

## 2.1 Regiotaxi Shared taxi (NL)

**Regiotaxi is a demand-based type of transportation**, in the form of a regional taxi service with shared rides. It operates like a traditional taxi service although it **can pick up other users along the way**, thus charging lower prices than a traditional taxi service



### 2.1.1 About The Netherlands

<u>Country</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>Target Area</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Population density</u>	<u>Visitors/year</u>
The Netherlands	342 municipalities	41.543 Km <sup>2</sup>	17.550.654 inh.	422,5 inh./Km <sup>2</sup>	20 MI

The European part of the Netherlands borders Belgium to the south and Germany to the east; to the north and west sides face the North Sea. The capital is Amsterdam, although the residence of the sovereign, the seat of parliament and the seat of government, as well as the embassies of foreign countries are located in The Hague. The other two main cities are Rotterdam and Utrecht. The Kingdom of the Netherlands acts as a unitary nation in matters of defence, foreign policy and citizenship, while the Netherlands, as a constituent nation, acts as an independent nation in all other matters (e.g. interior, healthcare, education and transport).

Netherlands is the 5th most densely populated country in Europe, with a density of 521 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>. However, it is the world's second largest exporter of food and agricultural products (after the United States), thanks to its fertile soil, mild climate, intensive agriculture.



Figure 39 – The Netherlands

### 2.1.2 Description of the Mobility Solution

Regiotaxi implemented in the Netherlands is a demand-based type of transportation, in the form of a regional taxi service. It operates like a traditional taxi service, since it takes users from their origin point to their

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destination, with the only difference being that it can pick up other users along the way; therefore, being able to charge lower prices.

Regiotaxi is operated by local sub-contractors and the municipality is involved insofar as it has to cover the fares of passengers traveling with the Social Support Act (Wet Maatschappelijke Ondersteuning, WMO) transport pass, received on medical grounds. Furthermore, municipalities may allow carer/attendants to travel with eligible passengers for free <sup>10</sup>.

The Regiotaxi is a nationwide service complementary to the public transport network. It is an intermediate transport solution between a taxi service and public transport, targeting short-distance travels. The service of the Regiotaxi is seen as a more cost-efficient alternative to regular public transport lines. Once a bus line is terminated as a result of austerity measures, the alternative for bus-users will be using a Regiotaxi.

This solution addresses the lack of public transportation and transport options for disabled people. It meets the requirements of the target users by being an on-demand service that picks up its users wherever they are and allows them to pay lower prices. Disabled people may travel for free if they qualify for the Social Support Act transport pass.

The service is part of regional public transport strategies (e.g. in the Utrecht region ) where the Regiotaxi is the backbone for an inclusive and dense public transport network. The Regiotaxi is also part of the national public transport vision that strives for a fully door-to-door public transport system by stimulating demand-driven Public Transport (e.g. Regiotaxi). This service is innovative in the sense that it combines demand-responsive public transport with transport for disabled people.

#### Target user groups and needs

Regiotaxi is targeted to those with limited mobility and need for adapted transport, and those who have trouble accessing other types of public transportation (e.g. living too far from bus stop; absence of buses in the rural area etc...). 90% of users of the service in urban areas are travellers with proven disability or elderly (the average age of users is 71) who are no longer able to independently travel to out-of-house activities. People with a mental or physical proven disability have a discount on using the Regiotaxi. The percentage of users without disability exceeds 50% in rural regions with low offer of regular public transport.

#### Involved Bodies

Municipalities and public transport authorities collaborated to identify the demand for this service within a specific area. Commonly, municipalities have joined forces in tendering the Regiotaxi service. The service is outsourced to commercial (taxi) operators. More than one operator can have a contract and sometimes the contract for the Regiotaxi call centre and the transport service operation are separated. Usually, large taxi companies win the tender and sometimes they then take on smaller transport companies as subcontractors.

#### Mobility services provided/addressed

All areas in the Netherlands are connected with Regiotaxi. There is a special law guaranteeing that everybody has the right to public transport, Regiotaxi is fulfilling this guarantee. The Regiotaxi is wheelchair friendly and the maximum step height is usually defined within regulation (e.g. the Hague Regiotaxi).

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<sup>10</sup> SMARTA Regiotaxi, 2019

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The service is public; to get the free access to the service, users need a WMO-pass from the municipality. The reservation for the Regiotaxi must be made at least one hour in advance. 70% of the users make a booking for the Regiotaxi by phone. 20% of the bookings are done by e-mail, via the app or the website.

Municipalities are responsible for offering the Regiotaxi services. The public transport authorities' subsidies the service to make the exploitation of the Regiotaxi commercially viable.

