

# Position paper

*Prise de Position – Stellungnahme*

AUGUST 2009

## Supporting economic recovery while realising the environmental and social objectives of the European Union: Contribution of Public Transport

Memorandum for the Swedish Presidency of the European Union

UITP (Union Internationale des Transports Publics) is the international organisation of public transport, it is based in Brussels and covers all urban, suburban and regional public transport modes (bus, metro, light rail, regional rail and waterborne public transport). It gathers over 3.100 members worldwide, public transport operators, their authorities and suppliers.

In the European Union, the UITP EU Committee (EUC) represents the views of the public transport undertakings of the 27 member countries. It is closely following and participating in the elaboration of the different European policies and initiatives that have an impact on urban, suburban and regional public passenger transport.

## Urban areas represent the backbone of economic wealth creation

Urban areas are the places where business is done and investments are made. More than 70% of the economic wealth in Europe is created in urban areas. The attractiveness of European cities is a key element in enhancing their potential for growth, innovation and job creation. Urban areas will represent the motor for economic recovery.

At the same time, cities are confronted with the most transport-related environmental and health problems linked to high levels of traffic and congestion, poor air quality, high noise levels, high numbers of accidents, etc. The cost of road traffic congestion alone will reach 106 billion € by 2010 for the whole EU area.

## Preparing the future and fighting against climate change must also address the specific situation of urban transport

With the clearly perceptible climate change as well as the significant energy import dependency, in particular for fossil fuels, the EU is facing unparalleled challenges.

Currently, urban transport, in particular motorised private transport, relying almost entirely on fossil fuels, accounts for 40% of GHG emissions of the total road transport sector and up to 70% of other pollutants from transport.

## Technology alone can not deliver the required change within an appropriate time frame without other measures and changes in the mobility behaviour of citizens.

New engine technology, better fuels and other improvements have not had the required significant overall impact on reducing Green House Gases (GHG) as these gains are offset by the sheer growth in traffic, particularly in urban areas. Higher comfort levels in many vehicle specifications such as air conditioning and GPS also increase energy consumption and therefore increase emissions as well.

## Modal shift to public transport, walking and cycling should be a main objective for the EU

### CO<sub>2</sub> emission per passenger per mode

*Average occupancy of vehicles*

*(Source VDV, Germany)*

Car	215,3g CO <sub>2</sub> /km
City bus (12 m)	66,4g CO <sub>2</sub> /km
Metro	24,7g CO <sub>2</sub> /km <i>(calculation based on the German energy mix for electricity production)</i>

Emissions per passenger/km

**are 3,24 to 8,71 lower**

when public transport is used!

(At peak times when most transportation problems in urban areas occur, public transport has an even bigger advantage over the private car)

As it takes around 20 years to renew a national vehicle fleet, transition technologies and modal shift must bridge the gap. Urban sprawl makes all transport less efficient but shifting more trips to public transport (bus, and rail), walking and cycling from individual car use can help reduce national CO<sub>2</sub> levels and stop the worsening trend.

## Last but not least, where there is mobility, there is social inclusion

The ability to access – in the spatial sense – jobs, education, health services, and other facilities is a key factor of social inclusion. Barriers to spatial mobility include problems of awareness, availability, physical accessibility, and affordability. Within this context, public transport facilities and services are an essential component to re-connect socially excluded citizens to the social and economic structures of society.

**Conclusion:** Modal shift and change of personal mobility choices represent major stakes for the development of sustainable urban mobility policy. Supporting and encouraging those efforts should be one of the political priorities of the European Union.

## **A sustainable future for transport - new White paper 2010**

The UITP EU-Committee welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the definition of the future orientations of the European transport policy. As far as urban transport is concerned we strongly believe that many of issues faced by European cities have not been properly addressed yet. Strong action is therefore needed at all levels of responsibility: local, regional, national and European to address urban sprawl and all related transport problems (congestion, GHG emissions, pollution, non-renewable energy consumption, accidents).

