



Mobility for Prosperity in Europe

The Future of Transport

Contribution to the public consultation¹

When developing future European transport policies the European Commission should:

1. Focus on the essential

Future policy should be developed around the following key principles:

- § Mobility is above all an important basic right that needs to be protected and further enhanced.
- § The needs of Europe's citizens should be the departing point of any policy development.
- § Transport policy should be based on relevant facts and good analysis.
- § A significant politically driven modal shift is neither possible nor suitable as modes of transport are not communicating vessels and one given mode is not, by definition, more environmental friendly than the other
- § The focus should lie on enhancing the benefits of transport rather than increasing the burdens of its users.
- § Investment into transport infrastructure should be fostered as it constitutes the basis of future welfare.
- § Transport policy should set the framework to make public transport more efficient and better integrated.
- § Transport policy should be part of a holistic policy approach.
- § European leadership to increasing road safety must remain a key priority.
- § Intelligent innovation making transport more efficient and sustainable should be fostered.

2. Recognise the vital importance of mobility

Sustainable and efficient mobility is and will continue to be a major contributor to the social and economic wealth of the European Union and a key element in its future. For decades, Europe's prosperity has grown, with the indispensable support of a more and more performing transport system, placing Europe amongst the most vivid centres of social and economic activity.

¹ This contribution was jointly prepared by Brussels-based stakeholder organisations active in the transport sector within the association *Mobility for Prosperity in Europe* which is multimodal in its approach, privileging the use of the most efficient and welfare-creating modes at all times. As such, it does not necessarily reflect in full their own positions and standpoints on the individual issues raised in the paper.

Against the backdrop of increasing global and regional challenges, the European Commission, when looking into the future of transport, will need to adjust the EU transport policy toolbox for the coming years with view to reflect the evolving and in many ways more diverse way of life of its citizens and the competitive intra-EU and global economic environment.

In this time of massive financial support policies, investment in improving the transport infrastructure networks Europe wide, nationally and locally would bring multiple immediate benefits for employment, trade, the environment and safety while establishing the enablers of future prosperity. The high added value of well maintained infrastructure includes smoother traffic flows, less congestion, and thus less CO₂ and other emissions.

Indeed, the EU can only live up to its ambitious Lisbon agenda's economic, social and environmental objectives, including at international level, with a modern and pragmatic transport policy framework, which places the individual and collective mobility needs of citizens and users at the heart of their policy decisions, and which enables individual transport means to develop their inherent capacities and strengths for the benefit of all users and society as a whole.

3. *Get the facts and figures right*

Future policy must be developed on the basis of appropriate, comparable, reliable and timely statistics on passenger and goods transport at EU level. Work should start immediately to develop the necessary methodology and willingness to collect these essential figures as soon as possible.

In particular, statistics must be developed on a European level in three areas:

- § Current omission in congestion data and missing definitions need to be remedied as quickly as possible in order to be able to make serious recommendations to alleviate congestion in the future.
- § Comparable and consistent EU-wide data on purpose, origin and destination, goods' weight and value by mode, in EU passenger and freight transport should be collected and made available to policy makers.
- § Data collected on passenger and freight transport movements should match the complex matrix of national, international, sectoral and load-type segments and markets. They should reflect and take into account cross-elasticities that exist between these different market segments.

4. *Increase the sustainability of mobility*

Finding a balance between the need to pursue socio-economic objectives of growth and development and the need to further reduce the negative effects that transport may cause to the society will remain the key challenge in the quest for a more sustainable mobility over the coming years. Sustainability has three pillars: social, economic and environmental. All of these pillars are of equal importance and they all need to be taken into account when assessing the sustainability of the various possible measures.

ICT-based transport applications can help increasing the efficiency and sustainability of transport and the use of limited infrastructure, reduce congestion and improve transport safety and security. A large number of ICT-based transport applications have been successfully developed and demonstrated in collaborative research projects throughout Europe. Today, there is a growing need to deploy them on a large scale while making sure that user needs are taken into account, that field tests confirm the proper functioning and that liability issues are addressed.

5. Take a holistic approach

Transport and mobility are often accused to be the principle cause of problems, environmental damages and loss of quality of life. Rather than integrating mobility into the equation of a successful overall policy, transport is singled out as the source of evil while political responses too often tend to focus on adding further burdens and restrictions. Instead of bringing a real improvement it adversely affects the social and economic welfare as well as long-term competitiveness.

6. Keep the co-modality spirit

Future policy must build on the new constructive political attitude of EU policy-makers towards all modes. It must preserve and enhance the advantages of each mode while working at a better integration to the benefit of the users. In a period of dramatic socio-economic repercussions due to the current global financial and economic crisis, transport policy should not fall again into the trap of artificially forced and inefficient modal shift policies, but instead to reason in terms of true co-modality and optimisation of each mode of transport. At the same time mobility is equally as important for goods as it is for people. The free movement of people and goods is a basic component of the single area which the European Union has been building since its inception.

Freight transport

A general Commission's perception seems to be that all modes of transport compete with each other; the fact is that some modes are in competition for transport of certain commodities but in general modes are complementary. One way of identifying which modes are in competition and which are complementary is to look at the value of the goods that are transported by the different modes. Existing analysis of transport within EU demonstrate that the value of the goods is the main criteria for the selection of the mode to be used.

The Commission has to avoid addressing transport policy on the basis of "modes of transport" but on the basis of "efficient transport". Contrary to a wide spread belief that goes back to the 2001 White Paper, modal shift is suitable from an environmental point of view in some very specific cases, but it is neither possible nor suitable in the majority of the traffic flows. It is not acceptable that the European Transport policy is based on the assumption that some modes of transport are, by definition, more environmental friendly than others and should therefore be given preeminence over the others.

