

SMALL

Shared Mobility for ALL

— 2023 —

**Co-creating new mobility solutions
with children and families, the elderly
and people with physical impairment**



SMALL

Interreg
North Sea



Co-funded by
the European Union

Introduction

The Shared Mobility for ALL project, which explores how to make shared mobility more accessible to children and families, the elderly and physically impaired people, is completing its first year as a project.

Through this publication, we highlight some of the main achievements of the project, mostly focusing on engaging with our end-users, learning more about their mobility challenges and exploring how shared mobility can be designed to meet their needs.

“Going joint force on a transformative journey, SMALL is accelerating into its first-year pit stop. With a commitment to accessibility, innovation, and shared experiences, our partners are working hard on reshaping the shared mobility landscape. In this publication, we’re thrilled to share the twists, turns, and triumphs of our co-created adventure. Beginning with the observatory and the first SMALL roundtable, and going further towards the first engagement events of our pilots with their end-users. Carpool with us through the document as we navigate toward a future where mobility knows no barriers!

PS: A heartfelt thank you to all non-SMALL stakeholders—cities, operators, and societal organizations—for generously sharing knowledge and expertise. Your support has been instrumental in propelling the SMALL project forward. Thank you for all!”



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The project

Shared mobility is a sustainable, efficient and convenient mobility option for urban citizens, but the majority of shared mobility users are young, able-bodied adults.

This is because many people have some form of reduced mobility which is not (yet) taken into consideration in the design of sustainable shared travel solutions.

People with reduced mobility is a very diverse category of people, ranging from wheelchair users to people with heavy luggage for example.

One thing is certain: we have all been and will be people with reduced mobility many times throughout our lives!



The **Shared multimodal Mobility for All (SMALL)** project is a European collaboration, co-funded by the Interreg NS programme, involving municipalities, research institutes and companies who want to make sustainable shared mobility options inclusive and accessible for all users, including those with reduced mobility. The project focuses on co-creating and testing new shared mobility solutions with three target groups: **children and families, the elderly and people with physical impairment.**

Project partners



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VALUE FROM SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Our approach

1. Engage with end users to understand their needs

We are bringing people with reduced mobility into the co-creation process to ensure shared mobility really addresses their needs. To do that, our academic partners University of Ghent and VU Amsterdam are supporting our pilot partners in shaping their engagement strategies and events to learn how to make the most out of co-creation principles.

The insights gained through these events and through the defined best practices will be assembled in a co-creation guide by the end of the project.



2. Test new shared mobility services, digital solutions and volunteering schemes



Eleven pilot projects are being deployed throughout the project:

- Three focusing on inclusive designs with Capital Region of Denmark, City of Saint Quentin and the City of Varberg.
- Five focusing on the digital aspects of shared mobility with the City of Amsterdam, Vervoerregio Amsterdam, Brest Metropole, Mpact and the City of Varberg.
- Three focusing on volunteering shared mobility schemes with Fietsambassade Gent, Brest Metropole and Mpact.

3. Advise policymakers towards inclusive shared mobility systems

We aim to support policymakers in developing shared mobility strategies and deploy systems that better take into account the needs of SMALL end users.

We do this through our expert community and roundtables organised by POLIS and Mpact to consistently share our progress and discuss at high strategic level how public authorities, transport authorities and shared mobility operators can successfully collaborate and design shared mobility for all.

Rupprecht Consult will publish policy guidelines and actively disseminate them to European cities to incorporate our findings into SUMP and other strategic documents.



Our work and learnings in 2023

In 2023, our purpose was to learn collectively on how to co-create and work together with end users. This work requires a good deal of careful consideration and planning. Choosing the correct definitions and work styles is an essential component to creating services that meet end user needs. Structuring concrete plans to work with end-users in the creation of new shared mobility requires dedicated preparation, time, clarity, creativity and inclusivity. In the following pages, we hope to provide you a great experience of that journey so far.

Expert roundtable: How can people with reduced mobility become an important driver of shared mobility?

On April 27th SMALL project partners and several experts met in Brussels to exchange and discuss about several relevant topics for the development of the SMALL project pilots.

The event served as a setting for the SMALL partners to exchange and interact with the expert community about three main topics:

- Identifying the needs of SMALL's user groups
- Generating effective co-creation strategies and engaging with SMALL pilots' target groups
- Identifying existing examples of good practice in inclusive shared mobility

The Expert Roundtable hosted three discussion sessions on user needs, co-creation and user engagement, and the SMALL observatory, to help our partners address the most important questions related to the topics identified above.