The UITP EU-Committee therefore proposes a strong orientation of the Future European Transport policy on promoting sustainable urban mobility:

### **Five goals<sup>1</sup> should be achieved by the future European Transport policy as far as sustainable urban mobility is concerned:**

- Support economic competitiveness and growth of European cities,
- Reduce GHG from transport,
- Contribute to better safety, security and health and longer life-expectancy,
- Promote greater equality of opportunities for all citizens,
- Improve quality of life for transport users and non-transport users, and promote a healthy natural environment

### **Priority n° 1: Coherence of all European policies & initiatives:**

For the overall impact of its strategic initiatives, it is essential that the EU-Commission makes sure that all its policies and its financial instruments (including regional funds) support those strategic objectives. For example, there must be doubts about the compatibility of the strategic objective to “tackle climate change” with the clear preference for the investment of structural funds into road network development rather than into urban public transport and/or rail networks.

### **Priority n° 2: Binding requirement to regularly measure CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in agglomerations (job-catchments areas):**

Such a measure would contribute to the urgently needed “better information of the local decision making process”. Many political choices done at local level, in particular those concerning housing and/or transport have lasting consequences on the performance of agglomerations in terms of CO<sub>2</sub> emission levels, congestion, accidents, pollution, etc... Reliable statistical data on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions would enable local politicians to make better informed choices.

### **Priority n° 3: Binding requirement to develop long term sustainable urban transport plans:**

Such planning tools are still too often missing in urban areas in the European Union. A European framework for such plans should be established while avoiding duplication with existing national legislation and leaving cities the freedom to adapt the plans to their unique local circumstances.

### **Priority n° 4: Support communication campaigns for modal shift towards more sustainable transport modes.**

No single “easy to introduce” policy measure will solve the problem in an appropriate time frame. Achieving greater awareness of all citizens about the impact of their mobility choices is an essential element towards the new culture for urban mobility.

### **Priority n° 5: Develop a European observatory for urban mobility** to gather on a voluntary basis statistical data based on the same methodology

Dynamic and community-focused urban growth that is more space and energy efficient linked to sustainable urban mobility patterns, based on public transport, is vital for higher quality of life (and thus competitiveness<sup>2</sup>) in European cities.

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<sup>1</sup> These goals have been adapted from the UK Department for Transport (DfT) guidance document (DaSTS) to help regional authorities develop strategic transport plans and policies

<sup>2</sup> Competitiveness is not only measured by growth in GDP. Quality of life represents an important indicator for attracting and retaining well educated workforce needed by enterprises.

## **Passenger rights and obligations in the field of urban and suburban public transport**

Customer focus is an essential element in the development of high quality public transport. In line with Regulation 1370/2007 (public passenger transport services by rail and by road) decisions about the extent and level of passenger rights lay within the responsibility of local authorities.

Depending on various local circumstances, operators and local authorities have different duties for the delivery of service to customers. Their aim will be to work together to secure improvements for customers; they will agree how their responsibilities are allocated and will keep this under regular review.

The UITP EU Committee, working together with many of its members, developed in autumn 2006 a Charter on passenger rights, as a tool providing an opportunity to reinforce the dialogue between operators, authorities and customers.

### **Priority n°6 – Clear differentiation in the current and future EU legislation on passenger rights between the different transport services:**

1. Urban and suburban public passenger transport is very often multi-modal. The different modes are integrated into one network with one information and ticketing system. It should not be subject to different passenger rights legislations depending on the mode (different rights for bus, metro, tram or suburban rail passengers).
2. Those services are very often subject to public service requirements including quality levels of service, etc.. set by the responsible local authority. In line with Regulation 1370/2007 (public passenger transport services by rail and by road) decisions about the extent and level of passenger rights lay within the responsibility those local authorities. No further EU-regulation is needed in this sector.
3. Local and regional public transport services should be excluded from the scope of passenger rights legislation addressing long distance services (rail and road).

As far as the proposed regulation on passenger rights for road transport is concerned, the UITP European Union Committee supported by EuroTeam is in a unique position to provide professional advice on the specific characteristics of local and regional public transport services by bus.

We are ready to bring this knowledge into the current European decision making process for the better information of the decision-makers.

We would therefore welcome regular meetings with the Council Presidency during this process.

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