

# M<sup>OG</sup>

Move on Green

## POLICY GUIDELINES FOR SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY IN RURAL AND MOUNTAIN AREAS



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## Preamble

### **Foreword of Dr. Johannes Hahn, EU-Commissioner for Regional Policy. Sustainable Mobility, a key to maintain the quality of life in rural and mountain areas**



The framework for rural areas in Europe has changed radically in recent years. Economic restructuring processes, aging and migration of many young people have led to a significant decrease in population in many rural areas of Europe. Rural areas are referred to regions where less than 150 persons per square kilometre are living (OECD). Taking the population density to scale, around 93% of EU territories are rural areas. To ensure sustainable mobility, which is a fundamental prerequisite for the functioning of a society and a fundamental element of individual quality of life, new ways have to be gone.

To face these challenges, it is our collective task to strengthen the rural areas as an independent and diverse shaped habitat. To increase the attractiveness of these regions, we have to encourage sustainable mobility for all. Bringing these new climate and environmental friendly solutions for elderly and young people, for tourists and for all people living in rural areas will allow a better access to education, to health and leisure services, will give new job opportunities and will encourage the development of economic activities, including tourism.

Many of Europe's rural regions face similar challenges concerning mobility issues. Thanks to the European support of the Interreg IV C programme, it is useful and gratifying that within the project "Move on Green", 13 regions of 10 European Member States have shared their experiences and interesting "good practice" examples to check feasibility in their own regions. All participating regions have carried out uniform surveys and studies, and thus have caused a sensitisation on mobility challenges for decision-makers with the aim to improve sustainable mobility in rural and mountain areas - with an emphasis on expanding demand orientated systems - by importing good practice approaches.

I hope that these policy guidelines will be a useful tool for all the other European rural and mountain regions to reinforce the importance of sustainable mobility in their regional development plans and to find and transfer adequate solutions to improve their sustainable mobility.

Though this project is an achievement of the 2007-2013 programming period, it is a good illustration of the further benefits that Cohesion policy will bring now that it has been thoroughly reformed. The approach adopted brings together a clear strategy and a bottom-up definition of local needs. Through the development of a sustainable and efficient transport network in rural areas, regions aim to achieve a competitive and sustainable growth all over their territory. All partners were consulted in the process, allowing to precisely assess the assets and needs of citizens and stakeholders on the ground. Likewise, the reformed cohesion policy for the 2014-2020 period now requires to design a proper strategy on the basis of a consultation of partners. It also improves the concentration of funds on areas which are critical to growth. Thanks to these features it is now more than ever a genuine investment policy, fit for supporting the fulfilment of decisive projects all over Europe.

# 1. Mobility in European rural areas as depicted by MOVE ON GREEN

## 1.1 Move On Green (MOG): why did this project emerge?

### **A lack of sustainable mobility affecting the attractiveness of rural and mountain areas**

Local mobility has a strong impact on local economy, cultural heritage, territorial cohesion and also social inclusion and environmental protection. Good mobility can increase the quality of life of inhabitants, business and tourists' attractiveness, competitiveness of enterprises. On the other hand, the absence of sustainable mobility schemes affects any development strategy implemented in rural and mountain areas. No matter how much effort is spent on education, promotion of tourism, development of new economic initiatives, etc.: **sustainable mobility, with the implementation of sustainable transport patterns, is one of the key success conditions for the attractiveness of rural and mountain areas.**

For many people in rural areas, mobility is just not practical without a car of their own. Even in the relatively densely populated countries of Western Europe, rural areas nationwide often lack public transport or have an insufficient standard to guarantee independent travel. In Germany's countryside, private cars total around 600 per 1 000 inhabitants and outnumber those of the other spatial categories<sup>1</sup> for instance.

Sustainable mobility is vital and therefore there is a need for alternative public transport services to guarantee mobility in rural areas, without a car. So-called flexible transport services or transportation on demand point the way to possible solutions, as innovative practices to encourage creative economically viable solutions that can be effective and efficient while being environmentally friendly.

### **Policy-makers are not enough taking into account specific characteristics of mobility in rural areas**

There is a general tendency to take more into account the environmental impacts of transport; and the European Commission, relayed by national and regional policy-makers, has encouraged focusing more on sustainable mobility all over Europe. **Nevertheless, so far, policy focuses have essentially been put on the major urban centres, forgetting mobility between urban and rural areas and mobility within rural areas.**

Though, rural and mountain areas present specific challenges such as the importance of distances to cover while the number of inhabitants can be low, sparsely populated areas with several villages of small towns, a high number of elderly people, sometimes a high poverty rate and a relative remoteness to the main airports /railway /road nodes. They should also face specific geographic conditions with slopes, altitude and protected areas. These characteristics require specific solutions and the involvement of policy-makers is needed at all levels.

Decision makers from thirteen mountain and rural areas have acknowledged the role they must play to encourage sustainable mobility in rural areas, are ready to learn about new solutions and to take action. Move on Green aimed to guide them in this pathway, to share the knowledge gained throughout the project by encouraging all other policy-makers to follow their lead and to highlight the importance of rural mobility at all policy levels.

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<sup>1</sup> BBR (Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning) (2004): Urban Development in Germany

## Move on Green: improving sustainable transport in rural and mountain areas

Move on Green aimed to maintain the environmental and economic health of rural areas and to ensure the access of both inhabitants and potential visitors to key services such as employment, education and healthcare. To do so, Move on Green had the objective **to improve the design and effectiveness of regional policies on sustainable transport in rural and mountain areas.**

To achieve these goals, during 3 years, 13 partners from 10 EU countries have collected examples of innovative ground-level initiatives and prepared a **Good Practice guide** on innovative transport solutions to help decision makers to get inspiration and improve their transport patterns. Partners have then derived from this practical experience these **Policy Guidelines on Sustainable Transport in rural areas to foster policy-learning for European and regional policy-makers.** Finally, each regional partner has prepared an **Implementation plan** to concretely adapt its policy towards more sustainable mobility schemes and transfer new sustainable transport practices at regional and local levels.

At the end of the project, several Good Practices were successfully transferred within the partners' regions and transport policies have sometimes even been changed, such as in Podkarpackie Region, where the issue of rural mobility was for the first time introduced in the Regional Strategy. **We believe that these Policy Guidelines will be of great help for all policy-makers to encourage them to adapt their transport policy to the specific characteristics of rural and mountain areas, to be inspired by MOG good practices and transferred them into their own areas to improve sustainable mobility.**

## 1.2 Clarification of the concepts: what is “sustainable mobility in rural areas”?

Before pursuing the analysis of policy guidelines, let's first agree on definitions. What is a rural area? How can we define sustainability? What is mobility? Which links exist between urban and rural areas?

### Rural area: a definition based on population density

There is no commonly agreed definition of rural areas at European level. Nevertheless, the main and common criterion used to characterise a rural area is the **population density**. Based on this criterion, OECD has classified a commune as “rural” if its population density is **less than 150 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup>**. Otherwise, the commune is classified as “urban”<sup>2</sup>.

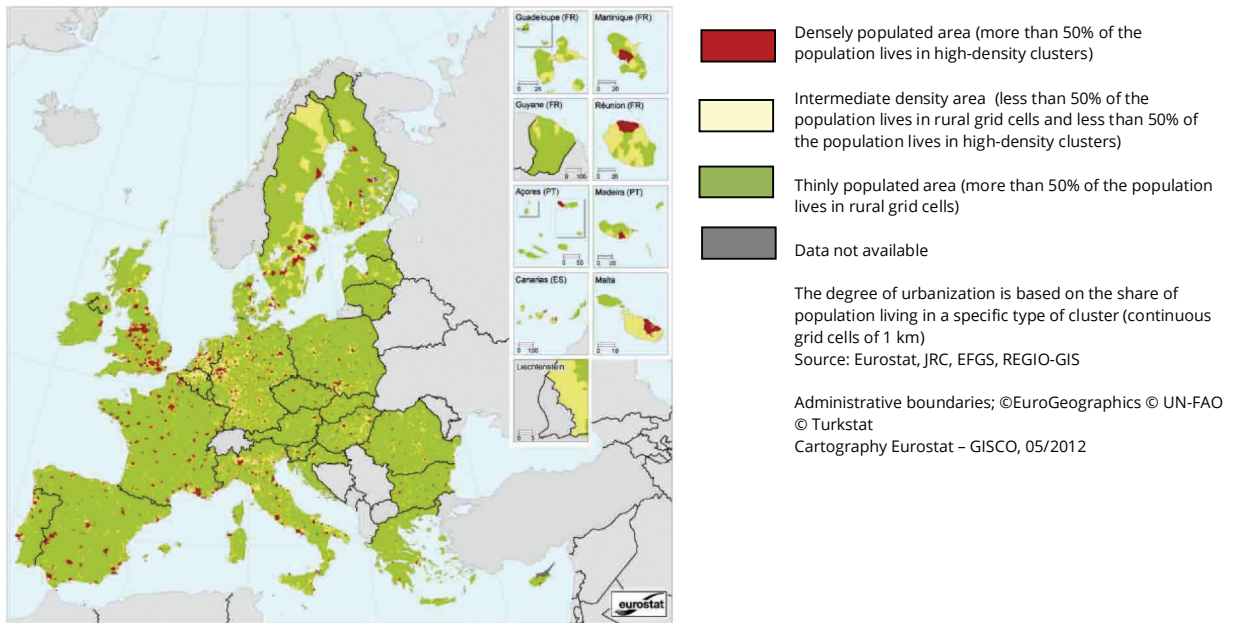
Depending of the scale used – municipal level corresponding to LAU2 level or regional level corresponding to NUTS 3 level, the importance of rural areas in Europe can change, but in any case, at least 90% of EU territory is considered as rural or intermediate hosting at least 60% of the population.

The local level can help to have a more detailed and precise overview of the situation. OECD has made the distinction between three different degrees of urbanisation, as shown in this Eurostat map<sup>3</sup>:

<sup>2</sup> JRC report: “[Delimitations of rural areas in Europe using criteria of population density, remoteness and land cover](#)” by F. Jonard, M. Lambotte, F. Ramos, J.M. Terres, C. Bamps, page 20

<sup>3</sup> Map at LAU2 level (page 196) and the following map at NUTS 3 level (page 197) and all data per country can be found within the [Eurostat regional yearbook 2012](#), page 199 for LAU2 level and page 200 for NUTS 3 level

