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COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

Together towards competitive and resource-efficient urban mobility

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COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

Together towards competitive and resource-efficient urban mobility

1. INTRODUCTION

Europe's cities[1] – home to 70% of the EU population and generating over 80% of the Union's GDP - are connected by one of the world's best transport systems. But mobility within cities is increasingly difficult and inefficient. Urban mobility is still heavily reliant on the use of conventionally-fuelled private cars. Only slow progress is being made in shifting towards more sustainable modes of urban mobility.

Many European towns and cities suffer from chronic traffic congestion which is estimated to cost 80 billion Euros annually[2].

Urban areas also account for a high share, some 23%, of all CO_2 emissions from transport. Cities need to make more efforts to turn past trends around and contribute to achieving the 60% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions called for by the Commission's White Paper "Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system"[3] (hereafter "2011 White Paper on Transport"). With their high population densities and high share of short-distance trips, there is a greater potential for cities to move towards low-carbon transport than for the transport system as a whole, through the development of walking, cycling, public transport – and the early market introduction of vehicles powered by alternative fuels.

EU legislation on air quality[4] and increasingly stringent emission standards for road vehicles seek to protect citizens from harmful exposure to air-borne pollutants and particulate matter. But cities in virtually all Member States are still struggling to comply with the legal requirements.

The number of road fatalities in the EU remains very high, some 28,000 in 2012. Urban areas account for 38% of Europe's road fatalities, with vulnerable users such as pedestrians being particularly exposed. Progress in reducing road fatalities has been below average in urban areas.

A Eurobarometer survey[5] investigated attitudes towards urban mobility. A strong majority of citizens considers congestion, the cost, and the negative environmental and human health impacts of urban mobility and transport patterns to be important problems. Most respondents were rather pessimistic about the prospects for improving the traffic situation in their cities.

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1 See also the report "Cities of Tomorrow", European Commission, 2011

2 Total cost of congestion; see SEC(2011)358 final

3 COM(2011)144 final

4 See in particular Directive 2008/50/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2008 on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe, OJ L 152, 11/6/2008, p.1

5 Special Eurobarometer 406 (2013)

The survey also showed that considerable differences exist across the EU. There is an increasing 'urban mobility gap' between Europe's few advanced cities and the majority trailing behind.

The Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, inclusive, and sustainable growth[6] highlighted the importance of a modernised and sustainable European transport system for the future development of the Union and stressed the need to address the urban dimension of transport.

A step-change is needed.

This Communication aims to reinforce the support to European cities for tackling urban mobility challenges. A step-change in the approach to urban mobility is needed to ensure that Europe's urban areas develop along a more sustainable path and that EU goals for a competitive and resource-efficient European transport system are met.

It is also crucial to overcome fragmented approaches and develop the single market for innovative urban mobility solutions by addressing issues like common standards and specifications or joint procurement.

The Communication sets out how the Commission will strengthen its actions on sustainable urban mobility in areas where there is EU added value. The Commission also encourages Member States to take more decisive and better coordinated action.

2. DELIVERING SUSTAINABLE URBAN MOBILITY TOGETHER

Transforming urban mobility requires coordinated action by decision makers and competent authorities at all levels of government.

EU-level action has to contribute to the joint effort: the Commission's Action Plan on Urban Mobility in 2009[7] received strong support from the European Parliament[8], the European Social and Economic Committee[9], the Committee of the Regions[10] and Member States[11], as well as from stakeholders across the Union. The twenty initiatives of the Action Plan were successfully implemented by 2012.

For this reason, the Commission launched an independent review[12] of the implementation of the Action Plan and a public consultation[13] to explore the way forward. Stakeholders reaffirmed the added value of EU-level support and highlighted that EU action was uniquely suited to ensure a broad debate about urban mobility across the Union; to facilitate the exchange of experiences and best practices; to catalyse research and innovation; and to

6 COM(2010)2020 final
7 COM(2009) 490final
8 European Parliament Resolution of 9 July 2008; 2008/2041(INI)
9 Opinion on the Action Plan on Urban Mobility of 27 May 2010, TEN/414
10 Opinion on the Action Plan on Urban Mobility of 27 August 2010, 2010/C 232/05
11 Council Conclusions on the Action Plan on Urban Mobility, 24 June 2010; www.ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/urban/urban_mobility/doc/2010_06_24_apum_council_conclusions.pdf
12 Report on the Review of the Action Plan on Urban Mobility, 2013, ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/urban/studies/urban_en.htm
13 Results of the public consultation "The urban dimension of the EU transport policy", 2013, www.ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/urban/studies/urban_en.htm

provide financial support for urban transport projects, particularly in the less-developed regions. They also highlighted the importance of working together on specific topics like urban mobility planning, deployment of Intelligent Transport System (ITS) solutions or access regulations, and road safety.

