



TOPIC 3: URBAN MOBILITY AND COMMUTING, INCLUDING TAXIS AS PART OF THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT CHAIN

1. Urban and commuter buses and taxis¹ for growth, competitiveness and social inclusion

Public transport is an essential mobility provider across Europe contributing to achieving environmental improvements, such as better air quality, reducing CO₂ emissions, and reducing noise pollution, since it accounts for 900 billion passenger-kilometres a year, equivalent to 45 million private cars. A 1% shift in passenger kilometres from private car to public transport would reduce the number of cars on European streets and roads by 2 million at any time.

Buses, coaches and taxis are the backbone of public transport and the closest complement, competitor and substitute of the private car. As such, they will inevitably contribute substantially to achieve the ambitious objectives of the EU transport policy, thanks also to their intrinsic characteristics, such as door-to-door flexibility, private sector adaptability, proximity and care to customers.

As an integral part of the social fabric of communities, affordable public transport is a lifeline to work, education and leisure, in particular for low-income citizens, households, regions and countries. Setting a clear European policy and business target to double the use of public transport in the next 10 years will enable European, national and local policy-makers to create appropriate legislation and policies to produce a shift in customers' behaviour, whilst at the same time developing and supporting measures to facilitate shift of passengers from the private car to public transport. To achieve this shift, citizens' needs, expectations and lifestyles must be put at the heart of any transport development strategy, initiative and activity.

So far, European legislation has been instrumental in creating the framework for more efficient and open markets, which has resulted in European taxpayers benefiting from lower transport costs and increased service quality. However, a time has now come to make a shift to introducing European legislation that incentivises travel by public transport over the private car.

Yet, the future development of public transport in Europe is challenged by the current financial position, with both capital and operational funding becoming increasingly difficult to secure. Therefore new innovative solutions and frameworks will be necessary, to support private initiative and attract private investment in public transport.

In addition, in order to maximise use of public transport it is essential that all future housing, business, retail and leisure developments throughout Europe are constructed so that they can easily be served by public transport services. The objectives of this paper will not be fully realised if easy access to the public transport network is denied due to ineffective planning within EU Member States, regions and cities.

It is important therefore that European intervention and legislation should be carefully assessed with input from the industry and its representatives. In order to increase passenger numbers and limit travel by private car, European support would be best directed at opening funding opportunities to:

- a) Encourage investment in public transport capital assets (vehicles, real time information, bus terminal and stop infrastructure etc)
- b) Promote modal shift (journey planning tools, ticketing initiatives such as reduced fares for young people etc),
- c) Facilitate best practice exchange, and

¹ A separate 2-page submission has been prepared for taxis.





- d) Introduce regulatory and policy measures to ensure fiscal incentives that can be passed onto passengers in terms of lower fares (0% VAT, lower duties on fuel etc.).

Regulation 1370/2007 on public passenger transport by rail and road should remain, also in the future, an essential piece of legislation to achieve open, fair and transparent mechanisms to introduce competition in the public transport market for bus and coach services.

...

2. Users' needs

- Passenger rights are an important issue and an in-depth analysis of the achieved benefits and the implementation of the new legislation on bus and coach passenger rights should be undertaken once experience has been gathered from its implementation. This could be followed by discussing with different stakeholders (a European platform could be created) voluntary commitments based on the principles of practicability, affordability and efficiency;
- The European Commission should further support activities in the area of research, development and innovation on accessible public transport together with discussions on best practices in accessible urban transport;
- Best practice guidance should be freely available covering safe and accessible stops and infrastructure, internal vehicle design, use of information technology for service information for all customers not just those with mobility impairments;
- In areas, which are difficult to access, in particular during winter times, traffic should remain open, in particular for buses and coaches, in order to secure basic mobility needs of the population;

...