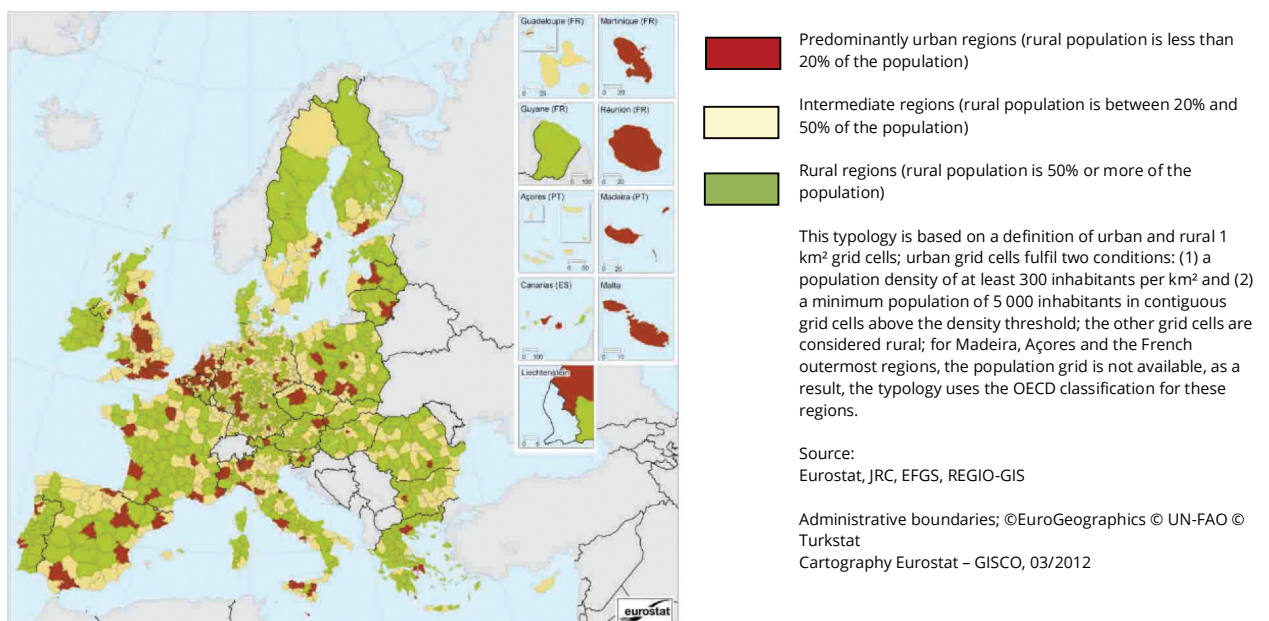
Map: Degree of urbanisation at LAU2 level from Eurostat



- **Rural areas or thinly-populated areas:** where more than 50 % of the population lives in rural grid cells.
- **Intermediate density areas/towns and suburbs/small urban areas:** where less than 50 % of the population lives in rural grid cells and less than 50 % lives in high-density clusters.
- **Densely-populated areas / cities / large urban areas:** where at least 50 % of the population lives in high-density clusters

According to this definition, **83%** of the EU territory is considered as rural areas, with **28%** of the EU population while **13%** of the EU territory is considered as intermediate with **32%** of the population.

Map: Urban-rural typology at NUTS3 level from Eurostat





To compare and analyse data, it is sometimes useful to have an overview of rural areas at a larger scale, at regional level (NUTS 3 level). OECD has defined three types of regions:

- **Predominantly rural: regions** where more than 50% of inhabitants of the total population lives in rural grid cells;
- **Intermediate region: regions** where between 20 and 50% of the population lives in rural grids
- **Predominantly urban:** regions where less than 20% of the population lives in rural grid cells.

According to this definition, **56 % of the EU territory is considered as rural areas with 24% of the EU population and 35% of the EU territory is considered as intermediate with 36% of the population.**

## Mobility

Mobility is the ability to move freely or be easily moved from one location to another. There are different types of mobility:

- **Mobility of people:** it embraces mobility of European persons living in the EU, but also foreigners coming in the EU to live or visit. It includes different target groups who could have different needs: inhabitants, tourists, young people, workers, senior people, disabled people etc
- **Mobility of freight:** for raw material and goods.

Mobility depends of land, maritime, fluvial and air transportation systems, which are in many cases owned and managed by local, regional or national authorities. Mobility comprises as well the possibilities and the willingness for/of movement.

In these policy guidelines, mobility of people will especially be addressed.

## Right of people to mobility:

The right to have adequate, quality and safe mobility is one of the basic rights of EU citizens,<sup>4</sup> which has been constantly declared by development and transport policies both on pan-European and national states' levels. Such mobility not only **ensures equal economic and social opportunities for all** (possibility to carry out economy activities, access to education and jobs...), **but also their social inclusion and access to other elements of quality of life**. Ability to fully use such proclaimed right depends on geographical (e.g. configuration of terrain, distances to mobility destination), personal (e.g. income of someone to buy a car or pay for transport ticket, driving licence) and joint public elements (e.g. level of transport infrastructure development, number of transport lines and transport companies available in certain territory). As joint public elements depend strongly on economic parameters and political actors (e.g. number of inhabitants as a potential transport consumers), it is evident that securing equal mobility rights is a much more difficult task in rural, less/sparsely populated areas. All this is even more true for groups who are additionally hindered by their physical, mental or social "handicap" (invalids, young people, mental patients, woman in more patriarchal societies...), although some of them can be also privileged by favourable public transport options (e.g. young people during school days).

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<sup>4</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: [Strengthening passenger rights within the European Union](#) COM(2005) 46 of 16/02/2005

## Sustainability: where social, environment and economic development meet

Sustainability is the “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”<sup>5</sup>. Sustainability is a mix of three different dimensions: **social equity, environmental protection and economic development** in the present and in the future.

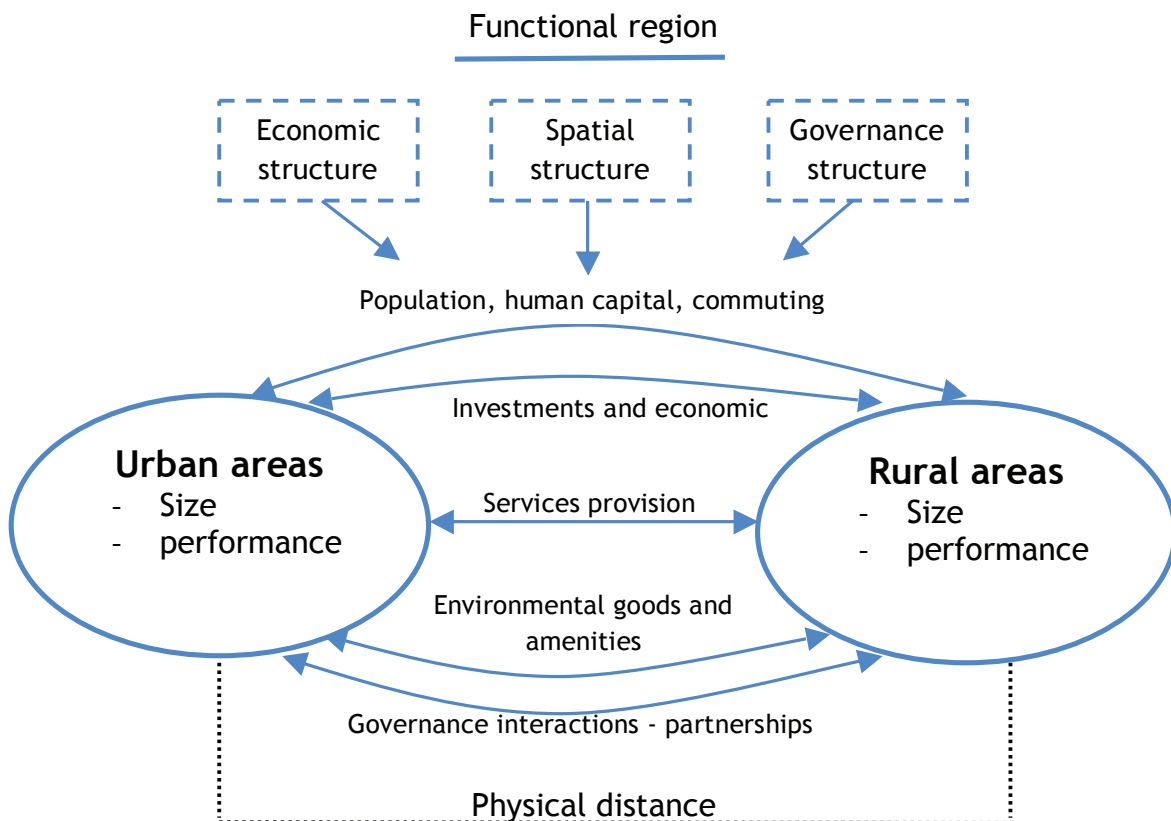
Sustainable mobility has to take into account these three dimensions comprehensively. A sustainable mobility solution is thus one that:

- **meets societal transportation** needs and provides accessibility to basic services for all social groups in a safe manner;
- is affordable, operates efficiently and supports **economic development**,
- **protects, preserves, and enhances the environment** by limiting transportation emissions and wastes; minimizes the consumption of resources; and enhances the existing environment as practicable.

## Rural urban linkages

Rural and urban areas mutually benefit one another and interact in many ways. The recent OECD work on Rural-Urban Partnership has defined five key linkages between urban and rural areas as shown in the below figure.

Figure: Linkages between urban and rural areas from OECD<sup>6</sup>



Mobility of people and goods is identified as a substantial component of this relationship, through commuting. The existence of transport services benefit commuters who have to move from one

<sup>5</sup> [United Nations General Assembly \(2005\). 2005 World Summit Outcome](#), Resolution A/60/1, adopted by the General Assembly on 15 September 2005. Retrieved on: 2009-02-17

<sup>6</sup> [From Rural Urban Partnerships: An integrated Approach to Economic Development](#), OECD 2013, page 23

area to another for work, for education, social services, health services, recreation, local food, culture (ecosystem services).

Food, timber and energy increasingly are produced mainly in rural areas. Significant and still increasing share of consumers live in urban areas and it needs to be secure that these goods are transported/delivered to the users.

There are investments and transactions driving the economic development of the region which depend on transport.

Rural-urban partnerships have been developed in various areas (regional transport association, metropolitan area strategies...) which allow people to move easily from one area to another through integrated transport solutions.

For good reasons there are a lot of initiatives developed on urban sustainable mobility. In order to benefit from the linkages between both urban and rural areas it is also important to provide adequate level of transport services in rural areas, well-tailored to the needs of rural residents and urban dwellers who come to rural areas.

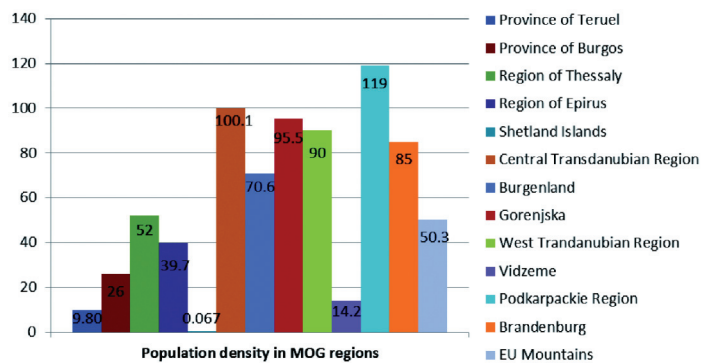
Mobility is one of the major factors of competitiveness, quality of life and business attractiveness of rural areas as well as urban areas. It has strong impact on local economy and environment, but also on social inclusion of people. **Imbalances in the accessibility across the EU, together with imbalances in education systems and current demographic trends, make territorial cohesion a serious challenge to the EU development policies.**

### 1.3 Portraits of MOG Regions: a good representation of EU rural and mountain areas

MOG partners represent 10 different countries across Europe. There is a great diversity among the regions arising largely from the landscape and the climate, the economic activities in the regions, settlement patterns and the governance. Yet local studies on sustainable transport in rural areas performed in each of MOG regions allowed the consortium to identify some common features of these rural regions.

