeholder involvement at this stage <p>The participants worked on filling in a Canvas-like template prepared by TIS, working within their groups using markers, post-it notes etc. On a later stage, both groups presented their arguments for each Canvas-building block and tried to agree on the best solution that could be uploaded onto the digital Canvas, which was later presented to the overall audience of the SMARTA-NET conference.</p>	
List of relevant experience collected from participants (structured), including country/ type of organisation/ title of initiative presented/ short description (if available name of person)	
<p>During the 'tour-of-table', stakeholders understood the absence of a common approach or common methodologies for implementing a SUMP across the Member States. This disparity results from the fact that the preparation of a SUMP is a legal requirement in only a few countries, leading to significant differences in the experience of their implementation.</p>	
Key findings / discussion points on guidance/ tool/ preliminary ideas	



A snapshot of the exercise is presented below. But first, one presents a list of the key findings:

- Participants realised that setting prospective scenarios requires thinking on key external factors that may shape the rural areas in the medium-term (10 years)
- These external factors may have either a positive or a negative impact on sustainable rural mobility prospects. There are also a few external factors whose likeability is high and that may have mixed impacts (negative and/or positive). These include the attractiveness of rural sites as a tourism destination. Hence, tourism should be regarded as a key external driver that needs to be appropriately addressed in the context of SUMP planning activities.
- In an ideal scenario for rural areas, the role of shared assets (cars and bicycles) for improving the connectivity to rural areas is appropriately factored in the SUMP.
- The later is in line with one of the statements that participants suggested for integrating rural areas in SUMP, notably to seek “attractive rural rural areas with appropriate public transport connections and support of other complementary modes”.

Build scenarios and a shared vision



#1 Develop scenarios of potential futures
#2 Discuss scenarios with citizens and stakeholders

#3 Co-create common vision with citizens and stakeholders
#4 Agree objectives addressing problems and all modes



As the first step of phase two, you need to define the strategic directions of the SUMP. This process should be as participative as possible and cover all relevant transport modes. Consider the most deprived areas within the urban region where you come from and project what the situation will look like in 10 years from now. What are the main factors that will shape urban/rural connections in your region? Which are more likely to change transport services? And how will transport services look like? Discuss the status quo and the ideal situation. Then, elaborate a long-term vision for transport and mobility development in the rural regions that aligns with the ideal situation.



QUICK TIP Prospective scenarios are tools for imagining alternative futures based on the impact of key external trends. Examples of key external factors can revolve economy, society, technology, environment, policy, and external shocks. For instance, think how the pandemics have changed mobility patterns, attitudes and living styles.

What are the main **external factors** that are currently changing or expected to change the urban/rural connections and transport services between these areas?

- Digitalisation / technological evolution (all rural areas covered with 5G bandwidth)
- Big investments (creation of jobs)

- Rural areas are becoming trendy/sexy (to work from)
- Short-term tourists are taking over rural areas

- Climate change
- Political instability
- Economical issues (oil prices, house prices)

1

What will rural areas look like in 10 years if **nothing is done**?

- No new population and desertification
- Current SUMP are not fit for purpose (often focusing only in city centres)
- More cars in the streets
- We will not seize the tourism potential that exists in rural areas
- More horseriders

2

In an **ideal scenario**, what would be the level of transport connectivity that guarantees fair accessibility for those who live, work or visit a rural area?

- Autonomous vehicles
- Better infrastructure
- Green travelling
- Harmony in spatial occupation of land (more people in small cities and rural areas)

3

In practical terms, what is your long-term vision for rural areas, that can support an implementation plan?

- Attractive rural areas with appropriate public transport connections and support of other complementary modes
- 90% implementation of SUMP strategy
- Better education of mobility and education

5

What were the main suggestions for improvements?

We didn't have enough time to converge on the final content that would be uploaded onto the digital Canvas, so perhaps this can be improved in the future, allocating more time to the interactive workshops.