3. Legislative and administrative frameworks

- Regulation 1370/2007 is setting a clear and comprehensive framework for public transport in Europe:
 - Currently, European Commission (EC) interpretative guidelines on the implementation of the provisions of Regulation 1370/2007 are under preparation. Incentivising and further enhancing the involvement of private initiative is key to achieve a strategic shift in customers behaviour from the private car to collective public transport;
 - In addition, by 2014 Member States are required to report about the implementation in their national legislation, whilst by 2019, Regulation 1370/2007 should be ready for recast and review. In this perspective, it will be extremely helpful if the EC could start supportive review activities earlier, in order to have a basis for the further development of this framework towards more market opening and competition as soon as possible. Clearly, a new framework should be supporting private investment and initiative in the public transport sector;
- Activities regarding passenger information and ticketing are welcomed and supported in general. All initiatives should however take into account the real needs of the majority of passengers. All actions must support efficiency and should respect the existing local organisation of passenger information and ticketing in place. At the same time it is essential to introduce a compulsory impact analysis regarding the effects of legislation and regulation in the fields of passenger information and ticketing, in particular on competition and potential barriers for new entrants.





- Promoting competition-neutral and transparent access to terminal infrastructures, including the terminal infrastructures of other modes, can also be important for urban transport systems;
- The promotion of a sector-driven collection of statistics on urban bus transport will help to base policy and business decisions on facts;

...

4. Fiscal matters and user charging

- As a priority, ensure that any new EU/national/local decision in the field of taxation and user charges do not increase the fiscal burden on European public transport sector. Refrain from introducing new or extra user charges affecting public transport as these costs will have to be born, in the end, by the taxpayer or the passenger;
- The general objective of the Commission's initiative to propose a strategy to internalise external costs generated by transport on the principle of "polluter and user pays" is welcomed as fair transport costs would encourage collective transport users to choose the most sustainable transport mode, whilst improving the efficiency of infrastructure use and reducing negative externalities. Buses and coaches as contributors of important benefits need to be excluded from additional charges. Income from the internalisation process should be re-invested in sustainable transport choices, particularly public transport (modernising existing systems, creating new capacity, upgrading operations, etc.), and used to provide sustainable, efficient and competitive alternatives to private car use within new developments in land-use.
- Incentivise the use of collective land passenger transport, by ensuring a favourable fiscal treatment to collective land passenger transport and its customers compared to the use of the private car;
- Actions on VAT:
 - Ensure equal fiscal treatment of all collective passenger transport modes (VAT, excise duties on mineral oil, etc.) and equal opportunities regarding state aid;
 - Maintain/establish "low-tax" commercial diesel for professional users;
 - Take a strategic long-term political commitment to incentivise the use of collective land passenger transport through fiscal incentives, such as lower or "0 rate" VAT, as well as exempting collective bus and coach transport from congestion charging and user charges;
- Endorse and acknowledge private sector investments in innovative public transport infrastructures by fiscal support measures.

...

5. Infrastructure and seamless intermodality

- Prioritise public transport, including by bus, coach and taxis, and its associated infrastructure in all urban planning developments;
- Where passenger journey time benefits can be realised, support the building of dedicated infrastructure and separate (high occupancy) public transport lanes in urban areas, including by making increasingly use of modern ITS solutions;
- Carry out a study on the shortcomings and barriers related to access of collective/public passenger transport by road to terminals/infrastructures and terminals/infrastructures of other modes, with policy recommendations;
- Integrate collective public transport in any future EU multimodal journey planner;

smart move, a joint industry campaign to increase the use of buses and coaches and achieve sustainable mobility for all





- Encourage a stronger commitment of local or regional authorities to financing and maintaining passenger access facilities;
- Support increased creation of multimodal hubs for buses, trams and coaches;
- Support new management and technological innovations, such as Bus Rapid Transit, and encourage the sharing of best practices;
- Develop partnership schemes to facilitate safe integration of bike users into conventional public transport;

...

6. Easy access to services through better information and new technologies

- Encourage mode interchange by providing easy accessible information to customers on different modes, safety, help and services, including to customers with disabilities and cyclists;
- Promote EU initiated best practice and templates for the conclusion of commercial agreements between different stakeholder;
- Research and support public private partnerships to spread existing local level best practices, since in many Member States public-private partnerships have delivered excellent local systems;
- Develop EU-wide solutions enabling passengers to obtain travel information, whilst preserving and supporting existing locally developed solutions;

...