These thematic sessions were followed by a fishbowl discussion session, where both SMALL project partners and experts gathered to reflect on the most important points of the day.

Some relevant points of discussion included:

- Defining the correct terminology
- Going beyond the project's established target groups
- Successes and pitfalls of good practices of inclusive shared mobility



Join the SMALL Community

We are looking for engaged professionals and citizens to create a community around shared mobility. Join us if you'd like to:

- **Help create more inclusive and more accessible shared mobility services**
- **Gain insights into the needs of different user groups regarding shared mobility solutions**
- **Meet other relevant stakeholders from the field (such as representatives of societal organizations, policymakers, transport service providers, research organizations)**

Contact

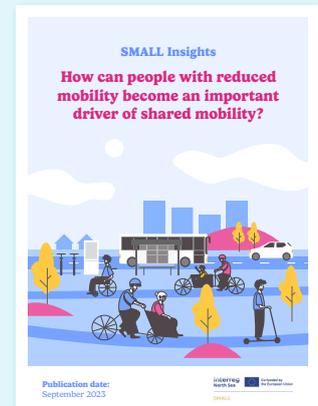
contact@sharedmobilityforall.eu

Read our insight paper

Get the key insights from our expert roundtable

In each of the chapters of the insight paper, we explore specific questions pertaining to every end-user group, in order to define targeted insights for all of them.

General key insights gathered from the discussions as a whole are summarised in the conclusion. It is important to note that none of these categories and subcategories are mutually exclusive, and that they can (and often do) overlap.



Selected insights

If shared mobility operators and policymakers wish to deploy truly inclusive shared mobility solutions that work for people with reduced mobility, they must take into the account the following:

Listening to user needs

Those who design shared mobility services often lack the perspective these users have, resulting in a lack of understanding of their daily lives and necessities.

Before we convince end users of the possibilities and the need for change, a perspective shift from possible changemakers, such as cities and mobility operators, is required.

A lot can be gained from just listening to the needs of end users. This can help changemakers, create services that meet at least the basic requirements for the end users. However, even when there is a willingness to listen, challenges arise in obtaining sufficient responses from end users within limited timeframes. Overcoming participation fatigue and obtaining the right information from end users were also identified as challenges. Finally, while co-creation is important, it should be complemented by top-down approaches to establish legal frameworks, secure funding, and manage financial risks effectively.

Changing the narrative

We should not aim for just inclusive solutions; we should aim for a more inclusive travel ecosystem that can benefit us all.

For this to happen, stakeholders should focus on making a smaller, more tailored impact rather than attempting to target everyone.

The challenge here is that people with reduced mobility are often perceived as “costly” or “non-profitable”, which leads to them being excluded as potential user groups. A shift in the narrative can lead to people with reduced mobility being seen as an investment rather than an extra cost.

There are more insights to read:

Click here: https://www.interregnorthsea.eu/sites/default/files/2023-09/SMALL%20Insights_compressed.pdf

Talking shared mobility with elderly people

In 2023, Kia Madsen, the project lead for SMALL in the Capital Region of Denmark, ran an engagement event with the local elderly council of the region. The aim was to explore how shared mobility could be designed for their needs.

The following interview with Kia, conducted by Sami Angsthem, highlights the importance of asking end-user groups directly about their mobility needs.

How do you start meaningful conversations with the elderly about their mobility needs?

Dive into our interview with Kia to learn more about it:

Kia, thank you for talking to us. Before diving into the topic, could you please first describe the role of the Capital Region of Denmark, and your mobility challenge that shared mobility can address?

The Capital Region of Denmark is one of five regions in Denmark. We have twenty-nine municipalities and five different mobility operators. We in the region are responsible for the regional transport, regional bus lines and regional train and tram lines among other things.