Next steps and action points, i.e. how SMARTA-NET will use information on experiences of partners and how suggestions will be addressed

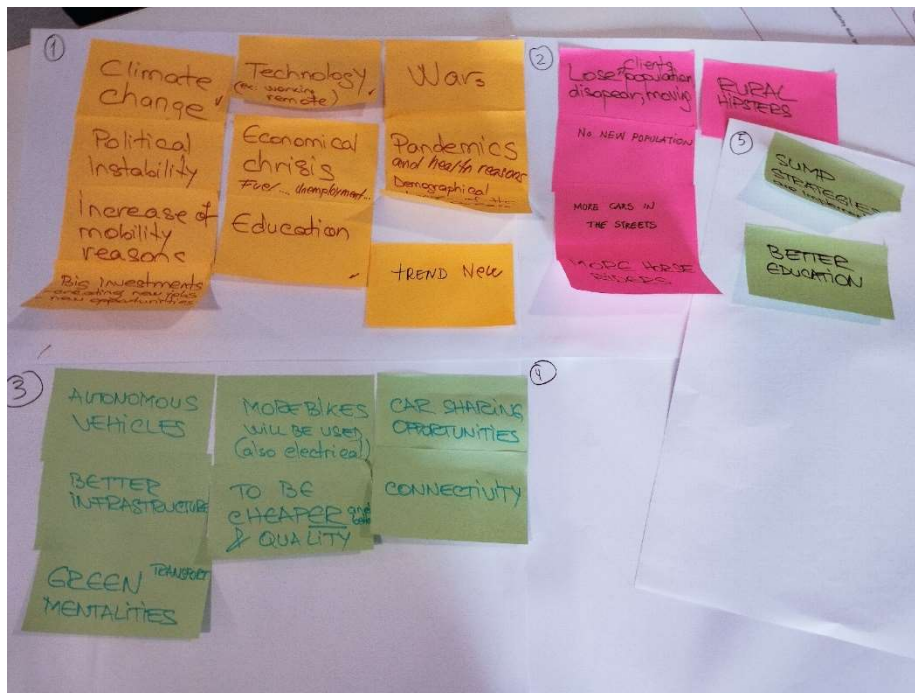
The focus of this workshop lay on phase 2 of the SUMP lifecycle and is built upon an online focus group discussion focused on phase 1. Therefore, SMARTA-NET team (TIS) has shared the willingness to continue discussing ways to mainstream SUMPs for becoming rural sensitive, with a specific emphasis on phase 3 and 4 of the SUMP lifecycle. This exchange is expected to take place remotely in the near future.