#### A low population density

Rural areas are characterised by a low density of population: 51.1 inhabitants /km in average in EU-27<sup>7</sup>. All MOG partners have a low population density, sometimes even extremely sparsely populated. For instance in Spain, the Province of Teruel has a density of 9.80 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup>, one of the lowest in the country. 50% of its 236 villages have less than 200 inhabitants. The Province of Burgos has a density of 26 inh./km<sup>2</sup>. 75% of its population lives only in 7 municipalities, 83% of its municipalities have less than 500 inhabitants. In Latvia, Vidzeme Region is characterised by the lowest level of population in the country: 15.3 inh/km<sup>2</sup>. The Shetland Islands are the most Northern local authority area in UK. It has more than 100 islands, of which 15 are inhabited. 3500 people live on islands which are not joined to the mainland. The population density is 0.067 inh./km<sup>2</sup>. Another example is West-Transdanubian region (Hungary), with a density of is 11.328 inh./km<sup>2</sup>, in very numerous and fragmented settlements (655). In Brandenburg (Germany), due to the deficits of birth and migration the overall population will be continuously shrinking within the next years (far from



<sup>7</sup> Rural Development in the EU Statistical and Economic Information Report 2013, page 58

Berlin). For mountain areas in general, the average density in the EU-27 is of 50.3 inh/km<sup>2</sup>, less than half of the European national density (112.5 inh/km<sup>2</sup>)<sup>8</sup>.

### **An ageing population**

The proportion of elderly people has increased in all types of regions in relation to both the younger and the working-age population. In the European rural areas, in 2012, the share of 0-14 years old was 15.3%, of 15-64 years old was 66% and of 65 years old and more was 18.6%. The share of elderly people is expected to grow continuously in the following years. For instance in France, INSEE has calculated that if the current percentage of people aged of more than 60 years is 22%, it will be 33% in 2050 in rural areas, which will require additional transport services for people<sup>9</sup>. Central Transdanubian Region (Hungary) is concentrating a high rate of retired persons and has the highest decrease of young people (0-14 years old) in the country. In Brandenburg (Germany), while in 2010 every 5<sup>th</sup> inhabitant had been 65 years and older it will be every 3<sup>rd</sup> in 2030. Additionally, the age cohort of people in working age (15-under 65) will be reduced by more than a quarter.

### **A good representation of mountain areas**

In the EU, 13% of the population (63 million people) live in mountains, which represent 29% of the EU territory<sup>10</sup>. Mountains represent some geographical constraints for transport systems: roads and railways are expensive and difficult to build up steep mountain valleys. Tunnels and bridges are often necessary. Heavy snowfall, avalanches, landslides and floods can also block the roads. Several MOG regions are mountainous, such as the region of Epirus (Greece), where 74.2% is mountainous or Gorenjska region (Slovenia), where 40% of the area lies over 1000m above sea level. In addition, Euromontana, the European association of mountain areas, is involved in the project and represents organisations implemented in 20 mountain countries.

### **Accessibility and peripherality of rural areas**

A rural commune is considered as **"peripheral"** if located at more than 45 minutes from the nearest city, with at least 50 000 inhabitants. Otherwise, the commune is considered as **accessible**<sup>11</sup>. If it is important to improve mobility in all rural areas, peripheral rural areas require more investment and a bigger challenge, as they have more difficult access to transport infrastructure, such as motorways, railways stations, airports etc. Accessibility is frequently used as a proxy to urban influence in rural areas. The map below shows a time-cost model: for each square kilometre in Europe, it shows the travel time to the nearest destination of interest given the transportation network.

In our MOG project, several partners can be considered as peripheral, such as the Shetland Islands, where the average accessibility is 155 minutes; Thessaly and Epirus Region are located within the South East Europe mountain range, where the average accessibility is 145 min. Other partners representing the Land of Brandenburg (Germany) or Burgenland (Austria) are closest to metropolis like Berlin and Vienna respectively; or Gorenjska Region (Slovenia) has an easy access to road and railway networks but also to international airports: these regions are thus considered as more accessible.

**This peripherality combined with the lack of public transport could explain the very high car ownership levels:** for instance, 73.8% of those old enough to drive own a private car in the Shetland Islands whereas the rate is 61.8% in Burgenland (Austria).

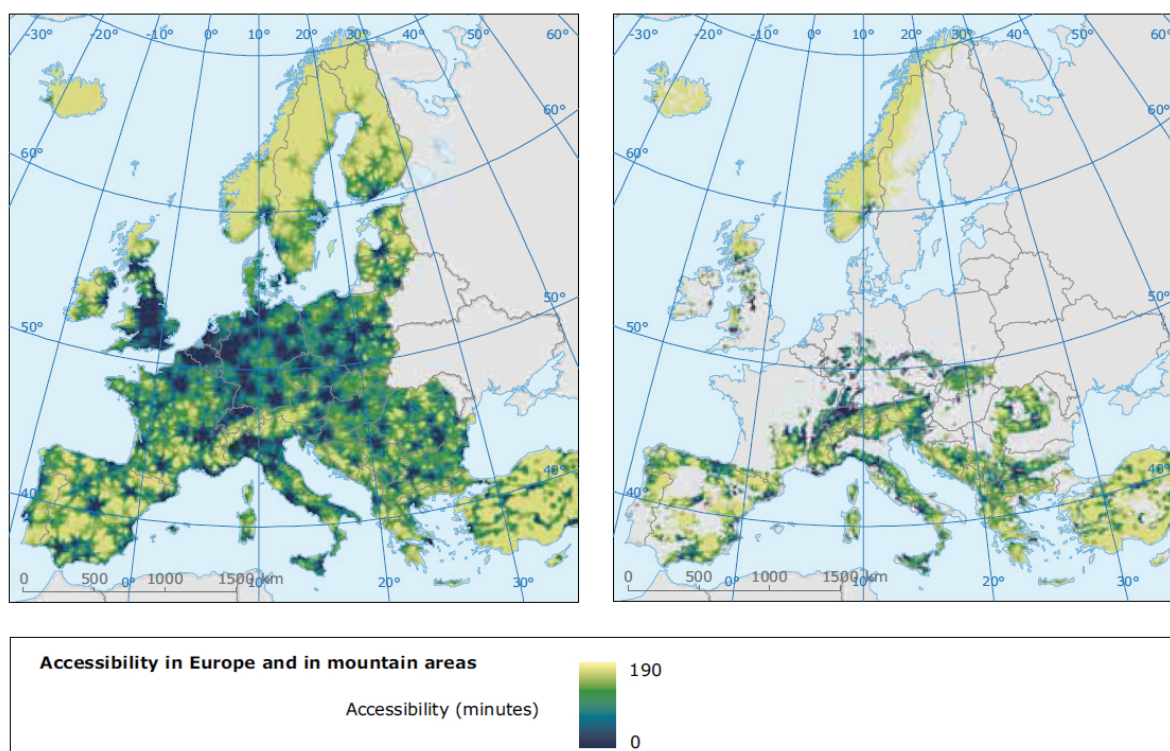
<sup>8</sup> EEA report n°6/2010: [Europe's ecological backbone: recognising the true value of our mountains](#), page 35

<sup>9</sup> O.Paul-Dubois-Taine, C.Raynard, F.Vieillard, D.Auverlot, report « [les nouvelles mobilités dans les territoires périurbains et ruraux](#) », 2012, page 35

<sup>10</sup> EEA report n°6/2010: [Europe's ecological backbone: recognising the true value of our mountains](#), page 9

<sup>11</sup> JRC report: "[Delimitations of rural areas in Europe using criteria of population density, remoteness and land cover](#)" by F. Jonard, M. Lambotte, F. Ramos, J.M. Terres, C. Bamps

Map: Accessibility in the EU-27 and in mountain areas, extracted from EEA report<sup>12</sup>



## The importance of protected areas

Globally the Natura 2000 sites cover 17.9% of the terrestrial area of the EU-27<sup>13</sup>. These **specific protected areas represent an additional challenge for mobility**: rules are stricter and the respect of the environment is a key issue, limiting the development of some transport systems. Several MOG partner regions are largely covered by protected areas: Brandenburg region in Germany has around 63% of its district subject to protection status: it covers an area of 40 604 hectares, 62 sites are designated for nature conservation area. Another example is the Podkarpackie region in Poland where 45% of the area is legally protected: Natura 2000 parks cover 33% of the region.

As a result, Move on Green partners give a good representation of the diverse situations of rural areas in Europe. Studying mobility in these regions allow us to define a more general framework of rural mobility in the whole EU.

## 1.4 Photograph of mobility in EU rural & mountain areas

Transport industry directly represents around 5% of EU GDP and employs 10 million people<sup>14</sup>. In 2011, total passenger transport activities in the EU-27 by any motorized means of transport are estimated to have amounted to around 13 060km per person, on average. Passenger cars accounted for 73.4% of this total, powered two-wheelers for 1.9%, buses and coaches for 7.9 %, railways for 6.3% and tram and metro for 1.4 %. Intra-EU air and intra-EU maritime transport contributed 8.8% and 0.6% respectively<sup>15</sup>. Unfortunately, despite the huge amounts of data available for transports systems and mobility in general, there are **few data directly targeting sustainable mobility in rural areas**.

<sup>12</sup> EEA report n°6/2010: [Europe's ecological backbone: recongnising the true value of our mountains](#), page 50 and data page 51

<sup>13</sup> European Commission, [Rural Development in the EU Statistical and Economic Information Report 2013](#), page 172

<sup>14</sup> European Commission, [White Paper "Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area - Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system" COM \(2011\) 144](#)

<sup>15</sup> European Commission: [EU transport in figures](#): statistical pocketbook 2013, page 18

Mobility is a complex system, based on the interaction of many components, all of which need to evolve together: behaviour, quality of vehicles and development of infrastructure.... This explains the difficulty to shift into new and more sustainable modes. Prices, technology deployment, conditions of supply and planning affected the development of more sustainable mobility.

### Good transport accessibility is mainly a privilege of Europe's central regions

There is a clear distinction between the centre and the peripheries of Europe in terms of accessibility by road. The potential accessibility by rail adds some other characteristics to this pattern. The highest rail accessibility is primarily in the cities serving as main nodes in the high speed rail networks and along major corridors. The picture is of a patchwork of regions with high accessibility by air surrounded by regions with low accessibility.

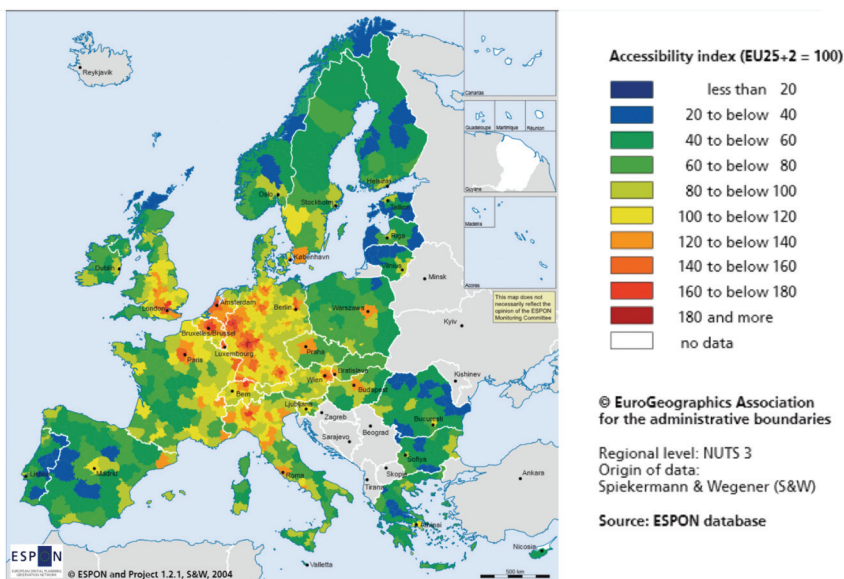
Low accessibility, however, is no longer a concern solely for regions of the traditional periphery. Various regions located in the European core have problems too. The recent development of regional airports generated by low-cost companies upgraded the accessibility of a number of less central and less developed regions.

