



THE FUTURE OF REGULAR INTERNATIONAL COACH SERVICES ACROSS MEMBER STATES.

Introduction

The members of Eurolines, which total some 30 operators within member states, are committed to providing a sustainable method of coach transport. Our focus is on providing high frequency services for over 5 million passengers. We provide connection and interchangeable services at key hubs across Europe thereby providing the only network of scheduled coach services within Europe.

Western and Central Europe

Recent research commissioned by Eurolines suggests that high speed rail services will exceed air travel, particularly low cost air travel- as the pre-dominant form of cross border public transport in Western and Central Europe

This will mean that there will be a key role for international coach services in providing a low carbon – and low cost - alternative to high speed rail.

Eastern Europe, Balkans and the Baltics

The rail sector is being developed in Eastern Europe, the Balkans and the Baltics,. While the rail network is being enlarged, regular international coach operators continue to provide an important contribution to cross-border travel by offering low cost services especially on short distances.

Improving passenger infrastructure across Europe

There is increasing demand for a quality coach network providing convenient and a low carbon method of travel at affordable prices.

However, there is inadequate coach passenger infrastructure across Europe. Linking our services through key interchanges will offer passengers the choice for longer journeys in a more environmentally friendly way.

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EUROPE'S EXPRESS COACH NETWORK

Summary

Eurolines believes that the European Commission should introduce practical measures that not only create a truly integrated transport system but also provide genuine alternatives to low-cost airlines travel which produces high levels of emissions.

In summary, Eurolines would like to see a policy framework that address the following;

- 1) More provision of centrally located coach terminals which provide an integrated travel facility.
- 2) Cabotage facilities where on some routes we have the opportunity to offer limited domestic travel.
- 3) A harmonised taxation across all Member States together with a level playing field with airlines on fuel tax.
- 4) Less restrictions on licenses from Non-Member States in using Hubs.
- 5) Centrally located Coach Station.