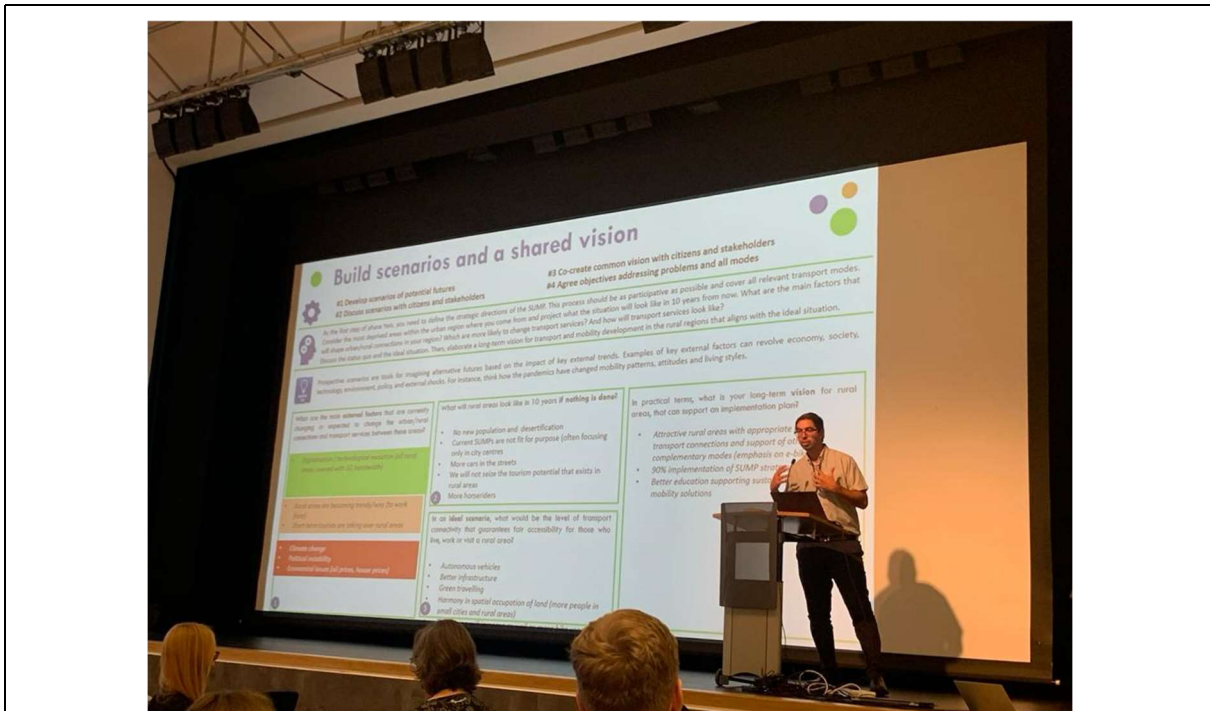
List of participants (Name of participant - Organisation – Country)

- André Freitas, TIS, Portugal
- Luciana Pereira, TIS, Portugal
- Cristina Loreto, DRTT, Portugal
- Alexandra Correia, ADRAL, Portugal
- Giorgio Ambrosino, MEMEX, Italy
- Roger Domenech, Diputacion Barcelona, Spain
- Carmelo Rivero, Diputacion Barcelona, Spain
- Helen McHenry, Western Development Commission, Ireland
- Florin Ceparu, Municipiului Râmnicu Sărat, Romania
- Martin Schiefelbusch, NVBW – Nahverkehrsgesellschaft, Germany
- Amra Adilovic, NVBW – Nahverkehrsgesellschaft, Germany
- Afroditi Papadaki, Municipality of Chania, Greece

Photos







Title of workshop:	Exploring mobility challenges in rural areas
Workshop Lead	Geert Koops, Daniela Mattiuz (Panteia)
Summary of presentation / guidance or tool	
<p>The workshop started with a brief introduction by Panteia on the initial findings that rural areas are subjected to (1) a decrease in population, with a simultaneous (2) increase in tourism, and (3) limited public transport. This leads to an increased car-dependency.</p> <p>Subsequently, Adela Pixova (LAG SDRUŽENÍ RŮŽE) gave a presentation on her Lighthouse Site (CZ) with a focus on the mobility solutions present, and lacking, on the territory. The territory of the Czechia lighthouse site was then used in an interactive group exercise.</p> <p>The participants split into three groups and brainstormed about additional mobility solutions by indicating them on a map (printed in A0 format) with markers, post-it notes etc...The participants had to identify these solutions without any specific prior knowledge on data (coverage, frequency etc..). The idea was to show that, in order to have a functional and efficient transport network, you need to collect a wide array of data.</p>	
List of relevant experience collected from participants (structured), including country/ type of organisation/ title of initiative presented/ short description (if available name of person)	
<p>Czech Republic, Adela Pixova, LAG SDRUŽENÍ RŮŽE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - bike and car sharing (organised or informal); 	



- car pooling (senior taxi, pharmacy bus, care service).

Key findings / discussion points on guidance/ tool/ preliminary ideas

Key findings resulting from the exercise:

- Municipalities in the area need to cooperate with each other to establish a functioning public transport network.
- There needs to be cooperation and money.
- Money has to go into a plan that needs to be done professionally by firstly collecting data on mobility patterns.