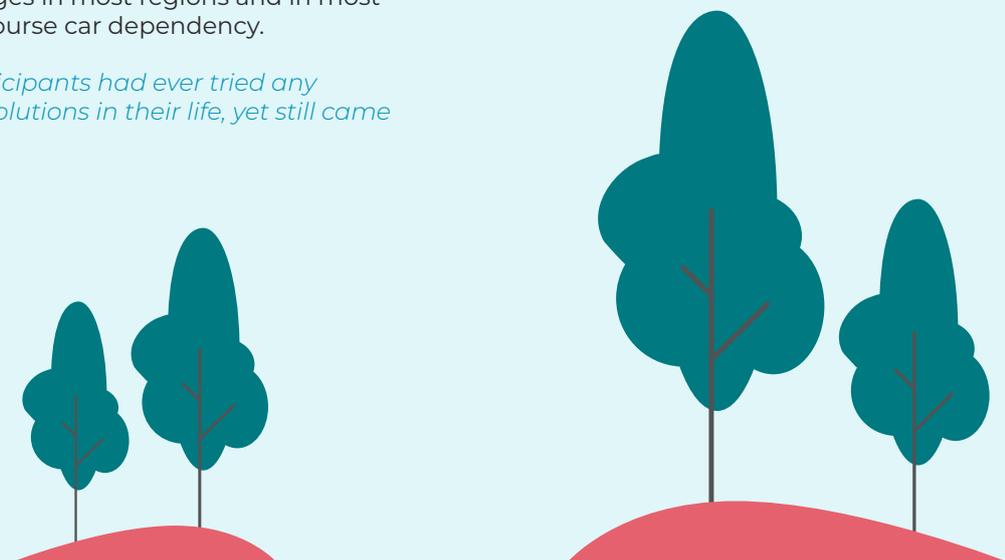
In the region, we would like to increase accessibility and create better and more green mobility for people travelling both in the region but also to and from the region. One of our main challenges in the region - and I think this is one of the main challenges in most regions and in most countries - is of course car dependency.

"None of the participants had ever tried any shared mobility solutions in their life, yet still came to the workshop."



Within the SMALL project, we are targeting some of our hospitals in the region. When we look at the data from the hospitals, we see that there is a large car dependency, both for patients, the employees, and the visitors going to and from our hospitals. This is especially true for the hospitals located outside the city centre.

One of the groups that use hospitals most frequently - and with the most specific mobility needs - is the elderly. How does an authority like the Capital Region of Denmark start planning shared mobility for elderly people?



To get some first-hand insights on your work, you recently ran a workshop with participants from the elderly council of your Region. Tell us about this session and what you covered.

In the workshop, we gave a presentation that introduced the group to shared mobility, its potential and its barriers for the Capital Region of Denmark. We explained how it works, and introduced the group to the operators we have in the region, to prepare them for later discussions. We used a lot of pictures and visuals for them to recognise shared mobility in the region.

The interesting thing was that none of the participants had ever tried any shared mobility solutions in their life, but they still came to the workshop. They were really listening and paying attention to our presentation; there was a real interest in it.

Overall, we talked about specific mobility solutions, technical features like the number of wheels, but also all the user journey including the booking, and the cost for a ride. We also gathered a lot of input which we can now take into a dialogue with private shared mobility operators.

“Shared mobility solutions must be easy to book, to find and to pay, and have good stability: this is not the case now.”

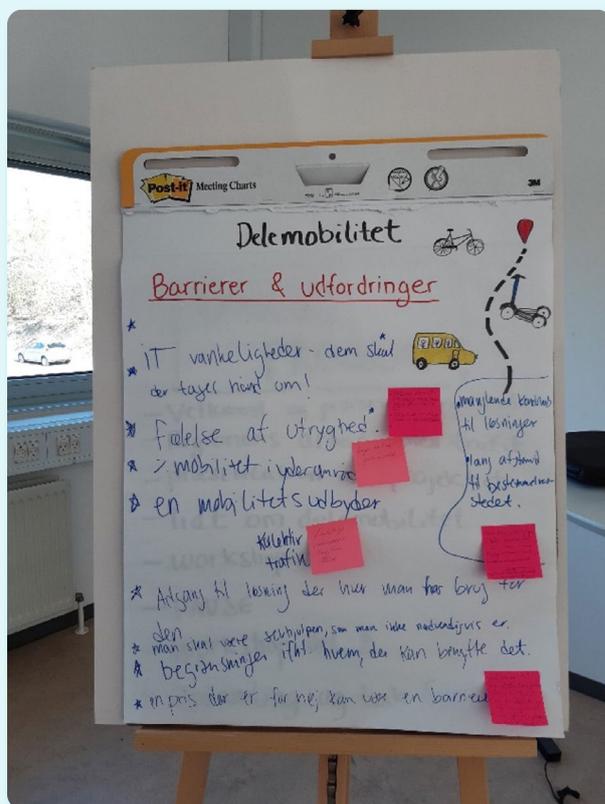
Interested in reading more ?

Click here: <https://www.interregnorthsea.eu/small/news/talking-shared-mobility-with-elderly-people>

What was the most surprising thing to come up in your discussions?

