
Smart mobility in rural areas: insights and good practices from Europe and beyond

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1 Abstract

Quality of life and social equity in rural areas are highly dependent on people's ability to access all their needs. Ideally, rural areas would have access to an effective, comprehensive and co-ordinated multimodal transport system that maintains efficient linkages between rural communities and also with urban areas. Despite their importance, rural public transport services in Europe are under stress, due to a combination of factors including austerity measures, depopulation and ageing populations. Many rural areas throughout Europe do not have the range of mobility services and connections that are required by the people who live and work there. Mobility is a fundamental freedom that is becoming increasingly out of reach for the young, old and lower income groups in our rural areas, as dependency on private cars increases. Mature digital solutions, already flourishing in urban areas, offer a possible route out of this negative spiral, providing the means to connect people and different shared and collective modes of transport in new ways. This paper reports work in a multi-partner EU DG Move project entitled SMARTA: Sustainable shared mobility interconnected with public transport in European rural areas (developing the concept of 'smart rural transport areas'). The project aims to gain a deep understanding of the nature and the evolution of mobility needs for diverse rural populations and to assess how sustainable, shared mobility systems can help enhance their mobility and travel experiences. The first stage of this work, reported in this paper, has been to undertake a systematic review of rural mobility and good practice in rural mobility solutions across the EU 28 and selected third countries. This paper will report on the principal findings from this work and offer an assessment of key priorities for policy and solution implementation going forward.

2 Additional Information

<https://ruralsharedmobility.eu/>

3 Presentation slides

For a copy of the presentation slides for this paper please contact: m.beecroft@abdn.ac.uk