What were the main suggestions for improvements?

We didn't have enough time to discuss this so maybe that is exactly what we can improve on => allocate more time for the interactive workshops.

Next steps and action points, i.e. how SMARTA-NET will use information on experiences of partners and how suggestions will be addressed

The SMARTA-NET team (Panteia) will provide a service to the Lighthouse sites, under Task 7, that includes collecting additional data (through surveys and interviews) to gain better insight into the mobility situation of the area and what could be improved.

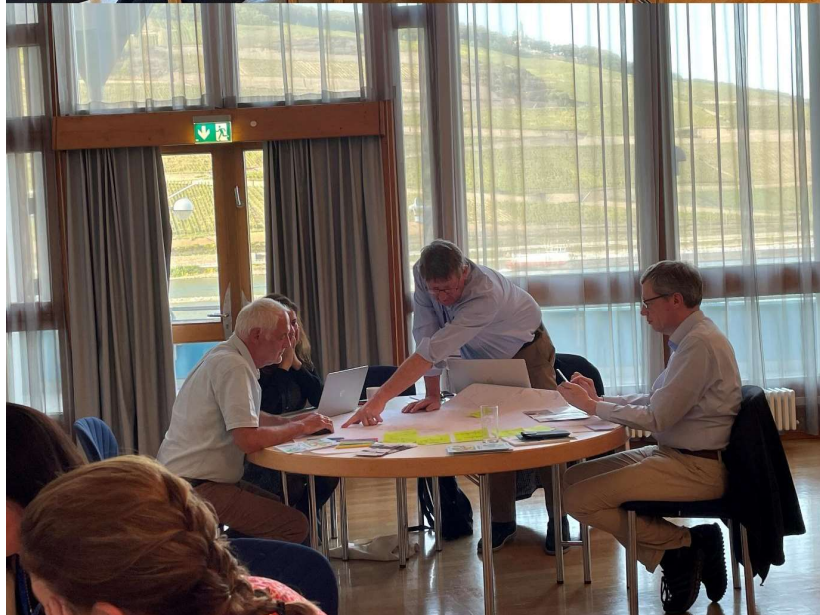
List of participants (Name of participant - Organisation – Country)

- Edina Ocsko, E40, Hungary
- Brendan Finn, Memex, Ireland
- Declan Rice, Kilkenny LEADER Partnership, Ireland
- Karl-Heinz Schoon, Kusel District, Germany
- Adéla Pixová, MAS Sdruzeni Ruze, Czech Republic
- Holger Jansen, Kusel District, Germany
- Vasileios Myriokefalitakis, Municipality of Rethymno, Greece
- Louise Weir, University of Galway, Ireland
- Alise , Gulbene Municipality, Latvia
- Maria Pratsinaki, Municipality of Agios Nikolaos, Greece



- Brian Campos, Comunidade Intermunicipal do Alto Alentejo, Portugal
- Ricardo Osório de Barros, CIMAC, Portugal
- Vineta Puce, Valmiera Municipality Tourism Department,
- Antonija Gotić, Grad Križevci, Croatia

Photos







Annex 4: Reports on parallel working group sessions

Clusters:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Integration and standards
Table Lead	Luciana Pereira (TIS) and Brendan Finn (MemEx)
Main aspects and topics discussed in the table, including emerging challenges and points agreed, if any	
<p>The discussion was focused on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of transport services and modes integration to better meet mobility needs, by establishing standard transport services, tariff integration, ticketing integration, etc. • How to determine the level of transport services, where minimum level of services was discussed for different regions, which vary for each region. A good example from Flanders was shared, where the level of services depends on the amount of population, which is different between clusters: urban areas, suburban areas, rural areas. • How to estimate the funding to meet such a level of transport services, on which the discussion was about setting standards. • Setting up a common baseline/ common standards within Europe. A good example from Ireland was shared, where a Sustainable Mobility Index was developed to measure transport services and accessibility in rural centres. This index is made up of 30 indicators related to Readiness for the Low Carbon Transition, Access to Employment and Economic Opportunities, and Access to Services and Social Facilities. • The importance of integrate mobility and tourism, highlighting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That better integration is needed for key sites (e.g., tourist panels). • The need to incorporate tourism in the mobility point of view, although a lack of transport services on weekends or evenings hinders public transport from being an alternative to car. • A good level of information is available about tourism (accommodation, etc.), but not mapping where they are going to: “if it’s not measured, it will not be funded”. • A “wall” between tourists and local people was mentioned, as well as the need to say “it’s not all about tourism, but also about residents”. • Integration of rural transport and funding, by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the existence of national frameworks. 	