Combining the various transport modes, the measurement of multimodal accessibility shows an arc where accessibility is highest. It stretches from Liverpool and London to Northern Italy, via Paris, Lyon, Benelux and the Rhine regions. High values are also found in a number of less central agglomerations such as Madrid, Barcelona, Dublin, Glasgow, Copenhagen, Malmö, Gothenburg, Oslo, Rome, Thessalonica and Athens.

In contrast numerous regions in Portugal, Spain, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Southern Italy and Greece have very low values of multimodal accessibility. Several regions of Germany, Austria and France also have below average accessibility values, and nearly all regions of the Member States joining the EU in 2004 are in the same situation with the exceptions of their capital city regions.

For businesses, the accessibility of cities where their real and potential clients and suppliers are concentrated is a major factor. **The calculation of the number of cities of more than 100,000 inhabitants accessible by car** in a certain amount of time underlines the fact that specific geographical conditions seem to play a major role. For example, mountainous areas like the Massif Central in France, the Alps in Austria or the Carpathian, have poor accessibility to cities.

Map: multimodal potential accessibility from ESPON, project 1.2.1<sup>16</sup>



<sup>16</sup> ESPON, ESPON Project 1.2.1: [Transport services and networks: territorial trends and basic supply of infrastructure for territorial cohesion](#), final report, 2004, page 56

Many European regions have very poor accessibility to large metropolitan areas. Examples are the north of Scandinavia and Finland, the West of France, the regions along the border between Spain and Portugal, the Mediterranean islands, North-Western Greece and the North of Romania, but this is not an exhaustive list.

## A remaining car dependency in rural areas

Small labour market and low numbers of consumers prevent delivering some private and public services in a cost-effective way. Decreasing or already declined public transport and increasing necessity of owning car as transport mean, limit the access of people without a car to those services. Most of all, **peri-urban and rural areas are characterized by higher number of driven kilometres per person as in urban areas (but only in old EU), which brings to a higher number of cars per person and significant share of CO2 emissions.** Even in rural areas of France, only 9 to 16% of people in rural areas have access to public transport less than 1 km from their home.

In France, whereas the share of public transport has increased in the main urban centres, individual cars largely remain the main transport used in rural areas, where less than 6% of all travel are made by public transport<sup>17</sup>.

## A risk of social exclusion

Even if the aim is to increase sustainable mobility for all, the different target groups in rural areas are facing specific challenges. According to Huygues, Baptiste and Carrière<sup>18</sup>, the inhabitants of rural areas can be characterised in three categories regarding mobility:

- The **“territorial assigned persons”** who don't have access to mobility for financial, physical or cultural reasons. These persons are very dependant and rely on local shops and services and on their families to increase their mobility. Elderly people with no cars, young unemployed with no financial means to get a driving licence or a car, women in households with only one car used by the other spouse and disabled people are included in this category.
- The **“vulnerable persons”** who are spending more than 18% of their budget in mobility expenses (car, fuel, insurance, parking and toll costs etc.). Low income households with workers and employees are often in this category. They have often moved to rural areas, as they can't afford the more expensive housing in urban areas. The distance travelled every day is important and there is a huge risk for this target group to become more vulnerable, due to its high motorisation rate and the increasing costs of fuel.
- The **“other mobile persons”** who don't have specific mobility difficulty, at least financially, but who mainly rely on their private car. These modest to well-off households represent the most important part of the rural population. In the context of growing costs of fuel, a part of this category can become vulnerable tomorrow.

The “territorial assigned persons” have difficult access to mobility, which complicates the access to jobs, services and reduce the possibility of interactions with other people. It can lead to precarious situations, isolation or exclusion. The “vulnerable” ones are threatened by the fuel costs and if the transport costs continue to rise, they will be obliged to make savings on other spending (like heating), or move away to cities closer to jobs and services where transport costs is less expensive, or they will reduce their mobility.

<sup>17</sup> O.Paul-Dubois-Taine, C.Raynard, F.Vieilliard, D.Auverlot, report « [les nouvelles mobilités dans les territoires périurbains et ruraux](#) », 2012, page 32

<sup>18</sup> Marie Huyghe, Hervé Baptiste et Jean-Paul Carrière, « Quelles organisations de la mobilité plus durables et moins dépendantes de la voiture dans les espaces ruraux à faible densité ? L'exemple du Parc naturel régional Loire- Anjou-Touraine », Développement durable et territoires, Vol. 4, n°3 | octobre 2013, mis en ligne le 30 octobre 2013. URL : <http://developpementdurable.revues.org/10000> ; DOI : 10.4000/developpementdurable.10000

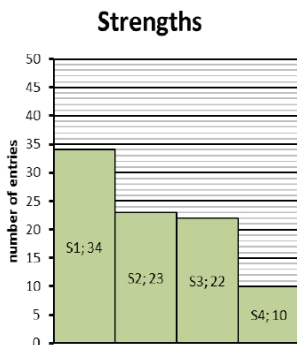
## A risk of territorial exclusion

In addition of these social risks, all rural inhabitants are facing the risk of territorial exclusion. Even if territorial cohesion is an important aim of European policies, with a number of policy and funding instruments pointing towards an increasing territorial balance in Europe, larger cities and growth poles are in the centre of most national and European policies. While **challenges in remote and peripheral areas are increasing, demographic trends and the imbalances in the education and transportation systems are not in favour of rural areas, territorial cohesion is thus challenged.** As a result, support to transport infrastructure in rural areas should remain considered as an **investment for public good** as it helps to prevent their territorial isolation. If such support is made to public transport, it simultaneously contributes both to economic growth and less pollution, which in total can ensure the quality of life and prevent rural exodus. The development of transport systems should thus be integrated in spatial planning of rural areas.

## 1.5 SWOT analysis for mobility in EU rural and mountain areas

During the project, each partner made a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis of its region. With 13 different partners in this project, the answers were very diverse. Among the 51 Good Practices collected, it was however possible to identify and determine certain common issues for all regions, helping to characterise strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for rural and mountain areas in general. The following tables show the compiled work for rural areas at EU level, illustrated by concrete examples from MOG partners.

Four main strengths have been quoted by MOG partners:

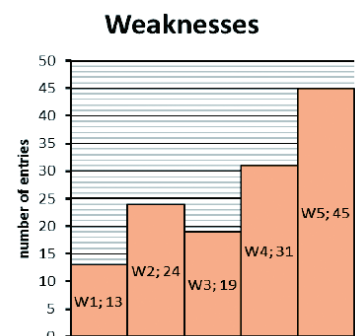


- The **current transport infrastructure is still adequate (S1)** in 34 cases: services are considered as flexible and planned around local needs; roads and public transportation networks are well developed and there is a widespread use of public transport passengers among youth, for whom there is generally organised school transport.
- The **region is strategically located** (from geographical or economical views) (S2) in 23 cases: the region is crossed by European development zones, transport corridors, it is located in their utilisable intersection or the region attracts tourists thanks to its natural heritage and numerous tourism attractions.

- The region remains **open minded towards new ideas for transports (S3)** in 22 cases: new forms of collective trips as carpooling or new transport methods are introduced, such as alternative services in off-peak periods like dial-a-bus systems, citizens' buses (voluntary drivers), disco-bus, reduced taxi fares for young people.
- **Investments transport programmes are on-going or about to be launched, including those thanks to EU projects (S4)** in 10 cases: programmes exist to improve the transport development in the region, as in Province of Teruel where the ISEAL Programme continues to operate within the framework of the European Social Fund 2007-2013. This program is performing adapted transport. Another example is the remarkable level of introduction of ICT applied to mobility in the province of Burgos, mainly through the "Transport on Demand" programme.

Five principal weaknesses have been noticed:

- There is an **excessive reliance on private individual cars, despite its higher costs and there is a lack of intermodality (W1)**: in 13 cases: motorisation rate are higher than the national average, like in the Shetland Islands and there is



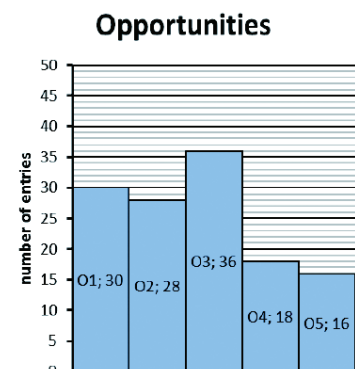


an important dependency on one's own car. The different transport systems, operating in the same area, are not well interconnected and users are not well informed about alternative transport solutions.

- There is a **lack of information and cooperation between authorities in charge of transport (W2)** in 24 cases: the different transport operators have difficulties to work together or there is no cooperation planned between public /private actors, national /regional /local actors. As a result, the cooperation between the service providers is poor and there is no combined offer with same tickets /types of reductions or convenient timetables between the different transport offers.
- **Unprofitability of public transport (W3)** in 19 cases is linked to the high investment costs in infrastructures (especially in mountains areas) and to the difficulty to gain incomes in sparsely populated areas, where there is often a low level of enterprises (including of large businesses). In addition, there is an excessive reliance on public finances for the maintenance of regular lines whereas public finances are more and more constrained.
- The **region is in demographic decline (W4)** in 31 cases: depopulated areas, ageing age structure of the population in rural areas and sometimes high unemployment rates prevent investment in transport in these rural areas.
- Finally if in some cases public transport remains adequate (S1), **in 45 cases the public transport systems are not adapted to the needs (W5)**: they are in poor condition with ageing transport infrastructures for roads /trains. They remain inaccessible for a large part of the rural population, for instance with insufficient bus stops or without access for disabled or senior people.

Despite these weaknesses, MOG rural and mountain areas have **5 major opportunities to seize**:

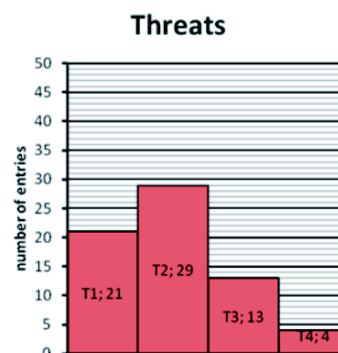
- **New technologies, new transport ways and means can extend the sustainable transport solutions in rural areas (O1)** in 30 cases: electric mobility, car-sharing, call-a-bus, local small-scale transport systems, flexible on-demand-systems etc. represent easily transferable innovative solutions. The Government of Aragon is for instance optimising more efficiently the public transport resources through the application of new technologies.
- **Investing in new and pre-existing transport systems to establish new lines or networks, to acquire new bus /trains, to develop the infrastructure for electric mobility (O2)** in 28 cases: this can be done by innovative ideas such as introducing vehicles with smaller capacity or renovating the bus rolling stock, developing the cycling infrastructure, which do not represent a huge investment.
- **The environmental constraints oblige all actors to rethink mobility in a different way (O3)** in 36 cases, introducing more sustainability in the transport programmes should decrease the ecological footprint. Soft mobility and soft tourism are thus encouraged in policies and projects. The importance of mobility policy has increased in the past years at EU, national, regional and local levels. Democratisation of electric bikes and vehicles appear as a great opportunity to envisage a new mobility.
- To address the difficulties, there is a **will of cooperation between different actors: countries, authorities, transport operators, citizens (O4)** in 18 cases, including for some cross-border cooperation under INTERREG projects. Two examples are KTEL company which collaborates in Hungary with enterprises to encourage employees to come and work with public transport or the creation of win-win partnerships to overcome the legally established Interurban Buses monopoly in Greece.
- Finally, there is an **increasing public awareness of sustainable issues for public transport (O5)** in 16 cases: there is a widespread interest in ecotourism and



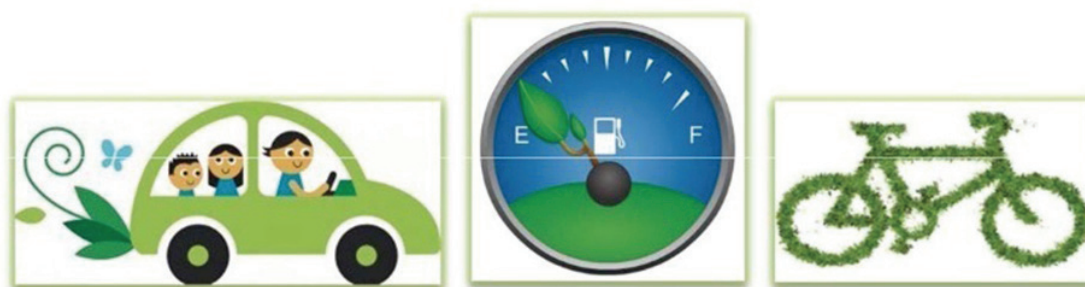
ethno tourism, organic agriculture and ecological societies in general, with a strong interest in local food products: these activities enlarge the reasons to visit countryside.

