



Participants Guide

2nd Rural Pact Conference

16-17 September 2025



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1. Introduction

The Rural Pact Conference '[From vision to action: Empowering rural areas for the future](#)', will take place in Château du Biez, near the city of Kortrijk/Courtrai, Belgium from 16-17 September 2025. It will offer two days of networking and reflections to advance the rural vision 2040, discuss possible actions for the updated Rural Action Plan planned early 2026 and guide future Rural Pact actions.

The Conference will welcome a total of 250 participants - civil society organisations, policymakers and public authorities, LEADER Local Action Groups (LAGs), academics and researchers, businesses and citizens – all keen on actively contributing to the future of rural areas.

This document provides guidelines to the participants to help them organise their participation in the event. It provides relevant information about the venue, accommodation and transportation options.

2. Venue

The Conference will take place at the **Château du Biez**, located in the rural municipality of Pecq in Rue de Lannoy 145, 7740 Pecq (see in [google maps](#)). Built in 1660, the château is surrounded by a wide moat and 4 hectares of wooded parkland, including a lake.



Please note that the venue is only accessible by private transport. To facilitate access, **shuttle buses** will be organised for all accepted participants **from the city of Kortrijk/Courtrai (Belgium)**, bringing attendees to the venue at the start of the conference and returning to the city at the end of each day's programme. Note that only accepted participants will be allowed in the venue due to the limited capacity.

Further information on accommodation and transportation can be found below.

3. Accommodation in Kortrijk/Courtrai

Participants have already been informed by the Rural Pact Support Office of their acceptance to attend the conference via email. The acceptance email specifies whether participants are expected to cover their own expenses or if their travel and accommodation will be organised with the support of the European Commission.

It is recommended to book accommodation in the city of Kortrijk/Courtrai, as shuttle buses to the conference venue will depart from there. The departure point will tentatively be **Kortrijk/Courtrai train station** (see in [google maps](#)). Participants will be informed of the confirmed departure point for the shuttle buses shortly.

The table below provides information on a selection of suitable accommodation options available in Kortrijk/Courtrai. This is not an exhaustive list, and participants are free to book other suitable accommodation of their choice:

Accommodation	Website	Email	Phone
Focus Hotel ***	https://focushotel.be/en	info@focushotel.be	+32 56 21 29 08

Square Hotel ***	https://www.squarehotel.be/en	info@squarehotel.be	+32 56 28 89 50
Hotel Messeyne ****	https://www.hotelmesseyne.be/en	hotel@messeyne.com	+32 56 21 21 66
Hotel Damier Kortrijk ****	https://www.hoteldamier.be/en/	info@hoteldamier.be	+32 56 22 15 47
Broel4 ****	https://www.broel.be/	info@broel4.be	+32 47 87 22 496

4. Transportation

4.1. How to arrive to Kortrijk/Courtrai

Kortrijk/Courtrai is a very well-connected Belgian city by public transport. This section provides information to help participants to organise their transportation to Kortrijk/Courtrai.

4.1.1. Main airports:

- **Brussels International Airport Zaventem**

This airport is located approximately 100 km from Kortrijk/Courtrai and is directly connected to the city by train. You can consult train schedules and book tickets on the [SNCB](#) (National Railway Company of Belgium) website.

Participants can also take a train from the airport to Brussels Midi/Zuid station, and then transfer to a connecting train to Kortrijk/Courtrai. This option will offer you more frequent trains to get to Kortrijk/Courtrai. The total journey takes approximately 1h30min / 2 hours from Midi/Zuid station.

Nonetheless, participants are encouraged to consult the National Railway Company of Belgium (SNCB) website for up-to-date train schedules and to plan their journey accordingly.

- **Charleroi airport**

To travel from Charleroi Airport to Kortrijk Courtrai, participants would need to go to Brussels-Midi/Zuid train station, where a direct train connection is available to Kortrijk/Courtrai.

- **Lille airport**

There are no direct buses or trains from Lille Airport to Kortrijk/Courtrai. Participants must first travel to Gare Lille Flandres, from where a direct train to Kortrijk/Courtrai is available.