- Having flexibility on the services to adjust the routes during the course of the day. The old-fashioned planning process will not work in the future. We need to use technology to understand the needs and adjust the services.

Suggested topics to be further investigated by SMARTA-NET, as suggested by participants

- Information sharing within the network:
 - What methodologies are being implemented in each country/ region? Identify what is not being done but should be done.
 - Identification of what are the issues that municipalities are facing. Reflexion on how to address them.
- Setting up a common baseline/ common standards.
- Need to advocate for rural mobility at the European level. Bring local concerns to supranational decision-making forums

Clusters:	Communication and behavioural change
Table Lead	Edina Ocsko

Main aspects and topics discussed in the table, including emerging challenges and points agreed, if any

Communication aspects: It is important to effectively communicate both about tourism services (to tourists) and mobility services (to inhabitants and tourists). For instance various mobility services are often unknown for tourists (example of Greece where first there was no one using a local public bus service targeted at tourists, but they managed to overcome this through effective communication about the services, encouraging people to leave their cars behind and use public transport). **Communication is important all way through:** from needs assessment in community – to planning and developing the right solution – to communicating about existing mobility and tourism services.

The development of services - the use of smart technology: One needs to consider when to use smart technology solutions for mobility/ tourism. There is need to exchange about effective platforms/ solutions. However, it is crucial to first assess the real needs for technology (e.g. if people will be using it, if the right skills are in place, etc.).

Sensitisation about key issues: It is important to encourage people to use public transport. Anecdote: In Germany, if someone is sitting in a bus-stop they think that he has a problem and his driving license is taken away. People are much dependent on their own cars. A barrier to the development of effective services is the short-term thinking of politicians (instead of planning long-term sustainable solutions).

Data collection (evidence-based planning) is important both for the planning of services as well as in the context of using specific services.



Quote: “We believe that if local people are happy, then the tourists will be happy as well.”

Suggested topics to be further investigated by SMARTA-NET, as suggested by participants

Effective ways / platforms to communicate to inhabitants and tourists about services (e.g. digital platforms).

Considering the whole chain and communication at each stage: from needs assessment/ planning of services – implementation of services – data collection and feedback.

Clusters:	Institutional and organisational framework
Table Lead	Daniela Mattiuz (Panteia), Andrea Lorenzini (Memex)

Main aspects and topics discussed in the table, including emerging challenges and points agreed, if any

- In summary: the discussion primarily centered around the challenges of cooperation between municipalities and private actors in mobility solutions. Participants agreed on the need for policy guidance, regulatory frameworks, flexible schemes, and the recognition of minimum connectivity, and service Key Performance Indicators (KPI) as a basic right. Change in mentality in public authorities/stakeholders with regards to the involvement of private actors was also emphasized as an important factor in addressing these challenges and planning the mobility solutions with respect to the identified needs.
- The challenges that emerged during the discussion:
- **Legislation and Regulation:** The discussion highlighted that existing legislation and regulation can pose significant challenges for municipalities seeking to cooperate with private companies in the setting and implementation of mobility solutions. Legal barriers and a lack of clear frameworks can hinder cooperation depending also on the type of solutions to be developed.
- **Distrust and Competency:** In some regions, there appears to be a level of distrust or hesitation among various stakeholders to cooperate. This can stem from the perception that certain matters (e.g., mobility solution design, service integration, responsibility in different transport services, etc.) fall outside their competency or that interference might be unwelcome.
- **Communication and Coordination:** Coordination and communication among different stakeholders, such as private actors, NGOs, and standard service providers, are identified as challenges. The lack of a unified approach or forum for discussions can slow down the decision-making process.



