Smart Specialisation in Rural Areas

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Smart specialisation in rural areas

- Ambition of the project: ICT solutions for improving transport and accessibility of rural areas
- 16 Partners
- 5 countries Sweden, Norway, Germany, UK, The Netherlands
- Transport authorities, transport companies, local and regional governments, universities
- 3 years
The future of smart mobility
The future of smart mobility

- Gelderland starts in 2015 with autonomous vehicles
- Driver-less cars and busses
- Economy of sharing: Uber(Pop), AirBnB, Peerby
- Decrease of private car ownership already happening in cities (US)
- Blurring distinction between public and private transport
- Anytime, anywhere, any size
- Technology mostly ready
- Progress hinges on ethical and societal dilemma’s
Low density population → Sparse public transport offer → Low (public) transport demand
Vicious cycles of rural transport

- Few people living; few people using transport; few public transport offerings; less attractive to live and work
- Cutting vicious cycle
- Smarter use of information leads to smarter transport services
- Smarter transport services offer better service levels in rural areas
- Smarter transport services have positive impact on liveability and economy of rural areas
What users want
What users want

- Ask them, but
- Marshall McLuhan: Rearview mirror paradox
- Difficult to know what does not yet exist
- Interactive, iterative, and explorative process of innovation:
  - Creating balance between ‘what is valuable’ and ‘what is possible’; co-creation
  - User empowerment: inviting users to express their interests
  - Design thinking:
    - Personas & user stories
    - Show what is possible
The innovations

- 40 new applications
- Personalised & Adaptive
- Reactive: using real time information
- Integrating domains
  - Public & private
  - Geography: Regions; countries
  - People and goods
- Clusters
  - Travel planning (multimodal ridesharing and public)
  - Travel updates (traffic jams, delays)
  - Monitoring and optimising
- Staff support (connection helper)
- Insight behaviour & change
The elephant in the room

- John Carr (Yorkshire Dales):
  - The elephant in the room
  - Assuming ICT as solution for transport in rural areas...
  - ...where digital infrastructure is often hardly available

- New technology (4G, 5G)
- Government interference
- Compounded business models

- No smart solutions without digital connectivity
THIS IS HOW I FEEL...

WHEN I GOT A SMARTPHONE!
Digital maturity (ability)

- Elderly, disadvantaged less often car owners: target groups
- Some of these target groups are not used to IT, including smart phones, Internet, Facebook, Twitter, etc.: digital divide
- Creating ICT based solutions deepens the digital divide
- Very personalised approaches to engage less digitally mature
Social innovation (willingness)

- Community thinking: ridesharing
- Changing behaviour: plan and share; not ‘just go’
- Matching demand and supply

- When government retreats; communities need to step up
- Organising social innovation
  - Leaders
  - Doers
  - Training
IT maturity (ability)

- Vision on what is needed and possible with ICT
- Set targets and reserve funds
- Source the right ICT
- Be a good principal
- Shared Competence Center?
Optimal solutions may span:
- Public and private transport
- Different transport authorities:
  - Regions
  - Countries
  - Rural and urban
- Different transport operators

Who is driving the vision, ambition, change?

Need for transcending vision and direction

Government assignment?
When things don't go as planned…
When things don’t go as planned

- Did we fail?
- Things we did not anticipate
  - Connection Users and Technology
  - IT development
  - Communication infrastructure
  - Digital Literacy
  - IT maturity of involved organisations

- What did ITRACT bring us; what will the future bring us?
- The top still beckons, project results and other developments (Uber, Google Transport, etc.) support the ambitions
- Need for more collaboration to reach the top?