Ridership and other key metrics/results

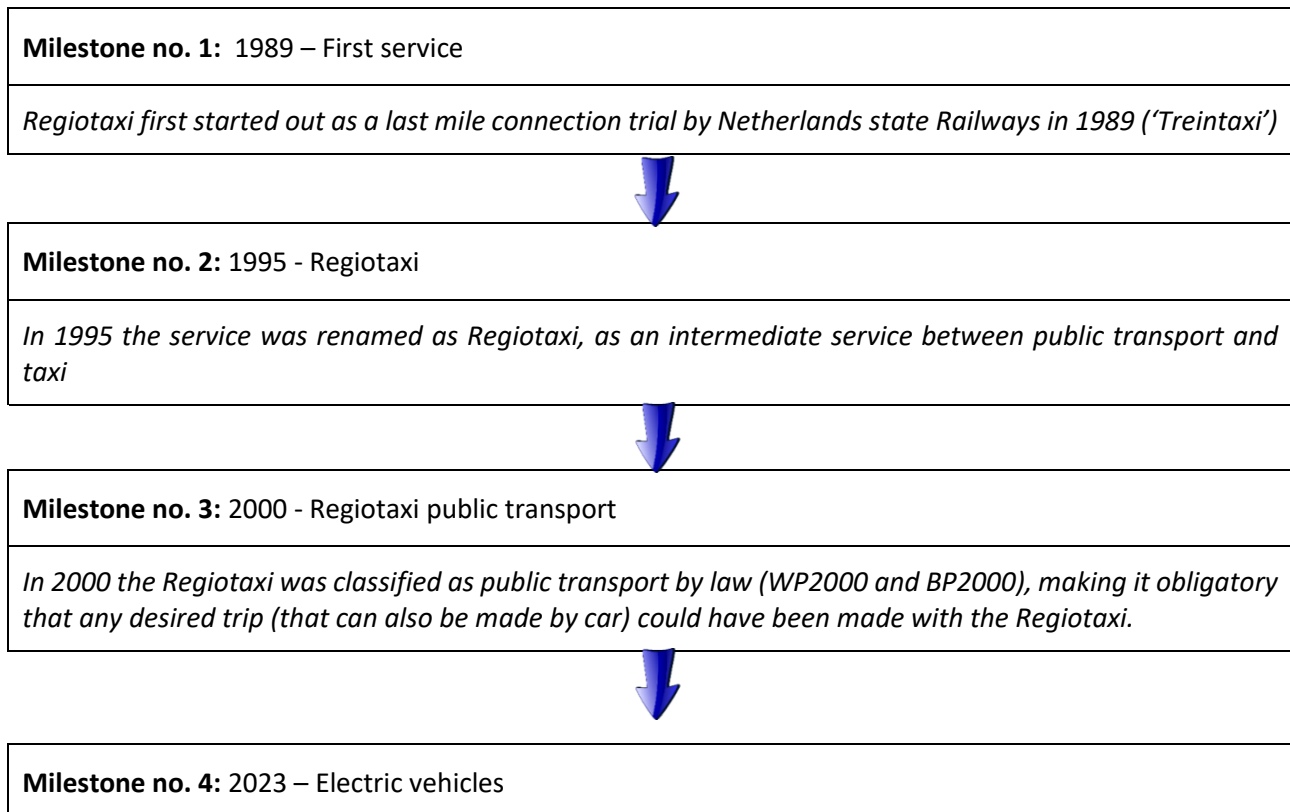
The Regiotaxi has 340.000-380.000 users per year. The Regiotaxi is mostly used for socio-recreative purposes; for example: visiting friends and family, and medical appointments. The average distance of travel with the Regiotaxi is 8 kilometres. 78% of Regiotaxi rides have no public transport alternative. 52% of users would not have made their travel if there was no Regiotaxi available. The service includes a large share of vulnerable users, which in general appreciate the Regiotaxi. 29% of users say the service is outstanding and 48% appraise the service as good.

It is understood that Regiotaxi's integration with regular public transport has been difficult. The advantages were limited, while the organization of this integration turned out to be complex as provinces are responsible for public transport while municipalities are responsible for Regiotaxi.

Supporting technologies

Users can book their ride online (website or app) or via telephone and pay via direct debit.

### 2.1.3 Timelines and Milestones



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In 2023 the region of Gooi en Vechtstreek is the first region to introduce electric vehicles in the Regiotaxi service. Per January 2023 80% of the vehicles used is zero-emission.

### 2.1.4 Long-term assessment

Success, Durability and Expansion

The service is still operating and is active across all The Netherlands, anchored in national regulation.

Funding and Financing Issues

Regarding investment and capital costs, it is important to highlight that the service is operated by already-existing transport operators. Concerning the operating costs, Regiotaxi is a service provided by the public transport authorities who subsidise the operation of the services. Municipalities pays the usage of the service for people with a disability indication. Other users have to pay for the service, like with a normal taxi.

Revenues are made of customer receipts. This service appears to be cheaper than normal taxi service because of the possibility of sharing the cost with other users on the same ride. The average price in 2019 was € 0,20 per kilometre and € 0,80 as a starting tariff. Passengers with the Social Support Act (Wet Maatschappelijke Ondersteuning, WMO) transport pass travel for free and the cost is subsidised by the municipality

Why is it considered a good practice?

The practice is showing a collaborative approach between municipalities and also with operators which contributed to the continued operation of this service over years and enabled a seamless and spread transport connections in rural areas across the whole region where the public transport is absent or weak.

### 2.1.5 Transferability considerations

CONTEXT PECULIARITIES	TRANSFERABILITY CONDITIONS
A context condition which might limit the transferability of the solution is the presence of a national legal framework that ensures Regiotaxi as a human-right of being mobile. Such a legal framework might not be available everywhere.	Key conditions for the transfer of the key concept are the capacity to tender a service as Regiotaxi to a commercial operator. Being able to identify which low-in-demand bus lines can be replaced with a Regiotaxi service
DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED/WEAKNESS	LESSONS LEARNT
The provision of Regiotaxi is an expensive form of transport per trip. It has been said that one passenger/km by Regiotaxi costs the government approximately 7 times the amount of a public transport passenger/km.	The service is especially popular among those who cannot use regular forms of transport (car, bike or the bus). The collaborative working between municipalities, and the engagement of local operators to provide the service ensures better access and social inclusion by people who might otherwise have significantly reduced involvement in society

**References for further details**  
Versis: [www.versis.nl/home](http://www.versis.nl/home)

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