- **Market Influence:** Private sector involvement in mobility solutions may be influenced by market conditions, such as the potential for profit. In rural areas with a high level of tourism, private actors may be more attracted to participate due to profit potential. By contrast, rural areas with few tourists and low mobility demand are not a suitable market for the private sector.
- **Misconceptions and Lack of Data:** There are misconceptions about the transportation needs of rural areas. For instance, there is a perception that transport is primarily needed to/from city centers and not between villages. Lack of data and information on local needs can contribute to such misconceptions.
- **Flexibility in Cooperation:** Balancing the profit motive of private actors with the need for regulated and reliable mobility services is a challenge. There is a need for flexibility in the regulation of cooperation with private actors while ensuring they provide essential services.

Suggested topics to be further investigated by SMARTA-NET, as suggested by participants

Participants would like the team to further research:

- Policy guidance to overcome barriers (and regulatory frameworks) in the cooperation between private and public actors. Analysis of how different countries deal with this issue.
- Minimum level of transport connectivity and service KPI as a basic right, and constraints for possible cooperation between the private sector and public Authority



Clusters:	Rural tourism and mobility
Table Lead	NIT, Bente Grimm and Rieka Oldsen
Main aspects and topics discussed in the table, including emerging challenges and points agreed, if any	
<p>Challenges of mobility in rural tourism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last mile problem, not possible to go around without a car • Individual tourists using (rental) cars → cars need a lot of space, some rural regions are crowded • Financing bus services • In some countries there are no bike rentals in rural areas • Challenge of taking kids by bikes • Tourism workers can't find accommodation at the place they work, need to get to their job and back at times without public transport (evening, weekend, ...) <p>Possible solutions for rural tourism regions:</p> <p><u>Inspiration/information</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus marketing activities on guests that want to use public transport • Give clear information/booking options with relevance for tourists • Give information about getting around without own car, inform about taxis/minibuses • Regions with a good public transport → influencer marketing for sustainable mobility options • Help bus companies to give better information for guests during the trip and at the bus stop • Promote ridesharing (tourism workers) <p><u>Service</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodations could provide joined shuttle services • Make public cars available for carsharing in the evening and at weekends • People that rent private accommodations could offer to deliver an initial set of food and/or to take guests to supermarkets (e.g., once a week) • Motivate accommodations to provide bikes that can be used by guests • Expand bike rentals, get in contact with local bike service or convince bike sharing organisations to start their business in your regions • Develop package tours with different modes of transport (including walking tours) • Suggest tours, give information on accommodations close to the train/bus station <p><u>Other ideas</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage local tourism stakeholders to think about sustainable mobility – tell them about the advantages for themselves and for the inhabitants • Place the tourism information centre at the train station or nearby • Take part in the European Mobility Week (with a touristic activity) • Create nice bus stops (together with tourism stakeholders, students, pupils, artists, ...) • Finance bicycle trailers and cargo bikes by advertisements of local companies 	



- Involve local stakeholders and guests in sustainable tourist mobility (gamification, collect stamps)
- Build mobility hub where different modes of transport, touristic and mobility information are available

Suggested topics to be further investigated by SMARTA-NET, as suggested by participants

The participants stated, that the last mile problem should be in focus of SMARTA-NET.