Among the **threats** acknowledged by MOG partners, the following were the most recurrent:

- **The risk of depopulation and demographic change (T1)** is striking in 21 cases: sparsely populated areas with an ageing population, younger generations leaving rural and mountain areas to study or to find a job, which decreases the number of potential transport users.
- **The limited financial funding available at regional and local levels (T2)** was quoted in 29 cases: in the general difficult economic situation, fewer subsidies are available for rural mobility, such as in the Province of Teruel.
- **The questioning on the maintenance of the existing transport systems (T3)** in 13 cases: the population decreases and thus the drop of rentability of transport systems combined with some legal difficulties to develop transport systems (as for the monopoly of Interurban buses in Thessaly in Greece or the territorial restrictions applying in Spain) reinforce the lack of policy will to address rural mobility issue.
- **The growing costs of fuel and energy in general (T4)** in 4 cases: it will affect mobility costs, not only for car-drivers, but also for public transport systems and can have important social consequences, especially on the poorest and on the more vulnerable people.



Despite these difficulties, Move on Green partners are convinced that it is possible to improve sustainable mobility in rural areas by developing traditional transport systems and also more innovative and on-demand transport offers.



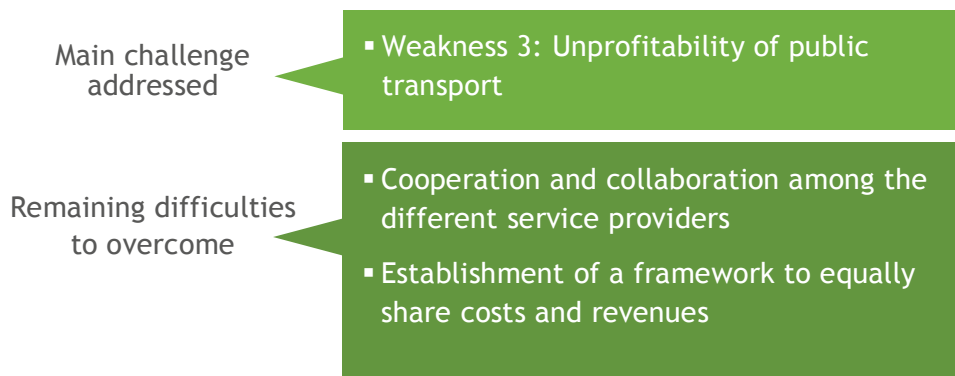
## 2. Nine Ways forward for sustainable rural mobility

Move on Green partners have **identified and characterised 51 good practices** - initiatives that have been successfully implemented in their areas and have responded positively to the needs of local people and businesses. They are concrete examples of innovative projects that can be implemented by other regions, too. This variety of initiatives aims to reduce not only costs, but also the environmental impact of passenger travel whilst ensuring and improving service to residents of mountainous and rural areas. These 51 good practices are clustered into the **9 following categories**, depending on their main objectives.

To ease the transfer of these Good Practices, we have defined each time the main challenge they addressed. Apart from the **financial difficulty** which always remains an issue, the **development of intermodality, the use of ICT (Information and Communication technologies) for elderly persons or people not used to new technologies and the access to specific target groups as senior or disabled people** remain permanent questions that should be addressed. Nevertheless, we have focused on at least one specific difficulty per cluster that request particular attention during the transferability of the Good Practices. To ease the transfer of good practice, discover all their details in [Move on Green Good Practice guide, on MOG website.](#)

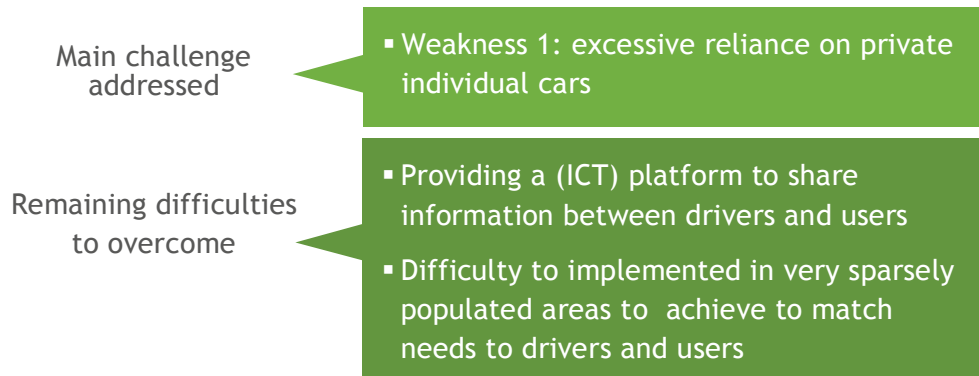
### 2.1 Combination of different types of services for cost reduction

Existing public transport infrastructures (bus depot, staff, vehicles and stop infrastructures) in rural and mountain areas can be utilised for other services with the aim of reducing costs and/or emissions or giving additional services. As an example, in Brandenburg (Germany), in addition to passenger transport, scheduled service buses are also transporting goods, by using the luggage space available. This is a possible way of **maintaining the public transport service in rural areas, bringing additional financing options and extending the service during off-peak hours**. In Central Transdanubian Region in Hungary, due to the lack of post offices, a mobile mail car is visiting small villages of less than 600 inhabitants to offer a large range of basic services, like the delivery and collection of letters and packages, and also money board and pension service or delivery of cash, selling newspapers or lottery tickets.



## 2.2 Carpooling, car-sharing & other "sharing" formulas

In 2006, Eurostat calculated a motorisation rate of 455 vehicles for 1000 inhabitants at the EU level<sup>19</sup>. This means that almost 50% of the population has an individual vehicle. These vehicles are used for daily, short distance journeys, and very often, they are used only by one single person. The interest of carpooling and car-sharing formulas is to **give access to car use by reducing costs, carbon emissions, traffic congestion on the roads and the need for parking spaces**. For instance, in Podkarpackie region in Poland, a large carpooling initiative has encouraged car owners and travellers to travel together, thanks to a specific website, which connects them together. In Dumfries and Galloway (as noted by the Shetland Islands) in the UK, vehicle sharing was encouraged between local organisations to reduce underutilisation of vehicles and increase the number of passengers per vehicle.



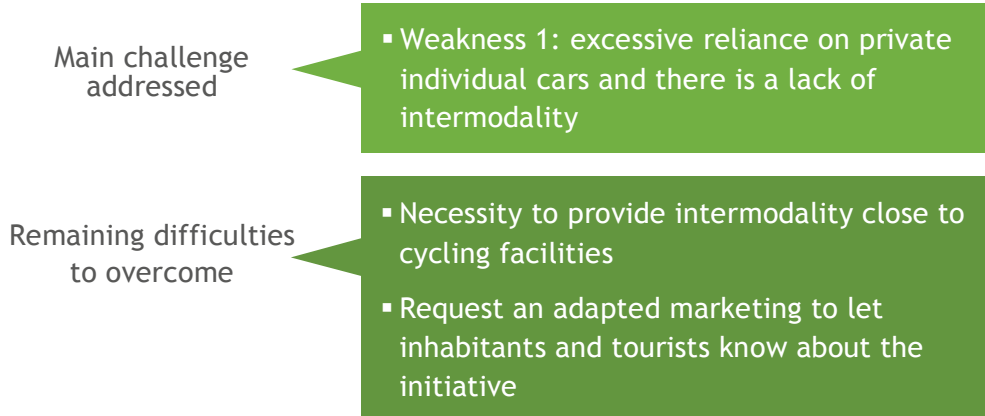
## 2.3 Cycling promotion: traditional & electric



Cycling promotion in Vidzeme (Latvia)

Over the last years, innovative shared bicycle facilities have imposed themselves more and more as a means of local transport, including in rural areas. For tourists or locals going to work, bikes **can provide both a fun and practical way of mobility**. The Mastrazgo Centre in the Province of Teruel (Spain) is giving free access to practice mountain biking and has developed a full touristic offer (100 km of marked routes, several information points, some washing facilities) to encourage biking. In addition, the electric bike is considered to be a great alternative for trips up to 30 km. It has low travel costs and does not create much greenhouse effect. For instance, in Gorenjska countryside, in Slovenia, a user-oriented programme for e-cycling was developed with rental of electric bikes and an awareness campaign to enhance motivation to use it.

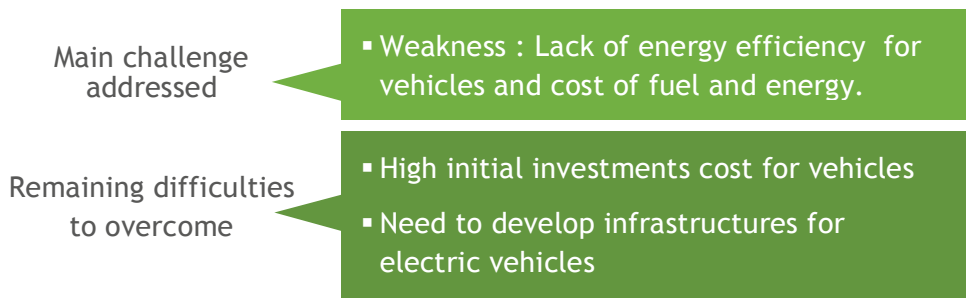
<sup>19</sup> [Eurostat report on motorisation rate](#)



## 2.4 Energy efficiency & environmentally friendly attitudes to mobility

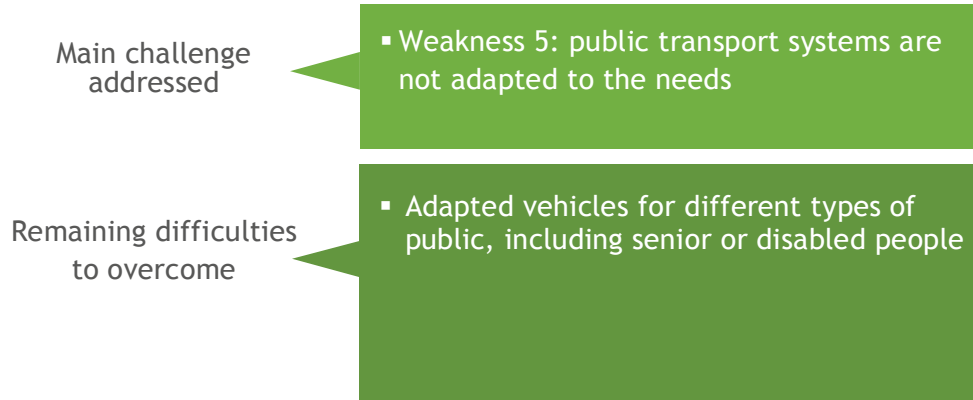


To encourage more sustainable transport, some initiatives are specifically targeting the increase of energy efficiency of the vehicles, as in Sagunto in Spain. Indeed, they have developed a short-term rental of electric vehicles at the bus ticket price to encourage electric car-sharing systems. In addition, to experiment a more environmentally friendly attitude to mobility, some specific courses were given in Spain to progress towards more efficient driving of vehicles, to reduce pollution and fuel consumption.



