

Day 2 Agenda

24th October

Building recommendations for Rural mobility 2.0



9.00
9.30

Registration

9.30
10.00

Opening Session

10.00
11.15

First Thematic Session:
Urban-Rural Linkages

11.15
11.45

Coffee Break

11.45
12.30

Second Thematic Session:
Advancing Rural Mobility

12.30
13.00

Closing session: Towards
rural mobility 2.0

13.00
14.00

Lunch at venue

9.00
9.30

Registration

9.30
10.00

Opening Session

Welcome note
Brendan Finn, MemEx

Keynote address from DG-MOVE
Eddy Liégeois, Acting Director, investment, innovative and sustainable transport, DG MOVE

SMARTA-NET key achievements, including European Rural Mobility Network (ERMN) events, Guidance, and trainings
Andrea Lorenzini, MemEx

What key messages did rural municipalities of the ERMN agree yesterday?
Edina Ocsko, E40

10.00
11.15

First Thematic Session: Urban-Rural Linkages

Rural access challenges and solutions

Rural Access Challenges and Framework of Solutions - Good Practice and Catalogue of Solutions
Elena Bargagna, MemEx

Solutions within the public transport framework – Case of Alentejo, Portugal
Alexandra Correia, Alentejo Region, Portugal

Solution based on community and volunteering – Case of Kusel District, Germany
Karl-Heinz Schoon, Kusel District, Germany

Moderated Q&A

Including rural aspects in Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans

Incorporating rural aspects within Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs)
André Freitas, TIS

An inspiring practice of Functional Urban-Rural transport planning
Neri di Volo / Alberto González Sánchez, JASPERS - EIB

Moderated Q&A

Panel Discussion on Rural Accessibility

Accessibility issues in rural areas, public transport deficits and transport poverty, what it is, the need to baseline (and measure) it and how it could influence policy choices.

Moderator: Edina Ocsko, E4O

Panelists:

- Helen McHenry, Western Development Commission, Ireland
- Pascale Van Doren, Rural Pact Support Office, Belgium
- Ute Wein, Policy Officer, DG MOVE
- Filip Boelaert, Secretary General Department Mobility and Public Works, Flemish Government

11.15
11.45

Coffee Break

Join the conference online



at this link

<https://tinyurl.com/smartanetfinalconference>





**Brendan
Finn**



Brendan Finn is an independent transport consultant with over 40 years of experience in the public transport sector. Having started his career at Dublin Bus in Ireland, he has worked on a very wide range of assignments in Europe, Asia and Africa, dealing with governance, institutional arrangements, regulation and organisation of passenger transportation. He has worked for many years on rural transport issues and is Project Manager of the ongoing EU-supported SMARTA-NET project on rural mobility (www.smarta-net.eu). In addition, he is also currently working on BRT and bus priority projects for cities in Ghana, Mozambique and Bhutan.

Opening session

Welcome note



**Eddy
Liégeois**



Eddy Liégeois is Head of the Transport Networks unit since January 2021 and acting Director of Investment, Innovative & Sustainable Transport Directorate from December 2023. He is responsible to formulate policies and provide overall direction of the activities in the area of TEN-T projects and transport infrastructure development including provision of support for the work of the European Transport Coordinators. Previously Eddy was Head of Road transport unit (2015-2020), Head of the legal unit (2010-2015), and assistant of the Director General in DG MOVE (2005-2010). Before joining the European Commission in 1996, Eddy has worked in the private sector. He studied law in Louvain-La-Neuve.

Opening session

Keynote address from DG-MOVE



**Andrea
Lorenzini**



Andrea Lorenzini is a Senior Transport Consultant with a background in Civil and Transport Engineering. He joined MemEx in 2017, engaged in passenger and freight transport, transport accessibility, rural and shared mobility services, smart cities, and urban logistics. Andrea provides technical assistance to public authorities, organisations, and operators on mobility and transport planning, focusing on inclusivity, sustainability, and intermodal transport. He has managed several European projects including the SMARTA Project (2018-2020), and currently coordinates the SMARTA-NET Project (2022-2024). He also works on EU transport policy, training, funding, evaluation, and stakeholder engagement.