Passenger transport

Individual and collective transport offer different services and therefore fulfil different needs. They are not, as is often assumed, communicating vessels. The efforts need therefore to be focussed on enhancing the sustainability of individual transport. Public transport plays without any doubt a crucial supportive role, mainly on mainstream routes. Its role can be enhanced if its service is further adapted to the needs of its users (comfort, flexibility, modal integration, etc.). A forced modal shift policy based on traffic restrictions and increased costs for individual transport will lead to a high loss of welfare without the expected benefits for mobility and quality of life.

Regarding public transport, the European Commission should investigate the various market obstacles, promote full and open access to operators, foster the separation of infrastructure and press for competition in the sector. At the same time the European Commission should address infringements of the rules or illegal practices that hinder competition.

Transport policy should also strengthen the rights of passengers using public transport in inter-European travels and ensure that these rights are effectively respected without long judicial procedure.

7. Be guided by the users' needs

All citizens should benefit from a transport system whose design and management corresponds to their needs. Considering the strong involvement of public authorities in the management of the transport infrastructure and public transport services the allocation of public funds must become more efficient, i.e. spent on the most important transport means in terms of traffic and avoiding any waste of money on inefficient services and prestige projects. A transport system, enabling high quality mobility at affordable costs, guided by the needs of all, taking into account social, economic and environmental aspects in a balanced way, will serve best the society.

A transport system guided by ideological principles jeopardises the welfare of all.

Future policy must also include those modes in the mainstream EU policy-making that have been completely ignored in past transport policy such as powered two-wheelers, busses and coaches. Moreover it must take account of tourism as a major trigger for mobility.

8. *Be positive*

The immense progress made during the last couple of decades which in turn has brought about huge environmental, social and economic benefits across the society needs to be better recognised. Further sustainable progress should be encouraged. Artificially increasing the costs of transport does not necessarily make it greener or more efficient, it will just make it more expensive. Implementing charging schemes on the basis of weak methodology of assessing negative externalities while leaving the positive externalities out of scope will damage the European welfare on the long term.

Revenues from taxes and charges should be reinvested in building and maintaining infrastructure as well as mitigating nuisances at their source. Collected revenues should be reinvested in sustainable technology and road infrastructure and not used to subsidise less efficient transport services or other sectors.

9. *Sow the seeds of future prosperity*

A good infrastructure is a pre-condition for sustainable mobility by ensuring smooth traffic flow (limiting congestion and its negative effects on the environment) and by guaranteeing a high level of safety. In particular with regard to the current crisis improving the transport infrastructure will set the best conditions for future economic strength and competitiveness. While road transport has occupied the central role in transport too much of the limited TENs budget is politically channelled towards non-road infrastructure. The task of filling in the missing links and removing bottlenecks in the EU road network as well as carrying out much need maintenance deserves a much greater degree of financial and political support from the European Union, proportionate to the role of road transport and its importance in ensuring the competitiveness of the European economy.

10. *Make mobility safe*

To be most efficient any transport safety policy must address vehicles, drivers and infrastructure within a safe systems approach. Safety is a responsibility of all stakeholders including users, vehicle manufacturers, infrastructure owners and governments. Future policy must stress the fact that, to reach the European objectives of sustainable mobility, the EU's efforts in the field of road safety must significantly be increased, focusing in particular on the protection of vulnerable road users, a wider deployment of active vehicle safety systems, awareness raising amongst all road users, driver education and a targeted enforcement of rules, the eradication of high-risk roads through an increased EU involvement and funding for safe infrastructure, harmonisation of traffic rules as well as a better understanding of accident causation. Particular attention should be devoted to the desperate need for an adequate framework to evaluate and introduce the most cost-effective actions on a European

level, as highlighted by the European Parliament's Resolution on the Third Road Safety Action Programme.

11. Keep cities mobile

More than two-thirds of the European population lives in an urban environment and generates almost 85% of the gross domestic product, making cities the engine of the European economy. And this engine is becoming increasingly choked. Therefore it is essential to develop and manage an integrated mobility policy. Joint efforts are needed to respond to the challenge of economic growth, quality of life, sustainable development and environmental protection. Despite all the reduction measures and the promotion of public transport, the share of car use for domestic travel has risen in the EU-15 to 84.8%. Mobility solutions should be promoted such as:

- § optimising traffic flows through the introduction of traffic light synchronisation;
- § redesigning networks including traffic intersections and signs to balance throughput on the basis of sound data;
- § co-ordinating road works so that utilities and other organisations carry out necessary work at the same time and with minimum disruption;
- § use of multiple function lanes allowing different activity at different times of day (bus lanes, general traffic lanes, unloading or residents' parking);
- § facilitating additional paid parking in urban areas, preferably underground, which is vitally important for effective functioning of city centres. Being able to find a place to park easily and quickly, preferably linked to a Parking Route Information System (PRIS) and alternative modes of transport substantially contribute to mobility in urban areas
- § implementing park-and-ride schemes that will allow travelling to urban centres by public transport, linked with large car parks on the outskirts and rail stations, allowing car users to drive from outlying areas without having to actually reach city centres by car.

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The association *Mobility for Prosperity in Europe* was founded at the year-end 2005 to serve as a forum for transport-related debate. It is presided by MEP Ari Vatanen. *Mobility for Prosperity in Europe* believes that the European transport policy has been biased towards policy goals which fail to take account of the actual needs of users. Ideas such as modal shift and decoupling transport from economic growth, if achievable, would only harm Europe. The association looks forward to a new emphasis on competitiveness and wishes to contribute to the debate in an analytical and honest way.