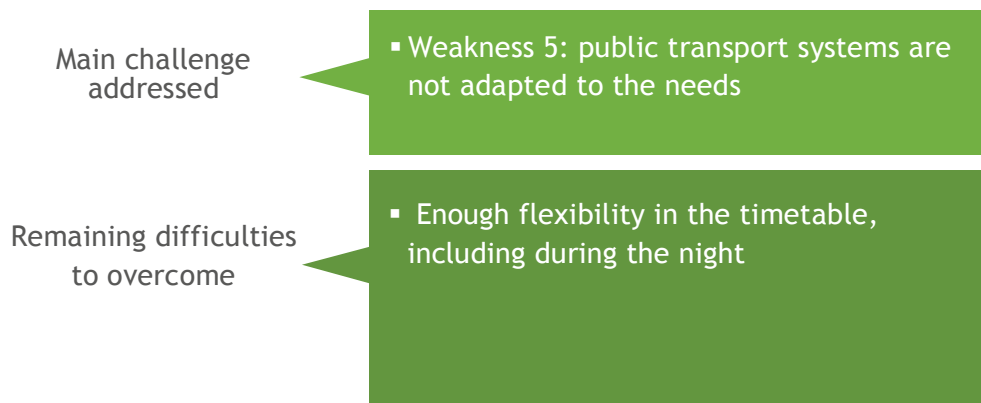
## 2.5 Dedicated mobility initiatives: social

Disabled or elderly people generally have difficulties in accessing transport and thus to satisfy basic social needs (access to doctors, food, nursing etc.), not always easily available in remote rural areas. Thus, some initiatives are encouraging social mobility, such as the Village Caretaker Service in Hungary, where some mini-buses are helping to deliver catering, home care or school transportation for children in the villages or as the social service of adapted transport for disabled people in rural Aragon in Spain, which facilitates the mobility of disabled people.



## 2.6 Dedicated mobility initiatives: leisure

To encourage mobility of young people and to avoid young drunk drivers on the road, several initiatives have been developed to let **young people go to parties and return home safely**. With the DiscoBus, shuttles are serving 18 different lines across 118 municipalities in Burgenland (Austria), allowing people to go home safely for a very moderate price (2€).



## 2.7 Dedicated mobility initiatives: tourism



A river tram on the Gauja River (Latvia) to explore the notable sights of Valmiera)

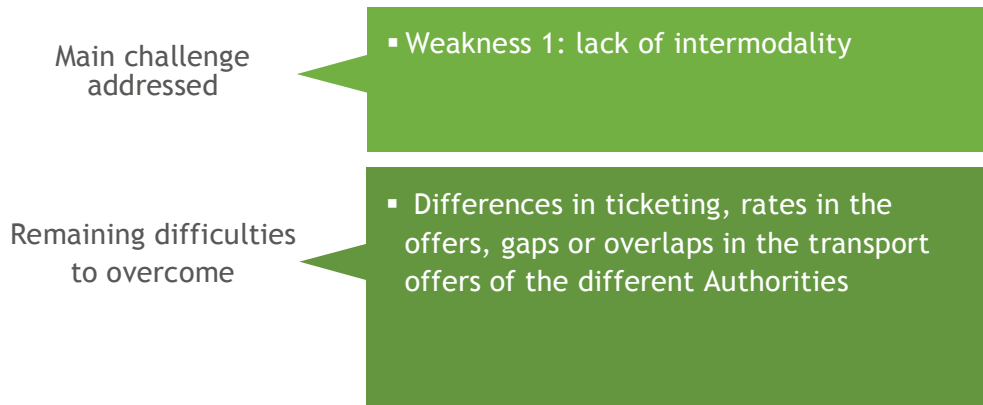
In addition to inhabitants, tourists, who come to visit a rural territory for a few days, do not always want to rent a car. **Public transport initiatives can, in this case, be a perfect solution for all:** for individuals, for communities and last but not least, for the environment. A river tram on the Gauja River (Latvia) offers eco-friendly journeys to explore the notable sights of Valmiera. This transport mode significantly facilitates tourism as it allows for quick and easy access to various attractions and tourist sites.



## 2.8 Governance and Coordination in the mobility field

There are usually several actors who share responsibilities in the field of transport in the same territory. For example, in the Auvergne region, in France, 13 authorities are in charge of managing transport: thanks to a better coordination, they have decided to improve their transport provision and avoid overlaps. Beyond authorities, the coordination can be done between the different transport providers to develop intermodal transport facilities, like the GYSEV Railway company has done in Hungary by creating ride parking facilities or intermodal passenger information system in the train stations.

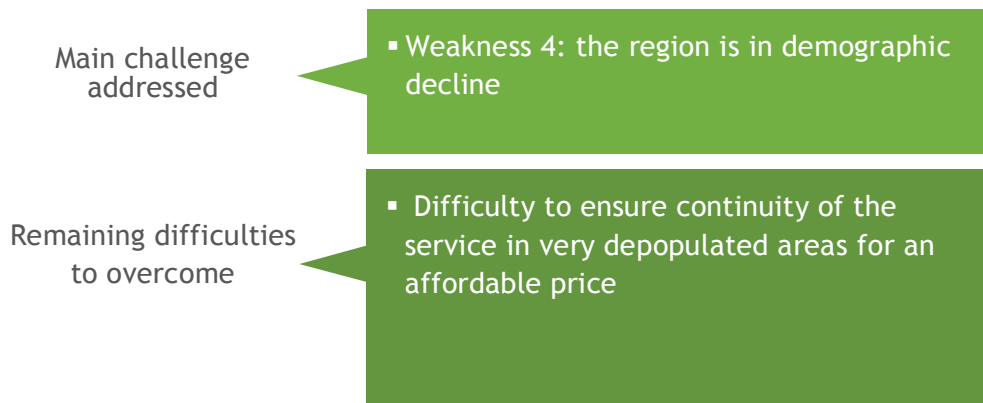
A good coordination helps to provide the public with better access to travel information and options, thus obtaining knowledge of the integrated mobility portfolio on how to travel from one place to the other. This undoubtedly contributes to the growth and more frequent use of public transport infrastructure by the users.



## 2.9 Transport on demand in rural areas

Low population density and dispersed settlement patterns constantly undermine the viability of public transport initiatives in rural and mountain areas, adversely impacting the economy, environment and quality of life. Transport on demand can be a solution as a transport service for passengers, using requests made in advance that have been collected and combined thanks to new information technologies. Characteristics of transport on demand systems vary, some depending **only on the express demand of users** (like the system in the province of Burgos in Spain), and **others using predefined elements**, such as pick-up and drop-off points (as in the TWIST project in Greece), itineraries and frequencies of the trips (as in the DorfBus project in Burgenland in Austria).

Transport on demand helps to cover mobility needs for small isolated villages with poor connections, by grouping together enough passengers to reach a critical mass of people, thus improving cost efficiency and attend their basic needs.





Each cluster of Good Practice can present advantages and shall address challenges to implement sustainable mobility solutions in rural and mountain areas. These approaches can **give concrete ideas to policy-makers to move towards more sustainable mobility.**

Defining interesting good practices that can be transferred not only to partners regions, but also to other rural and mountain areas, is a first step. To go further, the **mobility changes should be reflected into regional strategies.** Each MOG partner region has to define an "Implementation Plan" to widen, improve and enrich its regional transport policy and transfer new sustainable mobility solutions. These Implementations Plans shall take into account not only the regional context, specific and unique for each partner, but also the European context. Despite its limits, the EU has indeed defined a sustainable mobility framework. **The following EU guidelines aim to synthetize the existing legal and policy framework, such as the EU funding schemes that could be used to develop sustainable mobility in rural and mountain areas.**

Move on Green encourages regional policy makers to use these guidelines to facilitate their implementation of their regional transport mobility schemes in rural and mountain areas.



## 3. EU guidelines for Sustainable Mobility in rural and mountain areas

The European Transport policy constitutes a common policy since 1958<sup>20</sup>. If the EU is to partly support sustainable mobility in rural and mountainous areas, the absence of specific focus on rural and mountain areas prevents it fully addressing their specific challenges.

### 3.1 The European legal and political framework on sustainable mobility

The EU aims to encourage mobility of its citizens. The Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union (TFUE) is especially encouraging this mobility for specific target groups, such as **workers** (art. 202) by increasing their geographical and occupational mobility thanks to the European Social Fund (art.162), **students and teachers, young people** and their **instructors** (art.165) or **researchers** (art.180). In addition, the common policy on border checks, asylum and immigration (Art 70) is providing a common European framework for mobility of non-EU people<sup>21</sup>.

Mobility on European soil has been implemented through the European Transport Policy, adopting rules for transport of both passengers and freight. This policy *aims at “completing the internal market, ensuring sustainable development [and] extending transport networks throughout Europe”*<sup>22</sup>. Since 2001<sup>23</sup>, the EU has encouraged more sustainable transport and multimodality.

#### **Towards a competitive, resource efficient and environmentally friendly transport system for all regions**

The European Commission's current position is laid down in its 2011 [White Paper “Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system”](#)<sup>24</sup>. In order to reach the 60% reduction of GHG emissions from transport target set therein, the EC has defined specific objectives **to move away from reliance on fossil fuels** (i.e. by encouraging sustainable fuels, decreasing the use of conventionally-fuelled cars) and to optimise the performance of **multimodal logistic chains, including by making greater use of more energy-efficient modes** (i.e. by developing a European high-speed rail network, shifting road freight over 300 km to other transports modes, connecting all core airports networks with rail networks). It thus puts sustainability at the heart of transport.

More specifically, this White Paper recognizes that although in the intermediate distances, new technologies are less mature and modal choices are fewer than in the city, this is where EU action can have the most immediate impact. More resource efficient vehicles should be accompanied by the consolidation of large volumes for transfers over long distances (meaning greater use of buses, coaches, rail and air transport). Airports, ports, railway, metro and bus stations should increasingly be linked and transformed into multimodal connection platforms for passengers. Therefore, this White Paper aims at the creation of framework conditions to promote the **development and use of intelligent systems**, which can be implemented through interoperable and multimodal scheduling, real-time passenger/travel information, online reservation systems and smart ticketing, traffic management for improved use of infrastructure and vehicles, as well as, promotion of awareness of the availability of alternatives to individual conventional transport (drive less, walk and cycle, car sharing, park & drive, intelligent ticketing etc.).