The most surprising discovery was the relation to vandalism. Elderly people are less likely to use sharing systems if there is a lot of vandalism, because they do not want to be associated with such “experiences”. The service needs to be “neat and have a high service level”. I was surprised that it was so important, and it’s really something worth thinking about.

Another thing was the ticketing and pricing. Shared mobility solutions should be part of public transport tickets, and you should be able to pay it with a hard card, a travel card. It makes sense as elderly people are familiar with public transport, and this should be the starting point for shared mobility for them.



Rolling together: a spotlight on tri-wheel taxi service ran by volunteers

In 2023:

- Total number of rides: **5807**
- Total number of cyclists (= volunteers): **70**
- Average numbers of cyclist per month: **30**
- Number of passengers: **578**

The Cycling Embassy is an external independent agency of the City of Ghent that wants to stimulate and facilitate the use of the bicycle as a sustainable mode of transport in Ghent. In 2024, they will be the host for the famous Vélo-city conference that will take place in June. Within the SMALL project, the Cycling Embassy is piloting the 'Fietstaxi service' that serves voluntary based rides with tricycles to people with reduced mobility in Ghent.

Esen Köse (Mpact) had the chance to interview Saar Fizev and Liesbet Colson who started the Fietstaxi.

In the next pages, you will learn more about the service and how the Fietstaxi is working with volunteers:

"Hi, Liesbet and Saar. Thank you for joining us to shed light on the evolution and ambitions of the Fietstaxi service. Let's begin with the origin story. Can you share how the service came to be and the initial challenges you faced?"

Liesbet: "Certainly. Saar and I initiated the Fietstaxi service in 2020 as a citizen initiative, aiming to address the loneliness of the elderly and those with reduced mobility. However, the COVID-19 pandemic caused delays in our initial attempts to launch."

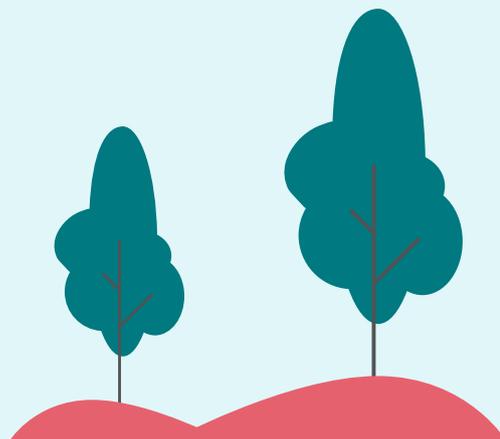
Saar: "Yes, the breakthrough, however, came in 2021 when the city of Ghent extended support through funding. At that time, the Cycling Embassy of Ghent had three bikes (tricycles), which were barely used. We saw an opportunity here and proposed a plan to the City of Ghent. This way, we secured a small project funding in 2021 to initiate a pilot. After this successful trial, discussions followed with the City of Ghent and the mobility departments. Fast forward to May 2022, we officially became a service of the Cycling Embassy!"



Esen: "Your motivation to start the Fietstaxi service in 2018 was rooted in a desire to address societal issues, particularly the loneliness of the elderly people. What is it that makes your service so unique for the elderly people?"

Liesbet: "Saar and I wanted to contribute to a social project focused on reducing the isolation of elderly individuals. We also incorporated a commitment to working with refugees and newcomers, with around 30% of our volunteers being refugees."

Saar: "Our service goes beyond traditional transportation. We focus on short distances, providing a door-to-door experience for those who may struggle with other means of transport. It's a personalized approach, offering assistance during activities such as shopping, making the Fietstaxi service a unique and socially impactful project."



Esen: "So, that pilot transformed into an official service of the Cycling Embassy in Ghent in May 2022. The city of Ghent seems very proud of providing your service to their inhabitants. How has this collaboration influenced the growth of the Fietstaxi service over time?"

Saar: "Joining the Cycling Embassy was a turning point. We gained access to logistical support, locations, and various departments, including accountancy and communication. This support was instrumental in navigating challenges and propelling the project forward."

Liesbet: "The collaboration with the city not only provided funding but also opened doors for a longer trial period. We are now embedded within the Cycling Embassy, which offers practical assistance such as bike repair facilities. This synergy has allowed us to evolve and expand."

Esen: "It's a very nice win-win situation: your idea made sure that their rickshaws, that weren't used in the beginning, were well used structurally. And then they can provide you the structure to, to accelerate your idea towards the complete business and service."