7. Safety and environment

- Within the evolution of European technical standards (for example in the field of emissions or other parts of environmental legislation etc.), prioritize, encourage and support further development and growth of public transport;
 - Assess CIVITAS initiatives and lessons learned, in particular regarding EURO-standards to avoid unintended adverse consequences (such as militating against the use of hybrids in zero emissions mode due to the "dirty" start up characteristics of diesel engines);
 - Study safety-related aspects of using alternative fuels, such as CNG;
- Ensure a fair treatment of environmental standards for the bus manufacturing industry compared to the private car industry, including by exempting collective bus and coach travel from congestion charging and user charges;
- Provide sustainable financial research support from EU funding for the bus and coach industry, for example for the technical and economical development of bus vehicles of the future;
- Support the development of a CO2 measurement methodology which takes into account real driving cycles;
- Help develop sustainable funding mechanisms for public transport in cities, such as further investigating in internalisation of external costs in urban transport;
- Promote additional priority measures to remove buses from congestion (which has the greatest adverse impact on carbon emissions);





- Carry out a study with vehicle manufacturers to examine the best ways of reducing the unladen weight of buses and coaches by investing in and using the latest construction and engine technologies.

...

8. City-related aspects

- Clearly prioritise public transport, including taxis, within urban mobility planning, over the use of the private car. Establish achievable incremental targets for increasing the number of public transport journeys within a given period of time;
- Establish, in consultation with the industry, a harmonised EU framework on access restrictions and low emission zones (LEZs);
- Provide a European single-window registration facility for operators and their vehicles, for the purpose of meeting the requirements of LEZs, traffic restrictions, user taxes, environment certification, coach parking areas in cities, etc.;
- Encourage Member States to allow commuters (individual citizens, companies, associations) to buy public transport tickets from their “before tax” income for all types of commuting (home-workplace, home-school, home-leisure, etc.);
- Promote and support car recycling schemes, with commitments to use collective transport instead;
- Where practical make a single public authority responsible for highways, spatial planning and development. Develop tools to determine the right balance of infrastructure, park-and-ride, collective public transport (including taxis) and charges to keep cities moving;
- Carry out a study on the impact of the introduction of clean car technologies on collective passenger transport and the related risk of subsidising clean car technology while ignoring proven collective/public transport technology, resulting in “clean congestion”;
- Support new management and technological innovations, such as Bus Rapid Transit, and facilitate the exchange of best practices;
- Include bus and coach terminals in the TENs financing facilities, and devote a dedicated % share of funding to develop an EU network of terminals, for medium and long distance bus and coach services.

...

9. International dimension

- Study and spread best urban transport industry practices from regions outside Europe, where proven and efficient public transport solutions (such as Bus Rapid Transit) have been implemented;

...

10. Innovation and best practices

- Work with bus & coach service providers and manufacturers to develop a concept of a “bus of the future”;
- Provide European support to:
 - Support transition programmes for operators helping to assess, understand and respond to social changes in an ageing society;

smart move, a joint industry campaign to increase the use of buses and coaches and achieve sustainable mobility for all





- Support training programmes and awareness training for staff, including customer care and disability awareness courses, before, during and (where possible) after the journey;
- Support collection and exchange of innovative best practices.
- Make the public transport sector attractive for funding from other sectors and for private sector investors
- Promote further research and dissemination of good practice in the field of congestion charging and parking pricing for further development of sustainable transport modes;
- Provide more information on existing funding measures, targeted to the public transport community, to raise awareness of these opportunities²;
- Future CIVITAS programme to include measures related to the modernisation of public transport business models, notably pilot projects on fare discrimination and product differentiation;

...

* * * * *

² From a general point of view the whole process of applying for public funding from EU sources is very bureaucratic and inefficient. Simplifying this needs to be addressed to attract a greater range of bids direct from bus and coach operators. The reflection on future funding needs requires, as a prerequisite, a better understanding of public transport funding programmes in different European countries.

smart move, a joint industry
campaign to increase the use of
buses and coaches and achieve
sustainable mobility for all