EU-wide action on urban mobility needs to involve Member States: Commission initiatives cannot reach out to each of the thousands of towns and cities across Europe, nor can they successfully identify and overcome the specific barriers to better and more sustainable urban mobility that might exist in different parts of the Union.

To be effectively and broadly deployed, concepts and tools developed at the European level should be adapted to the particular circumstances of each Member State and then actively promoted at national and regional levels.

3. SUSTAINABLE URBAN MOBILITY PLANS

New approaches to urban mobility planning are emerging as local authorities seek to break out of past silo approaches and develop strategies that can stimulate a shift towards cleaner and more sustainable transport modes, such as walking, cycling[14], public transport, and new patterns for car use and ownership. Many cities across EU have experimented with innovative solutions for urban mobility and shared their experience through various cities networks.

The Commission has actively promoted the concept of sustainable urban mobility planning for several years. EU-funded initiatives have brought together stakeholders and experts to analyse current approaches, discuss problem areas and identify best planning practices. With Commission support[15], guidelines for the development and implementation of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans[16] were developed, for instance, which provide local authorities with concrete suggestions on how to implement strategies for urban mobility that build on a thorough analysis of the current situation, as well as a clear vision for a sustainable development of their urban area.

The Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan concept considers the functional urban area and proposes that action on urban mobility is embedded into a wider urban and territorial strategy. Therefore, these Plans should be developed in cooperation across different policy areas and sectors (transport, land-use and spatial planning[17], environment, economic development, social policy, health, road safety, etc.); across different levels of government and administration; as well as with authorities in neighbouring areas – both urban and rural.

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14 A shift towards increased walking and cycling, in particular, considerably reduces the negative externalities from urban mobility and transport, with the added value of fostering a more active lifestyle with the concomitant health benefits. Relevant issues are also addressed in the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/index_en.cfm?section=active-healthy-ageing

15 Urban Mobility Observatory - www.eltis.org

16 Guidelines – Developing and Implementing a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan, European Commission, 2013

17 Reflecting the importance of proper urban planning for reducing the needs for urban mobility (for example by avoiding urban sprawl)

Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans are about fostering a balanced development and a better integration of the different urban mobility modes. This planning concept highlights that urban mobility is primarily about people. It therefore emphasises citizen and stakeholder engagement, as well as fostering changes in mobility behaviour.

Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans can help cities make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and services and deploy urban mobility measures in a cost-effective way.

The concept of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans has gained considerable momentum in recent years and the Commission will continue to support development and promotion of the concept in the future.

However, to ensure that best-practices in sustainable urban mobility planning are broadly taken up, this concept should be adapted to the specific requirements and existing planning practices in each Member State and then actively promoted at national level. Furthermore, appropriate measures should be taken in the Member States to ensure framework conditions that allow local authorities to implement local urban mobility strategies successfully.

Therefore, Member States should consider:

- Conducting a careful assessment of the present and future performance of urban mobility in their territory, also in view of key EU policy goals;
- Developing an approach to urban mobility which ensures coordinated and mutually reinforcing action at national, regional and local level;
- Ensuring that Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans are developed and implemented in their urban areas and that they are integrated into a wider urban or territorial development strategy;
- Reviewing – and amending where necessary – the technical, policy-based, legal, financial, and other tools at the disposal of local planning authorities;
- Where appropriate, measures to avoid fragmented approaches to ensure continuity and compatibility of urban mobility measures to safeguard the functioning of the internal market.

The Commission, in turn, will:

- Set up, in 2014, a European Platform on Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans to coordinate EU cooperation on developing the concept and tools further; provide a one-stop shop; and expand the present www.mobilityplans.eu website into a virtual knowledge and competence centre;
- Support national, regional and local authorities to develop and implement Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans, including through funding instruments.

4. COORDINATING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE-SECTOR INTERVENTION

Achieving systemic improvements in the transport sector requires joint efforts of public actors across all levels of governance, as well as private-sector involvement, in the following areas highlighted by the 2011 White Paper on Transport.

More action on Urban Logistics

Urban logistics are essential for cities to function successfully and make up a significant share of urban traffic as part of regional, national and international supply chains. They are expected to grow, further increasing their high external costs. However, logistics needs are often neglected in urban planning and management.

There is significant potential to improve urban logistics operations and services, and captive fleets, such as mail delivery vehicles and garbage trucks, can be well-suited for the early introduction of new types of vehicles and alternative fuels to reduce oil dependence and emissions. The measures outlined below, along with the other initiatives of the 2011 White Paper on Transport (e.g. Clean Power for Transport Package), will contribute to the goal of achieving essentially CO_2-free city logistics in Europe's major urban centres by 2030.