Saar: "Absolutely, it's a win-win situation. The city often faces a challenge in promoting sustainable mobility, particularly in the city center, which is the case not only in Ghent but also in other urban areas. Traveling through the city center can be challenging, especially for those with reduced mobility. The city of Ghent was already aware of this and was actively seeking solutions to address the issues people face in reaching their destinations. Our initiative was well-timed, aligning with their ongoing research. We were welcomed as a valuable contribution toward resolving the transportation challenges faced by individuals with reduced mobility."

"Ghent is very well-known as a progressive city when it comes to integrating shared mobility. In 2020, It even received the CSA Carsharing City Award, from Movmi and CSA, in the category 'regional cities'. However, tricycles, and more specifically rickshaws, are quite new and unknown to the shared mobility world in Europe. Not a lot of people are aware of their existence. How would you define the role of the rickshaw service in the entire mobility ecosystem of the city?"

Liesbet: "Our service fills a niche for very short distances, serving people who may find it challenging to walk even 100-200 meters. This makes it a valuable alternative to traditional taxis, which can be expensive for such short trips. Additionally, our project goes beyond mere transportation; it's a social initiative. We spend time assisting passengers with tasks like shopping, where volunteers may even enter stores to guide and support them. This sets our project apart as a unique and low-barrier mobility solution."

Saar: "Our focus is on providing a door-to-door service, a small but crucial part of the overall mobility ecosystem. We ensure individuals reach their destinations by picking them up from their residences and dropping them off at their intended locations. It's a process that improves accessibility for those who might struggle otherwise. The rides can also be first/last mile solution to connecting with public transport networks. In some cases, we take passengers to bus stops or train stations, enhancing their independence and integrating our service with broader transportation options."

Interested in reading more ?

Click here: <https://www.interregnorthsea.eu/small/news/rolling-together-spotlight-on-ghents-volunteer-driven-tri-wheel-taxi-service>

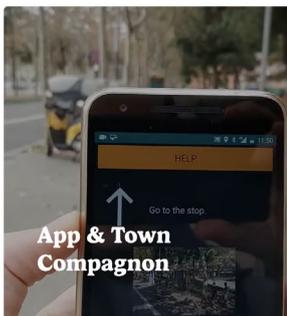


Observatory

To inspire mobility practitioners about what is possible in the realm of inclusive shared mobility, Rupprecht Consult developed an observatory of case studies from Europe and beyond.

For each case study, you'll find relevant information related to the service provided, the intended users and benefits; as well as additional information such as service design, finances and the organisation leading the project.

The observatory will be added to as the project goes on. On the next page, we share some of the most interesting case studies of the observatory including inclusive mobility hubs, guidance applications, and transportation services for people with physical impairment.



Have a great case study in mind ?

Contact us at: contact@sharedmobilityforall.eu



Observatory use case n°1: Nielsen Concept Vélostation Inclusive

 Paris, FRANCE

The Nielsen Concept Vélostation Inclusive is a secured bike shelter with a shared bike fleet including a cargo bike, family bike, senior bike, and a rickshaw bike for rental using the MobyApp for reservations.

Service provided

The Vélostation Inclusive offers electric-assist bikes that can accommodate families, seniors, and other people with reduced mobility to be reserved for their convenient use. Currently there is a Mobility Hub located at the Gare d'Austerlitz in Paris with bikes available for use from April to September.

Intended users

The bike fleet in Nielsen Concept's Vélostation Inclusive can accommodate many types of people and trip types: families with up to two small children, seniors, groups of up to three adults where only one adult has to operate the bike, and people who are hauling loads. All of the bikes have three levels of electric assistance to help with heavier loads or inclines.

Benefits

The Vélostation Inclusive allows groups or people to utilize Nielsen Concept's shared bike services who may not be able to use or have access to traditional bicycles. The temporary rental hopefully helps people become comfortable and safe using bikes and ultimately avoid car trips.

Interested in reading more ?

Click here: <https://sharedmobilityforall.eu/observatory/nielsen-concept-velostation-inclusive/>

About the service provider

Nielsen Concept is a company that sells secured bike shelters, shared bike fleets, and the use of the MobyApp to manage the bike fleets and shelter spaces. The French company started in 2015 to sell the Mobilypod, a secured bike shelter built using recycled materials and is energy neutral, allows 24/7 secure access, and collects data for reporting. More recently, they partnered with four bike suppliers to offer the additional service of adaptive e-assist bike rentals for organizations - companies, housing associations, and small cities - who want to provide shared bike resources to their members. Nielsen Concept collaborated with the Urban Lab of Paris & Co and SNCF to install the first Vélostation Inclusive at Gare d'Austerlitz in Paris.