Opening session

SMARTA-NET key achievements, including European Rural Mobility Network (ERMN) events, Guidance, and trainings



**Edina
Ocsko**



Edina Ocsko is a consultant in rural and social development. She is the director of E4O, an international consultancy company that primarily aims to support the engagement of local (rural) stakeholders in EU projects and policies. Edina is also the Vice-Chair of the Rural Pact Coordination Group. Over the past years she has been working on supporting the implementation of Smart Villages, through coordinating two EU-funded preparatory actions (Smart Rural 21 and Smart Rural 27). She is the Coordinator of the European Smart Village Network, that is a voluntary network of rural communities, LEADER LAGs/ village groups and village associations with an interest in Smart Villages.

Opening session

What key messages did rural municipalities of the ERMN agree yesterday?



**Elena
Bargagna**



Elena Bargagna is an economist specialized in management and control of logistics processes. She has more than five years of experience in the European Programmes, and she works in MemEx in the EU Project Division. Elena deals with transport accessibility theme, rural and shared mobility services, funding and financing policies and stakeholder engagement. Indeed, she supports the management of relationships with stakeholders and private and public partnerships for a continuous and long-lasting collaboration. Elena collaborated in activities and projects related to the area of ecological and sustainable transition with particular regard to maritime transport.

Rural access challenges and solutions

Rural Access Challenges and Framework of Solutions - Good Practice and Catalogue of Solutions



**Alexandra
Correia**



She has a degree in Sociology, a postgraduate qualification in Public Administration and Regional Development, a Master's degree in Educational Sciences, and she is now a PhD Student in Geography and Territorial Planning.

Her area of expertise is Regional and Local Development. She coordinates the Development and Cooperation Department in ADRAL, where she is responsible for managing projects and preparing applications for various national and European programmes. She promotes co-operation and networking at both regional and European level. She has more than 30 years' experience coordinating and managing projects at local and regional level and has co-authored some books.

Rural access challenges and solutions

Solutions within the public transport framework – Case of Alentejo, Portugal



Karl-Heinz Schoon



Karl-Heinz Schoon coordinates the volunteer Bürgerbus project and is the mobility officer in the Kusel district. He grew up in a rural area and lived in Berlin for 12 years, precisely during the time when the wall between East and West fell. He worked in the Berlin Senate Administration and served as the full-time mayor of the Schönenberg-Kübelberg association of municipalities in the rural Kusel district for 16 years. He holds a master's degree in European administration management and one as mediator.

Rural access challenges and solutions

Solution based on community and volunteering – Case of Kusel District, Germany



André Freitas



André has been working on transport-related EU projects since 2008. He is experienced in the social aspects of mobility, evaluation of urban mobility projects, and has been involved in several evaluation and impact assessment studies, including the evaluation of Regulation N.º 1315/2013 for the development of the trans-European transport network. More recently, he has coordinated R&I projects focused on disruptive technologies and new mobility concepts, participated in the EIB-JASPERS SUMP Training and Capacity Building programme, and has been steering one of the research streams of the SMARTA-NET project devoted to incorporating rural mobility aspects into SUMPs.

Including rural aspects in Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans
Incorporating rural aspects within Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs)



Neri Di Volo



Neri di Volo is a Principal Advisor and Lead Transport Specialist at the European Investment Bank since 2007. He is also the Country Manager for Slovakia and Italy within the JASPERS Programme advising on strategies and projects that contribute to a greener, more connected, and more innovative Europe.

Neri is a transport and civil engineer and was responsible from 1999 to 2007 for the monitoring of the Bus service and technology in ATAF GESTIONI S.R.L. the public transport operator managing the public transport system in the entire Florence Metropolitan area, in Tuscany, Italy.

Including rural aspects in Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans
An inspiring practice of Functional Urban-Rural transport planning

Panel Discussion on Rural Accessibility



**Helen
McHenry**

Dr. Helen McHenry is a Policy Analyst with the Western Development Commission (WDC) where she is responsible for analysing socio-economic data and policy as it impacts on the Western Region of Ireland. She has a particular focus on rural and regional development, energy infrastructure and renewable policy and the low carbon transition for rural dwellers. Most recently she developed the Sustainable Mobility Index to quantify mobility options, services, and infrastructure for 40 rural towns. Prior to joining the WDC, she worked with various public sector organisations and at the University of Aberdeen and the Queen's University of Belfast and has extensive experience in policy analysis, evaluation and research.