<sup>20</sup> [Article 3 and Title 4 of the original Treaty of Rome](#)

<sup>21</sup> [Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union](#)

<sup>22</sup> Articles 90 and 100 of the [Treaty on the Functioning of the EU \(TFEU\)](#)

<sup>23</sup> With the [White paper on “European transport policy for 2010: time to decide”](#), COM(2001) 370 of 12<sup>th</sup> September 2001

<sup>24</sup> [White Paper “Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system” COM \(2011\) 144](#)

### **With no particular attention to rural and mountain areas**

Despite the fact that “particular attention shall be paid to rural areas, areas affected by industrial transition, and regions which suffer from severe and permanent natural or demographic handicaps such as the northernmost regions with very low population density and island, cross-border and mountain regions” (art 174 of TFUE), there is no specific attention given to rural and mountain areas in the transport policy so far.

Developing a unique transport policy for all regions, without taking their specificities into account, such as altitude – slope – remoteness to main transport networks or sparsely populated in large areas – prevents to effectively and efficiently address specific situations all over Europe.

Up to now, only the specific challenges and needs of urban areas were addressed, with the last EC Communication called “[Urban mobility package](#)” adopted on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2013 (and already since 2007 with a Green Paper on urban mobility). This communication aims at reinforcing the exchange of best practices and provides targeted financial support and invests in research and development. In addition, it encourages the development of “sustainable urban mobility plans” to stimulate a shift towards cleaner and more sustainable transport in urban areas. Even if the EC recommends linking these plans with a wider urban and territorial strategy, including with the neighbouring rural areas, **there is no specific recommendation or orientation to concretely implement these links with rural areas.**

The Committee of the Region, with Gordon Keymer is drafting a position to encourage “*better mobility for all, including the remote regions*”<sup>25</sup>. This approach **focusing on the geographical and social specificities should be encouraged and pursued for rural and mountain areas** to well address their specific needs and challenges.

## **3.2 How sustainable mobility in rural and mountain areas helps to achieve the objectives of other EU policies**

Implementing sustainable mobility in rural and mountain areas is the prerequisite to a successful economic development; it helps to have not only a more balanced territorial development, but it will also participate to improve health and education for the population living in rural and mountain areas. Sustainable mobility in these areas should be strongly encouraged, as its improvements will help to achieve the objectives **not only of other EU policies but will also help to achieve key indicators of the EU 2020 Strategy.**

### **Supporting rural development...**

Support for rural development shall contribute to “*ensuring the sustainable management of natural resources, and climate action*” and to “*achieving a balanced territorial development of rural economies and communities*”<sup>26</sup>. Developing sustainable mobility in rural and mountain areas strongly supports these objectives: indeed, **implementing sustainable mobility encourages more environmental friendly mobility solutions and helps to shift towards a low carbon economy.** It also increases **access to employment**, which can be limited by the absence of adequate transport systems in rural and mountain areas. As a result, attractiveness of rural and mountain areas will increase and will help to prevent depopulation and territorial deserts.

Thus, sustainable mobility in rural and mountain areas helps to reach two indicators of the EU 2020 Strategy as a direct impact, it will **help to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions to achieve the target of 20% lower emissions** than in 1990 and it will **indirectly encourage an increase in the employment rate, to reach the target of 75% of employed people for people between 20 and 64 years old.**

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<sup>25</sup> This position should be released in 2014, Euromontana participated to a public hearing to explain the main issues for rural and mountain areas, as seen in Move on Green.

<sup>26</sup> Article 4 of [Regulation 1305/2013 establishing the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development](#), 17/12/2013

### **... and more generally territorial cohesion**

EU regional policy is an investment policy. It supports job creation, competitiveness, economic growth, improved quality of life and sustainable development. Regional policy aims to reduce the significant economic, social and territorial disparities that still exist between Europe's regions. Among the 11 thematic objectives defined for 2014-2020, two are specifically targeting "*employment and mobility*" and "*sustainable transport*". **Developing sustainable mobility solutions in rural and mountain areas can effectively contribute to these two objectives.**

### **Improving public health**

Air pollution in urban areas is a well-known issue but rural and mountain areas are also suffering from air pollution, especially in the rural parts of Northern Italy, Czech Republic or South of Poland<sup>27</sup>. Despite falling emission levels and reductions of some air pollutant concentrations in recent decades, Europe's air pollution problem is far from solved. Two specific pollutants, particulate matter and ground-level ozone, continue to be a source breathing problems, cardiovascular disease and shortened lives. Increasing sustainable mobility with **sustainable transport systems and cleaner vehicles with an increased autonomy and reduced costs** in rural and mountain areas can only help to **improve air quality and thus public health in general.**

### **Access to education**

For young people in rural and mountain areas, access to education, especially at higher level, (universities and post graduate degrees) can quickly become an issue if the transport systems are not well adapted and if they cannot actually go where the universities are. Increasing sustainable mobility in these areas will facilitate the **access to higher education** and will indirectly participate to the EU 2020 objective of having at least **40% of 30-34-year-old** completing third level education.

## **3.3 EU Opportunities linked to sustainable transport and mobility**

From fundamental research to the concrete development of transport networks, many **EU funding opportunities** exist for private companies and public institutions **in the sector of sustainable transport for the new programming period 2014-2020. Mobility of people continue to be addressed though specific target groups.** Even if these programmes are not directly addressing rural areas, these EU funding could be used to develop or implement new sustainable transport solutions, or improve mobility also in rural and mountain areas.

### **3.3.1 EU funding schemes in transport**

#### **HORIZON 2020: improving research in sustainable transport**

[Horizon 2020](#) is the new European programme for **Research and Innovation**. It targets excellence science, societal challenges and industrial leadership. One specific work programme is dedicated to the social challenge "**Smart, Green and Integrated Transport**" and has a financial envelope of **€6.3 billion** for the whole programming period.

It will fund projects aiming at: developing a resource efficient transport that respects the environment, encouraging a better mobility with less congestion and more safety and security, supporting a global leadership for the European transport industry and supporting a socio-economic and behavioural research and forward looking for policy making.

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<sup>27</sup> [EEA Report – Air Quality in Europe](#) 09/2013, map page 30

In particular in 2014-2015, the call for proposals to be published will target mobility for growth, research on green vehicles and small business and fast track innovation for transport<sup>28</sup>. This funding will be directly managed by the European Commission.

### **CONNECTING EUROPE FACILITY (CEF): building transport networks**

[Connecting Europe Facility](#) is an instrument aimed at supporting the development of high-performing, sustainable and efficiently interconnected trans-European networks in the field of energy, telecommunications and transport. CEF has an **overall budget of €13.17 billion** to invest in transport infrastructures<sup>29</sup>.

CEF investments will focus on projects with high EU added value; such as building missing cross-border links and removing bottlenecks along main trans-European transport corridors by improving connections between different parts of the EU. These transport networks shall ensure that *“urban and rural areas benefit from the opportunities created by major networks”*<sup>30</sup>.

### **ERDF: implementing sustainable transport at regional level**

ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) will finance investment in transport infrastructure and promote sustainable transport by enhancing regional mobility, developing low-carbon transport systems and multimodal links<sup>31</sup>. Some funding opportunities will thus be available in regions where transport is a priority in their Operational Programmes for Growth and Jobs goal.

In addition, **the INTERREG EUROPE programme**, under the European Territorial Cooperation, is designed to **support policy learning among public authorities** to improve the performance of policies and transfer the Good Practices into Operational Programmes under the Investment for Growth and Jobs goal of cohesion policy.

25% of its ERDF financial envelope (i. e. €84.44 million), will be dedicated to Low Carbon Economy. Some Interregional Cooperation Projects focusing on sustainable mobility and on multi-modality will be funded through calls for proposals. However, what is true is that the programme is focusing mainly on urban mobility, leaving fewer opportunities for rural projects.

### **3.3.2 EU funding schemes for mobility**

Four different EU funding programmes will support mobility actions for specific target groups: Erasmus +, ESF, COSME and Horizon 2020.

#### **Erasmus +: mobility for students, young people and teachers**

[Erasmus+](#) is the new EU umbrella programme for education, training, youth and sport from 2014 to 2020. It brings together the previous mobility programmes called Erasmus Mundus, Erasmus (for students), Grundtvig (for grown-ups), Leonardo (for trainees) and Comenius (for pupils) with an overall budget of €13.01 billion (which does not only count mobility actions).

#### **European Social Fund (ESF): mobility for workers**

The ESF aims to improve the *“geographical and occupational mobility of workers”* and to *“enhance transnational labour mobility as well as (...) mobility schemes”*<sup>32</sup> to modernise the labour market institutions. At EU level, the Common Strategic Framework has defined four possible axes for the

<sup>28</sup> For more information, visit [2014-2015 Work Programme on Transport](#)

<sup>29</sup> [According to the Multi-Annual Financial Framework adopted for the period 2014-2020](#)

<sup>30</sup> Annex I, 4.8 of [EU Regulation 1303/2013](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund

<sup>31</sup> According to articles 3 and 5.7 of [Regulation 1301/2013 establishing ERDF](#)

<sup>32</sup> [Articles 2 and 3 of Regulation 1304/2013 establishing the European Social Fund](#)

regional Operational Programmes. As one of them is “*promoting employment and supporting labour mobility*”, probably most of the regions will have this axis integrated in their Operational Programmes, with some dedicated budget to support mobility of workers.

### **COSME: mobility for entrepreneurs**

The new Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises programme ([COSME](#)) has a budget of € 2.03 billion for 2014-2020. One of its four priorities is “*mobility programmes for new entrepreneurs to improve their ability to develop their entrepreneurial know-how, skills and attitudes and to improve their technological capacity and enterprise management*”<sup>33</sup>. It will support the specific sub-programme [Erasmus for young entrepreneurs](#).

### **Horizon 2020: mobility of researchers**

A specific sub-programme of Horizon 2020 aims to improve the European Research Area thanks to an improved mobility of researchers and post-doc students. These [Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions](#) have a budget of € 6.162 billion for 2014-2020.

## **3.4 Persistent threats and obstacles at EU level for sustainable mobility in rural and mountain areas**

Mobility in rural and mountain areas require specific solutions, as they address different needs and challenges than in more populated areas. Nevertheless, so far, at EU level, there is **no particular attention given to rural and mountain areas, neither at policy level, nor at funding scheme level**. It is time to specifically address mobility in rural and mountain areas.

### **The absence of rural mobility policy at EU level**

The orientations given for European mobility in the EU 2011 White Paper have been made precise in a specific EU Communication on urban mobility to encourage the development of “*sustainable urban mobility plans*”<sup>34</sup>.

On the contrary, **the absence of specific policy orientation document for rural mobility at EU level is lacking**. Indeed, in the new 2014-2020 programming period, rural mobility does not appear as a priority neither in the general strategy EU2020, nor in the rural development policy or the cohesion policy.

Priorities of EU 2020 strategy do not formulate specific expectations for sustainable rural mobility. One of the eleven thematic objectives<sup>35</sup> that have been defined for regional policy is “*Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures*” (7<sup>th</sup> thematic objective) and gives some opportunities for the development of cross-border transport systems and for the development of transport links within the regions. Urban and rural areas shall benefit from these transport networks.