Another idea would be to promote a competition on the nicest bus stop in the region, announced in the SMARTA-NET newsletter and the winner could be named during the final conference. Some really creative ideas can be found here: <https://www.architecturendesign.net/interesting-original-bus-stops/>

SMARTA-NET sites and their touristic partners could take part in the European Mobility Week 2024 (end of September), including car free day – and jointly promote engagement. For further information see <https://mobilityweek.eu/home/>

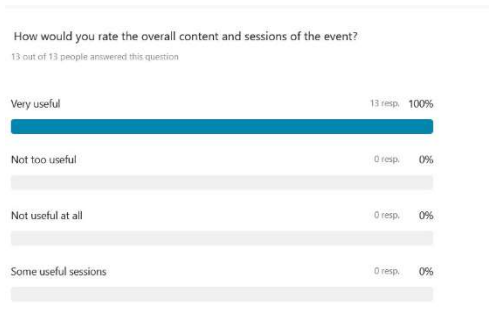




Annex 5: Feedback of participants on the ERMN event and field visit

An online questionnaire was shared with all the participants to rate the 2nd ERMN Meeting. 13 out of 70 participants rated the event.

The overall event received a highly positive feedback, 13 out of 13 participants indicated the sessions were very useful.



Individual session of the 2 days event were also rated.

1st Day sessions:

	I liked it a lot	It was ok	I didn't like it that much	I didn't like it at all	I did not participate
Opening plenary (9.00-10.30)	69.20%	30.80%	0%	0%	0%
World café session (11.00-13.00)	92.30%	7.70%	0%	0%	0%
Good practice presentations (14.00-15.30)	84.60%	15.40%	0%	0%	0%
Parallel thematic workshop sessions (16.00-17.30)	53.80%	30.80%	15.40%	0%	0%

2nd day sessions:

	I liked it a lot	It was ok	I didn't like it that much	I didn't like it at all	I did not participate
Parallel working table sessions about topics suggested by participants (9.15- 10.30)	54.50%	36.40%	0%	0%	9.10%
Panel session on implementation at sufficient scale to meet rural mobility needs(11.00-11.45)	50%	41.70%	8.30%	0%	0%
Closing plenary on building capacity and training (11.45-12.30)	33.30%	58.30%	0%	0%	8.30%

Based on their comments the participants found the following sessions the most useful:





- Presentation of Good Practices: They appreciated these sessions for the insightful content and the opportunity to learn from experiences and solutions in other countries.
- World Café Sessions: These were well-received for encouraging active participation, engaging in debates, and sharing regional specificities.
- Parallel Thematic Sessions: Participants valued these sessions for the meaningful interactions with others and their relevance to their own contexts.

On 10th October, 4 parallel field visits were organized, with 36 participants taking part in the field visits. 11 participants have rated the field visit experience, with 10 of them rating the event as excellent and 1 as very good.

How would you rate the site visit experience?

11 out of 13 people answered this question



Annex 6: Participant list

2nd Meeting of the European Rural Mobility Network (ERMN)

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	NAME OF ORGANISATION	COUNTRY
ABREU	Aleixo	MUNICÍPIO DA CALHETA - MADEIRA	Portugal
ADILOVIC	Amra	"NVBW - Nahverkehrsgesellschaft	
ADRIAN GENU	Dinu	Municipality of Ramnicu Sarat	Romania
AGUIAR	Ana Catarina	Madeira - Funchal	Portugal
AMERIKA	Ilze	Ropazi Municipality	Latvia
BRUNOVIĆ	Krešimir	City of Križevci	Croatia
CAETANO	Carmen	Alentejo Regional Development Agency	Portugal
CAMPOS	Brian	Comunidade Intermunicipal do Alto Alentejo	Portugal
COMERFORD	Martina	Kilkenny County Council	Ireland
CORREIRA	Alexandra	Alentejo Regional Development Agency	Portugal
DAHL	Christa	District of Kusel	Germany
DÖGLER	Rainer	Tourism organisation of Rhineland-Palatinate	Germany
DOYLE	Barry	Kilkenny LEADER Partnership	Ireland
DRAGOS	Voicu	UAT Comuna Siriu	Romania
FERREIRA	António	Câmara Municipal de Machico	Portugal
FLORI	Pietro	Municipality of Narni	Italy
FLORIN	Ceparu	Municipality of Ramnicu Sarat	Romania
GEORGIAN	Margarit	UAT Comuna Boldu / Regional County Council Buzau	Romania
GOTIC	Antonija	City of Križevci	Croatia
GREGOROVIĆ	Marin	City of Cres	Croatia
JANSEN	Holger	Kusel District	Germany
JARDIM	Paulo	Câmara Municipal da Ribeira Brava	Portugal
LIŠKOVÁ	Eva	Municipality Ledenice	Czech Republic
LORETO	Cristina	Madeira - Funchal	Portugal
MCHENRY	Helen	Western Development Commission	Ireland
MEALLY	Jackie	Kilkenny LEADER Partnership	Ireland
MILLERE	Ilze	Limbaži municipality agency "LAUTA"	Latvia
MOUSTERAKI	Maria	MUNICIPALITY OF PLATANIAS	Greece
MYRIOKEFALITAKIS	Vasileios	Municipality of Rethymno	Greece
NOVOSEL	Zvonimir	Municipality of Jastrebarsko	Croatia
OSÓRIO DE BARROS	Ricardo	CIMAC - Comunidade Intermunicipal do Alentejo Central	Portugal