URBAN LAB
PARIS&CO



Nielsen Concept installed the Vélostation Inclusive at Gare d'Austerlitz in central Paris in March 2022 as a one-year pilot in collaboration with the City of Paris and SNCF. Other mobility hubs have been installed on the outskirts of Paris, in the south of France, and also in Italy. The Vélostation Inclusive works best in an urban environment, ideally with existing cycling infrastructure for increased safety and comfort.





Observatory use case n°2: App & Town Compagnon

 **Barcelona, SPAIN - Madrid, SPAIN
Laval, CANADA**

App&Town Compagnon (ATC) is an innovative intelligent guidance system that enables autonomous navigation and multimodal public transport use for people with mild to moderate cognitive and physical disabilities.

Service provided

ATC is a mobile app that guides from a point of origin to a destination using metropolitan transport in cities that have partnered with the app.

Intended users

The app is intended for users with mild to moderate cognitive and physical disabilities, who can travel alone safely with the guidance of the app.

Benefits

ATC helps adults feel safer and more confident in traveling independently on public transit, promoting social inclusion without increasing the need for car travel.

Interested in reading more ?

Click here: <https://sharedmobilityforall.eu/observatory/app-town-compagnon/>

About the service provider

App&Town Compagnon was created by MassFactory, a technology-based company that emerged from the School of Engineering at the Autonomous University of Barcelona in 2012.



Currently the app has integrated public transit information for the cities of Madrid and Barcelona in Spain and Laval and Longueuil in Canada. ATC is specifically designed to be used in urban areas with a well-developed public transport network.





Observatory use case n°3: De Zonnebloem



THE NETHERLANDS

De Zonnebloem is a national program in the Netherlands that offers people with physical disabilities adapted mobility options including special wheelchair rentals, wheelchair-adapted electric bike rentals, and vehicle rentals that accommodate wheelchairs and electric scooters.

Service provided

The non-profit offers multiple mobility services: rental wheelchairs that are suitable for beaches and different terrains for recreational excursions; rental bikes that can be used by wheelchair users and companions; and rental vehicles that accommodate motorized wheelchairs or scooters with the option of hiring a volunteer driver for the trip.

Intended users

De Zonnebloem is intended for people with physical disabilities above the age of 18, primarily those who rely on the use of a wheelchair for mobility.

Benefits

The service is explicitly designed to promote social inclusion of groups that are at risk of exclusion due to inaccessible designs of the built environment and transport options.

Interested in reading more ?

Click here: <https://sharedmobilityforall.eu/observatory/zonnebloem/>

About the service provider



De Zonnebloem is a national non-profit organization in the Netherlands that has been focused on increasing accessibility of people with physical disabilities for more than 70 years. The organization has more than 300 local chapters that are run by volunteers in addition to a central office with paid employees. Roughly 27,000 volunteers were active in 2022 to support De Zonnebloem activities and services.

In addition to the car rental, wheelchair, and scooter rentals, De Zonnebloem also organizes group outings including day excursions, boat rides, and special holidays for wheelchair users. De Zonnebloem is a national advocate for accessible design with a focus on leisure locations; they regularly collaborate with major recreational attractions such as football stadiums, museums, and parks to advise how to make their space more accessible and to train employees how to help visitors with mobility restrictions. They audited and advised more than 85 locations in the Netherlands at the end of 2022.

De Zonnebloem supports over 300 local chapters across the Netherlands. Dutch culture values volunteer work and charity donations: at least 40% of Dutch adults serve as volunteers regularly and 80% of adults donate to charity.

Our next steps in 2024

In 2023, we have collectively learnt more about people with reduced mobility, their mobility patterns and needs towards shared mobility, and how to work together using co-creations principles. This groundwork will support our activities going into 2024, where we expect more engagement events and the launch of our first pilot projects, along with several other activities, including:

- A new SMALL roundtable in May 2024 in Amsterdam with mobility practitioners from the Netherlands and Europe to exchange on how to deploy inclusive shared mobility pilots.
- A new edition of our SMALL Observatory with more inspiring shared mobility cases.
- A new platform to interact with our community on inclusive shared mobility.

Are you interested in joining our community and working on inclusive shared mobility ? Contact us!

Get in touch

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