### **The absence of EU funding schemes specifically dedicated to rural mobility**

There are several EU funding programmes like CIVITAS or specific calls for urban mobility under Horizon 2020 targeting the specific urban needs. On the contrary, there is **no specific EU funding schemes targeting explicitly rural mobility**. EAFRD (European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development) for example, which is focusing on rural development, does not include any requirement regarding transport or rural mobility. The other EU funding possibilities are thus

<sup>33</sup> Article 12 of [Regulation 1287/2013 establishing a Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises \(COSME\) \(2014 - 2020\)](#)

<sup>34</sup> According to [Commission Communication “Together towards competitive and resource-efficient urban mobility” COM\(2013\) 913 of 17<sup>th</sup> December 2013](#)

<sup>35</sup> According to Article 9 of [EU Regulation 1303/2013](#) laying down provisions for the European Structural and Investment Funds

limited to general mobility schemes and are not always well adapted to the specific needs of rural areas.

The direct consequence is that a large part of the financial support is generally always given to the same themes or areas. In that respect, if structural funds have well supported urban mobility, with around €8 million of ERDF invested in urban mobility during 2007-2013<sup>36</sup>, there was unfortunately **no equivalent support for rural and mountain areas.**

### **ITIs and CLLD: promising (but not used) tools for next programming period**

The lack of appropriate EU rural mobility policy or funding schemes encourages Member States, but also regional and local levels, to directly develop rural mobility. At local and regional levels, two new instruments the “**Integrated Territorial Investments (ITIs)**” and “**Community Led Local Development (CLLD)**” could become key instruments to implement integrated territorial strategies, including sustainable green rural mobility. These innovative tools could help to embed initiatives and projects that target enhancing rural mobility more deeply and more easily into local and regional strategies.

However, there is no clear guidance issued by the EC on how to implement these innovative tools and the Regulation did not prescribe a minimal share of the different funds to be spent in these integrated frameworks, either. Observing current planning processes, Member States tend to use the more simple and conventional ways to plan and implement the programmes of the period 2014-2020. The risk of not using the opportunities of ITI and CLLD is therefore also affecting the area of sustainable rural mobility.

## **3.5 List of recommendations**

As a conclusion in order to increase sustainable mobility in rural and mountain areas, taking into account their specific needs and challenges, the thirteen partners of Move on Green recommend the following at European and regional levels:

### **Recommendation n°1**

As a Urban mobility package was adopted in December 2013, we recommend the European Commission to elaborate a specific **Rural mobility package**, focusing on solutions to implement sustainable and multi-modal transports in rural areas, where distances are generally more important than in urban areas, where the number of public transport services are less numerous and where the number of potential users can be restricted.

### **Recommendation n°2**

Locally several successful initiatives provide solutions to improve rural mobility, as we presented in our MOG project. But generally, there is a lack of transfer of knowledge and good practices are not often implemented in a wide range, due to the difficulty to have access to information. To increase the dissemination of good practices and their effective transfer on a larger scale, we recommend that the “**European Local Transport Information Service**” (ELTIS), an initiative of the European Commission, which is so far only focusing on urban mobility, **integrates a strong rural component, presenting concrete case studies, specific tools for rural mobility and services on the EU legislation and funding schemes, available in different EU languages.** Taking also rural aspects into account, the ELTIS website could become a real European-wide platform to ease the transferability of sustainable mobility in all kinds of territories.

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<sup>36</sup> According to [Commission Communication “Together towards competitive and resource-efficient urban mobility” COM\(2013\) 913 of 17<sup>th</sup> December 2013](#)

### **Recommendation n°3**

Each year in Brussels and all over Europe, the **European Mobility Week** is organised in September. So far, this event is only focusing on urban mobility. As shown in Move on Green, there are also plenty of Good Practices in rural and mountain areas that could be disseminated at a larger European scale and easily transferred into other areas. As a result, the **European Mobility Week should support initiatives focusing on the links between urban and rural areas and encourage smaller towns and villages in rural areas to participate in this event** to present their sustainable mobility practices. It will help to promote and discuss about rural mobility issues at EU level. To move forward in this direction, Move on Green has organised its final conference on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2014 in Brussels at the beginning of the European Mobility Week.

### **Recommendation n°4**

Electric vehicles, driven by renewable energy, can improve sustainability of mobility. Nevertheless, up to now the inadequate autonomy and speed of electric vehicles and their high costs restrict the development of such vehicles. The European Commission should continue to foster **fundamental and applied research to increase the autonomy of these vehicles, to encourage their use in rural areas**, where the distances are generally higher than in urban ones, and to foster the **development of alternative fuels**.

### **Recommendation n°5**

At regional and local levels, there are often different Authorities in charge of Transport covering the same territory: train /bus / taxi companies etc. As a result, there are often overlaps in the offers whereas some parts of the area are not well covered by transport services. To encourage a better coverage of the area and to develop combined transport offers (with for instance the same ticket that can bus used for train and bus), the **Authorities in charge of Transport should be encouraged to work together**.

### **Recommendation n°6**

To organise its travel, users should have access to the different transport solutions, knowing in real-time their timetables, costs, eventual delays and possibilities to combine several transport offers to reach the desirable destination. Regional and local authorities in charge of Transport should be encouraged to **develop together these information systems, available 24/7 through the Internet or smartphones**.

### **Recommendation n°7**

In rural and mountain areas, one of the main challenges for public transport is to maintain an economic viability whereas the number of users is lower than in urban areas. The **development of multi-activities in public transports** (like: transportation of people and goods at the same time or a full range of services provided by one postman) should be encouraged to increase the viability of public transports.





## State aid and Sustainable Transport: a general prohibition with some exemptions

As most transport markets have been liberalised in the last years, they have become subject to the general State aid prohibition rule. However, some exemptions apply when specific conditions are met.

State aid in the transport sector is considered to be compatible with the Community's state aid regime if it is granted for<sup>37</sup>:

- *"coordination of transport purposes"* : Member States may grant aid for transport by rail, road and inland waterway in the following cases: for costs which undertakings have to bear for the use of certain infrastructure, for research and development, and the elimination of excess capacity causing serious structural problems.
- or if it concerns *"reimbursement for the discharge of certain obligations inherent in the concept of a public service"*. In this case, compensation shall be granted for the costs the undertaking has to bear because of its public service obligation. Indeed, competent authorities may act in the field of public passenger transport to guarantee the provision of services of general interest which are more numerous, safer, of a higher quality or provided at lower cost than those that market forces alone would have allowed. To this end, the 1370/2007 Regulation<sup>38</sup> lays down the conditions under which competent authorities, when imposing or contracting for public service obligations, shall compensate public service operators for costs incurred and/or grant exclusive rights in return for the discharge of public service obligations.

Another exception to the general State aid prohibition rule lies within the **"De minimis" regulation**, according to which when the accumulated State aid amounts to less than €200 000 during 3 consecutive financial years, this aid is considered as having no impact on the internal market. It is therefore considered to be compatible with the TFEU and does not require any notification prior to its implementation. A specific ceiling of €100 000 applies to the road transport sector.

Some sector-specific State aid rules also apply in each transport sector (rail, air, inland waterways and maritime transport).

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<sup>37</sup> According to article 93 of the TFEU

<sup>38</sup> According to [Regulation \(EC\) No 1370/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on public passenger transport services by rail and by road](#)

## Annex 2

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### Regulatory Framework regarding Transport in the EU

In addition to the extensive EU legislation in place for each type of transport (road, air, rail, water) and on the rights of passengers, the **European Commission** has also published several transport-related communications / papers. You will find here a short summary of the most important documents.

- [Commission Communication “Together towards competitive and resource-efficient urban mobility” COM\(2013\) 913 of 17th December 2013](#), also called “Urban mobility package”, updated the Green Paper on urban mobility issued in 2007.
- JRC Reference Report “[Common Noise Assessment Methods in Europe \(CNOSSOS-EU\) \(2012\)](#)” by Stylianos Kephelopoulos, Marco Paviotti, and Fabienne Anfosso-Lédée
- [White Paper “Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system” COM \(2011\) 144 of 28th March 2011](#): establishes 10 objectives towards a more competitive and resource-efficient transport system
- [Strategy for the internalisation of external costs](#) (2011) European Environmental Commission
- [Commission Communication “A sustainable future for transport: Towards an integrated, technology-led and user friendly system” COM\(2009\) 279 of 17th June 2009](#): summarised the results of two studies, a debate with three focus groups, and a consultation with stakeholders. At the same time it also identified policy options to be tested and eventually included in the 2011 White Paper.
- [Green Paper “TEN-T: a policy review: Towards a better integrated transeuropean transport network at the service of the common transport policy” COM\(2009\) 44 of 4th February 2009](#): with this Paper the Commission initiated a broad review process of the trans-European transport network policy (TEN-T). The Paper considered future political and economical challenges such as the achievement of climate change objectives, further economic growth, economic and social cohesion as well as the strengthening of Europe's international role.
- [Commission Communication “Strategy for the internalisation of external costs” COM\(2008\) 435 of 8th July 2008](#): forms part of a package of initiatives aimed at making transport more sustainable. It consisted of including external transport costs (pollution, noise, congestion, etc.) in the price paid by the user, so as to encourage them to change their behaviour.
- [Commission Communication on “Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion, Turning territorial diversity into strength”](#), COM (2008)616 of 6/10/2008
- [Commission Communication “Greening Transport” COM\(2008\) 433 of 8th July 2008](#)
- [Commission Green Paper “Towards a new culture for urban mobility” Com\(2007\) 551 of 25th September 2007](#): initiated the debate on issues specifically related to urban transport and to elicit applicable solutions at a European level, since 60% of the European population is concentrated in urban areas, with these areas producing almost 85% of the gross domestic product (GDP).
- Commission Communication on “[Keep Europe moving - Sustainable mobility for our continent Mid-term review of the European Commission’s 2001 Transport White Paper” COM\(2006\)314 of 22/06/2006](#)
- [Emissions from Maritime Transport \(Directive 2005/33/EC\)](#) (2005) European Commission



- [Commission staff working paper - Annex to the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament "Thematic Strategy on air pollution" SEC 2005/1133 of 21/09/2005](#)
- [White paper on "European transport policy for 2010: time to decide" COM\(2001\) 370 of 12th September 2001](#): defines the premises of the current policy based on intermodality. It has been revised in 2006.
- [Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 14 January 1999: "Cohesion and Transport"](#): aiming at developing an efficient and sustainable European transport system taking account of economic development prospects at regional level, the enlargement of the Union to include new States and the importance of public transport.

## Annex 3

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### Bibliography

To go further, please find here a list of useful references, used to write these policy guidelines:

- JRC report: "[Delimitations of rural areas in Europe using criteria of population density, remoteness and land cover](#)" by F. Jonard, M. Lambotte, F. Ramos, J.M. Terres, C. Bamps
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- [Eurostat report on motorisation rate](#)
- [Eurostat regional yearbook 2012](#)
- European Commission: [EU transport in figures: statistical pocketbook 2013](#)
- Horizon 2020: [2014-2015 Work Programme on Transport](#)

## Move on Green Partnership

13 partners from 10 countries, 12 participating regions



1. Province of Teruel, Spain



2. SODEBUR -Society for the Development of the Province of Burgos, Spain



3. Thessaly Region, Greece



4. Epirus Region, Greece



5. Shetland Islands, Council, United Kingdom



6. Euromontana, France



7. Central Transdanubian Regional Innovation Agency, Hungary



8. Regional Management Burgenland, Austria



9. BSC Business Support Centre Ltd. Kranj, Slovenia



10. West-Pannon Nonprofit Ltd., Hungary



11. Vidzeme Planning Region, Latvia



12. Podkarpackie Region, Poland



13. Ministry for Infrastructure and Agriculture of Brandenburg, Germany



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