**Pascale
Van Doren**

Pascale Van Doren is an agricultural engineer from UCLouvain (BE). She pursued her professional career in a European context. Her work background includes university research, consulting for public decision-making and management of European projects and networks. Rural development, territorial governance, research and innovation, support to SMEs, social affairs, maritime affairs and interregional cooperation are the main focuses of her expertise. Over 30 years of experience has given her a cross-cutting view of European and territorial issues, as well as solid knowledge in policy evaluation, programme monitoring and foresight. She is Team Leader of the Rural Pact Support Office since December 2022



**Ute
Wein**

Policy Officer in the European Commission since 2001, in various Directorates-General. Worked principally on enlargement, (digital) internal market (Commission proposal on Single Digital Gateway Regulation) and transport issues. Since April 2022: part of the team that prepared two new legislative Commission proposals on passenger rights and inter-institutional follow-up. Since July 2024: responsible for transport poverty.



**Filip
Boelaert**

Mr. Filip Boelaert has held the position of Secretary-General at the Department of Mobility and Public Works within the Flemish Government since 2014. In this role, he spearheads the department's dynamic expertise in policymaking, monitoring and evaluation, technical support, and maritime access. Additionally, he contributes to holistic urban development as visiting professor at the university of Ghent. Mr. Boelaert's prior roles encompass impactful positions within the Flemish Government, where he played a pivotal role in shaping mobility policies. Throughout his career, Mr. Boelaert has been an advocate for the advancement of sustainable mobility and futureproof transportation systems.

11.45
12.30

Second Thematic Session: Advancing Rural Mobility

Mobility in support of sustainable tourism in rural areas

**Enhancing mobility in support of rural
tourism, with particular reference to
“tourism without my car”**

Bente Grimm, NIT

**Offering tourists mobility without the car –
case from Greece**

Vasilis Myriokefalitakis, Rethymno, Greece

**Greenways and support to cycling tourism –
case of Vidzeme Region, Latvia**

Raitis Sijats, Latvia Greenways Association

Moderated Q&A

Establishing the ERMN and where does it go from here?

**Overview and profile of the ERMN – purpose,
activities, participants, training, concepts
for future**

Andrea Lorenzini, MemEx

**Discussion on possible way forward with
ERMN members**

Carmelo Rivero, Barcelona Provincial Council,
Spain

Declan Turnbull, Mayo County Council, Ireland

Adéla Pixová, MAS Sdružení Růže, Czechia

**Moderated contributions from floor and
online audience**

12.30
13.00

Closing session: Towards rural mobility 2.0

**(Policy) Recommendations from the
SMARTA-NET Evaluation**

Geert Koops, Panteia

**Key messages from SMARTA-NET about
goals, scale, funding, etc.**

Brendan Finn, MemEx

**Conclusions and closing: A couple of take
aways**

Isabelle Vandoorne, Deputy Head of Unit
Innovation and research, DG MOVE

13.00
14.00

Lunch at venue

Join the conference online



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**Bente
Grimm**



Bente Grimm (sociologist, M.A.) is head of Tourism Mobility Research at the Institute for Tourism Research in Northern Europe (NIT), based in Kiel, Germany. She works in the city, but lives at the countryside and has been doing market research on various tourist topics for more than 20 years. In a large number of projects, she has been advising destinations, companies and public organisations, particularly on tourism mobility and sustainable tourism development. Within the SMARTA-NET project, she is responsible for all tourism related questions and has developed the “Guidance for a more sustainable mobility in rural tourism regions” and the training material on the same topic.

Mobility in support of sustainable tourism in rural areas

Enhancing mobility in support of rural tourism, with particular reference to “tourism without my car”



**Vasilis
Myriokefalitakis**



Naval Architect and Marine Engineer, graduate of the National Technical University of Athens. Holds a Master of Science Degree in Welding Technology awarded from Cranfield Institute of Technology. From 1994 to 2009 he worked in a large metal construction industry. For the next years he worked as a laboratory associate at the Technological Educational Institute of Crete. Since 2011 is an Advisor to the Mayor of Rethymno with his direct involvement in the sustainable development of the Municipality. Project coordinator for the European cooperation projects run by Rethymno (like Horizon 2020, Interreg Projects). He is also a member of the municipal team working on environmental issues and on the adaptation to climate change.

