

Legal & regulatory contextual conditions for promoting new mobility solutions in rural areas

As shown in the SMARTA-NET guidance 1, several good practices of rural mobility exist. However, quite often transport practitioners cannot put them in practice due to legal constraints. As an example, in some countries, it is not possible to engage volunteers as drivers. In other countries, the implementation of demand responsive transport contracts is more demanding as the number of services and service-km varies or is uncertain during the procurement process.

Labour laws and collective labour agreements might also have implications in the way the mobility solutions are developed and set up. Asset sharing mobility solutions very often face challenges at the insurance level. These are some examples of legal and regulatory contextual conditions that might hinder the implementation of shared and community-based mobility solutions. As a result, some business models might not be so appropriated, and the mobility solutions fail to be successfully implemented and replicated.

What are the **existing mobility solutions linking urban and rural areas** in your region for commuting?

- *Service in Slovenia (SOPOTNIK?), managed by a NGO. Free of charge for **elderly people**. Drivers are volunteers (the NGO offers insurance and ensures that drivers receive donations from local restaurants).*
- *Vehicles are purchased by the municipalities in the catchment area. Preconditions: drivers receive training and the NGO assesses their motivation to participate in the programme*
- *Service in Slovenia for attending events. Service is **paid** and results from a **partnership with Toyota**. Target are students and need to register in advance. Runs every day from 6am to 5pm? People use it for last mile connections*
- *In **Latvia**, services are based in local public transport services and attendees feel that what is important is to ensure coordination between neighbouring municipalities*

1

What would be the **ideal mobility solutions** that you would like to test?

- *In Spain, professional services do not cater for mobility needs other than commuting (sports, etc)*

3

Are these solutions **fit for purpose**?

- *Scotland, offers car sharing solutions. But solutions must not undermine the commercial services in place (since these would deteriorate further)*
- *In **Greece**, the municipalities deliver social services, assigning doctors/nurses to rural settlements. But some mobility needs remain unmet*
- *In **Spain** it is difficult to implement services run by volunteers. Services are performed by professionals. Local legislation would not allow volunteer services to be implemented .*
- *In Slovenia, before the NGO step in, school bus run twice every day and was insufficient to suffice for all the mobility needs (e.g. health appointments)*

2

What **could be done** from the regulatory and legal point of view to allow some of these solutions to be tested?

- *In Greece, when EU funding is available, it is easier to adapt local legislation – **leverage effect** – so as to serve better the rural communities*
- *In Slovenia, they also agree that it is easier to ensure consensus and build partnerships whenever EU funding is in place*

4