4.1.2. Train

Kortrijk/Courtrai is well connected by train. Participants can find detailed information and plan their journey via the National Railway Company of Belgium (SNCB) [website](#).

Below are some examples of travel options from nearby cities:

- **Brussels (Belgium):** From Brussels Midi/Zuid, Brussels Nord, and Brussels Centraal a direct train to Kortrijk/Courtrai runs regularly every 10 to 20 minutes, with a journey time of approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes. You can check the schedule and purchase tickets online via the [SNCB](#) (National Railway Company of Belgium) website.
- **Lille (France):** From Lille a direct train to Kortrijk/Courtrai runs regularly every hour, with a journey time of approximately 36min. You can check the schedule and purchase tickets online via the [SNCB](#) (National Railway Company of Belgium) website.

4.1.3. Car

4.1.3.1. Car rental

In both Belgium and France, numerous car rental companies operate at major transport hubs, including airports and train stations. If you are interested in renting a car, you can explore and compare options online through the providers' websites or rental platforms.

4.1.3.2. Private vehicle

Participants may also travel by private vehicle, with parking available at the venue. However, the use of public transport and the organised shuttle buses is strongly encouraged, where possible, to help reduce the conference's carbon footprint.

4.2. How to arrive to the venue (Shuttle busses)

The venue is accessible by private means of transport (such as car or taxi). Public transport is extremely limited and not recommended for reaching the venue.

To facilitate access, the **Rural Pact Support Office will organise shuttle buses exclusively from Kortrijk/Courtrai to the venue**. Shuttle services will operate at the beginning and end of each day's programme.

The section below provides detailed information on the shuttle schedule and departure point.

4.2.1. Shuttle busses

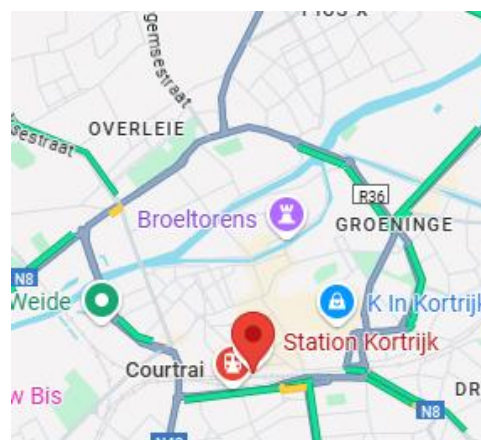
Shuttle buses will be available for all conference participants to travel between Kortrijk/Courtrai and the venue on both days of the conference.

The departure and arrival point will tentatively be Kortrijk/Courtrai train station – see in [google maps](#). The Shuttle buses will have specific signs to help you identify them. Participants will be informed of the confirmed departure point for the shuttle buses shortly.

Here below we provide the estimated time schedule:

16 September 2025

- From Kortrijk/Courtrai to Venue: Departure at **13h00 CET**
- From Venue to Kortrijk/Courtrai: Departure at **21h00 CET**



17 September 2025

- From Kortrijk/Courtrai to Venue: Departure at **08h00 CET**
- From Venue to Kortrijk/Courtrai: Departure at **18h00 CET**

5. Other important information

5.1. Clothing

Participants are advised to check the weather forecast before travelling and to bring appropriate clothing. In case of rain, please bring a small umbrella with you, as some walking outdoors may be required to move between different locations (e.g. to move for lunch, dinner, or breakout discussions).

Participants are welcome to dress comfortably and appropriately for a professional setting. Note, there will be no gala dinner (but a walking dinner on day 1), so no special dress code is requested to join the dinner at the end of day 1.

5.2. Meals

The organisers have taken note of participants' dietary requirements and will ensure suitable options are available for all participants.

On Day 1 (16 September), a welcome coffee will be offered during registration, between 14:00 and 15:00, prior to the official start of the conference. That evening, a walking dinner will be provided for all participants before the shuttle buses depart for Kortrijk/Courtrai to return participants to their hotels.

On Day 2 (17 September), refreshments will be available in the morning, followed by an early lunch starting at 12:30 CET. A coffee break is also tentatively planned for 15:45.