Mobility in support of sustainable tourism in rural areas

Offering tourists mobility without the car – case from Greece



**Raitis
Sijats**



Mr Raitis Sijats is a Chairman of the Vidzeme Tourism Association, the regional tourism authority in North Latvia. Since 2016, he is the President of the European Cultural Tourism Network, a non-profit international association dealing with sustainable cultural tourism.

He is also Member of the Tourism Advisory Council of the Ministry of Economics of the Republic of Latvia for tourism development, strategy and budget, since 2003. From 2005 to 2009 he was a Deputy of the Cesis City Council, responsible for culture, sport, tourism and economics.

Mobility in support of sustainable tourism in rural areas

Greenways and support to cycling tourism – case of Vidzeme Region, Latvia



Carmelo Rivero



Carmelo Rivero has a degree in Geography from the University of Barcelona and has been working in mobility planning for more than 30 years. For fifteen years he worked as a consultant in the private sector and in 2010 he joined the team of the Mobility and Road Safety Office of the Barcelona Provincial Council.

He has actively participated in more than 150 plans and specific studies on many topics: SUMP, accessibility, bicycle master plans, public transport, traffic calming, mobility in schools, road pricing, parking strategies, logistics, mobility in industrial zones, etc.

For the past fifteen years he has been coordinating a regular course on sustainable mobility for municipal technicians in the Barcelona province.

Establishing the ERMN and where does it go from here?

Discussion on possible way forward with ERMN members



Declan Turnbull



Declan Turnbull is Head of the Ballina Municipal District, one of four Local Authority Municipalities in County Mayo in the West of Ireland. Declan manages a team who provide various services to the Ballina communities, including housing, roads, environmental services and supports to community organisations. Amongst other projects, he is currently overseeing the development of an Active Travel & Local Transport Plan for Ballina. Declan is also the Chairperson of the Board of Mayo LocalLink.

Declan has been involved in many initiatives of the European Union, including Smarta-Net, and is committed to sharing his experiences and continuously learning from colleagues across Europe.

Establishing the ERMN and where does it go from here?

Discussion on possible way forward with ERMN members



Adéla Pixová



Adéla Pixová is a project manager at LAG Sdružení Růže, a Czech organization focused on rural development, and an energy consultant. She coordinates energy projects and promotes energy savings in the region. Pixová's work emphasizes renewable energy, regional growth, and rural mobility solutions. Actively involved in European projects like SMARTA-NET, her efforts focus on improving mobility and tourism in rural areas. She lives in a village with her husband, raising their seven children, and is committed to transforming her community into a place where it's pleasant to live and grow old.

Establishing the ERMN and where does it go from here?

Discussion on possible way forward with ERMN members



**Geert
Koops**



Geert is an urban mobility expert at Panteia. He studied Geography at Utrecht University with a specialisation in regional economics. As a geographer Geert combines his spatial background with his knowledge on transport. In his career Geert supported multiple governments in designing and implementing SUMP. These highly complex projects demanded from him to work with multiple stakeholders and in the meanwhile assessing the impact of potential policies and actions. Geert's work key characteristic is to always work evidence-based; meaning that, while working on new policies Geert always combined this advisory work with science-based applied research.

Closing session: Towards rural mobility 2.0

(Policy) Recommendations from the SMARTA-NET Evaluation



**Isabelle
Vandoorne**



Isabelle Vandoorne has been a civil servant at the European Commission since 2001. She is Deputy Head of the Unit in charge of innovation, research, urban and rural mobility policy at DG MOVE. Previously she developed EU policies and regulations in the areas of MaaS/multimodal ticket, travel information and data provision, intelligent transport systems, railways and telecoms, and with digitalisation projects in the field of EU taxation. Before that, she worked for the Belgian Railways. She holds a Master's Degree in Engineering from the Faculté Polytechnique de Mons in Belgium, where she also worked as a researcher.

Closing session: Towards rural mobility 2.0

Conclusions and closing: A couple of take aways



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<https://www.linkedin.com/posts/smarta-net-5b60b9275-smartanet-ruralmobility-sustainabletourism-activity-7217049180748320770-GuRD>



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