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	NAME OF ORGANISATION	COUNTRY
PAPADAKI	Afroditi	Municipality of Chania	Greece
PINUPE	Dace	Gulbene Municipality	Latvia
PIXOVÁ	Adéla	LAG Sdruzeni Ruze	Czech republic
PRATSINAKI	Maria	MUNICIPALITY OF AGIOS NIKOLAOS	Greece
PUCE	Vineta	Valmiera Municipality Tourism Department	Latvia
RICE	Declan	Kilkenny LEADER Partnership	Ireland
RIVERO	Carmelo	Barcelona Provincial Council	Spain
ROSSI	Filippo Andrea	Municipality of Narni	Italy
ROŽIČ	Urška	Šaleška Valley Tourist Board	Slovenia
RUBENE - DŪNE	Alise	Gulbene Municipality	Latvia
RUBLY	Otto	District of Kusel	Germany
SCHIEFELBUSCH	Martin	"NVBW - Nahverkehrsgesellschaft	
SCHOON	Karl-Heinz	Kusel District	Germany
SIJATS	Raitis	Latvia Greenways association	Latvia
SITI	Maria	Municipality of Rethymno	Greece
STÅLERED	Weronica	Destination Glasriket (represents Nybro municipality)	Sweden
STANECKI	Rafal	European Commission	Belgium
STOCKMAN	Lenita	Destination Glasriket (represents Nybro municipality)	Sweden
TORRELL DOMÈNECH	Roger	Diputació de Barcelona	Spain
TRAMINI	Luca	Municipality of Narni	Italy
TURNBULL	Declan	Mayo County Council	Ireland
URSULE	Emilie	Normandy Tourist Board	France
VAN DOREN	Pascale	Rural Pact Support Office	Belgium
VINŠČAK	Dražen	Municipality of Jastrebarsko	Croatia
WEIR	Louise	University of Galway	Ireland
ZEVNIK	Marko	Zavod Sopotniki (Sopotniki Institute)	Slovenia

*SMARTA-NET Partners*

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	NAME OF ORGANISATION	COUNTRY
Ambrosino	Giorgio	MemEx	Italy
Balogh	Anita	E40	Hungary
Bargagna	Elena	MemEx	Italy
Ercoli	Eleonora	MemEx	Italy
Finn	Brendand	MemEx	Ireland
Freitas	André	TIS	Portugal
Grimm	Bente	NIT	Germany
Koops	Geert	Panteia	Netherlands
Lorenzini	Andrea	MemEx	Italy
Mattiuz	Daniela	Panteia	Netherlands
Ocsko	Edina	E40	Hungary
Oldsen	Rieka	NIT	Germany
Pereira	Luciana	TIS	Portugal