Member States and urban authorities need to provide a framework (e.g. delivery spaces, access regulations, enforcement etc.), to ensure that there is a business case for the private logistics operators to invest in new technologies and solutions. They should also facilitate co-operation between actors, build the necessary capacity at the local level, stimulate the take up of good practice, ensure interoperability of local logistics solutions based on Intelligent Transport Systems, and ensure integration with national priorities.

Member States should consider:

- Ensuring that urban logistics are given proper consideration in their national approaches to urban mobility and in Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans;
- Creating platforms for cooperation, exchange of data and information, training, etc., for all actors of urban logistics chains.

The Commission will:

- Improve the dissemination and uptake of urban logistics best practice (2014);
- Prepare, with experts, guidance documents that provide practical assistance on how to improve urban logistics performance, e.g. by developing delivery and servicing plans, city logistics in access regulation schemes etc. (2014-2016);
- Facilitate procurement of clean vehicles used for urban logistics by reviewing the scope of the Clean Vehicle Portal[18] (2015-2016).

The proposed approach is set out in detail in the accompanying Commission Staff Working Document *"A call to action on urban logistics"*.

[18] www.cleanvehicle.eu

Smarter Urban Access Regulations and Road User Charging

Making urban centres as accessible as possible requires making choices about the use of urban space. Loading and unloading spaces, bus lanes, cars, parking, pedestrian facilities, cycle lanes and parking all compete for urban road space[19] and cities have to manage these competing demands according to local priorities and circumstances. Urban vehicle access regulations can help optimise urban access, improve air quality and contribute to the goal of phasing out conventionally fuelled cars in cities by 2050.

There is currently a wide diversity of schemes being implemented across Europe and a better understanding of these different types of access regulations, their costs and impacts is needed.

These different rules and requirements, and the lack of information about how to comply with the various schemes, risk fragmenting the internal market and creating new barriers to the movement of people and goods. A fully harmonised European approach is not considered appropriate because it is crucial that the design and implementation of such schemes can be tailored to the specific situation in each urban area. Non-binding guidelines would, however, allow cities and Member States to benefit from the experiences elsewhere, and, where appropriate, foster a more common approach to issues such as vehicle categories, road signs, information provision, enforcement, exemptions, and pricing. This would make it easier for users to understand and comply with schemes, while leaving cities flexibility to adapt to their local circumstances.

Furthermore, the implementation of schemes should follow transparent rules that avoid a discrimination of occasional or foreign users. A more common approach, e.g. to sharing information about schemes, would assist trip planning, and the use of Intelligent Transport System solutions to implement schemes would reduce costs for cities and users and improve compliance.

Member States should consider:

- Conducting a thorough review of the effectiveness and impacts of existing and planned urban access regulation schemes;
- Providing a framework that allows local transport authorities to design, implement, and evaluate access regulation schemes, including urban road user charging.

The Commission will:

- Foster an exchange with Member States and experts on urban access regulations across the Union, including their conceptual foundations, practical implementation, effectiveness and impacts;
- Prepare, with stakeholders, non-binding guidance to help cities implement access regulation schemes effectively.

[19] Urban road space, in turn, is competing with demands for public space for leisure activities and social interaction (playgrounds, parks, etc.)

The proposed approach is set out in detail in the accompanying Commission Staff Working Document *"A call for smarter urban vehicle access regulations"*.

Coordinated Deployment of Urban Intelligent Transport Systems

Smart technologies and in particular Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) are key enablers for urban mobility planning. They support policy makers in achieving their policy objectives, and managing concrete traffic operations. They also help end-users by providing them with informed choices on mobility.

More specifically, ITS help to optimise the use of existing infrastructure through a variety of means, such as traffic signals, journey planners, smart ticketing or cooperative systems (including vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-infrastructure communication systems). They foster the coordinated management of road and public transport networks and ease the implementation of urban logistics and access restriction schemes. To ensure greater coherence and interoperability of ITS solutions across Europe, the Urban ITS Expert Group[20] developed a set of Guidelines for deployment of key applications of urban ITS[21.] Best practice, as well as standardisation needs for urban ITS, have been identified in this context.

Combined efforts are needed to make urban areas benefit from full potential of ITS solutions, while ensuring cost-effective, continuous and seamless ITS deployment across the EU.

Member States should consider:

- Using the Guidelines when key ITS applications are deployed in their conurbations;
- Developing proper interfaces between urban and surrounding interurban transport networks;
- Setting-up interoperable multimodal datasets gathering all information about urban mobility.

The Commission will:

- Take forward work on supplementing the existing legislation on access to traffic and travel data;
- Prepare specifications on Real-Time Traffic Information and Multimodal Information Services, as foreseen under the framework of the ITS Directive[22];
- Facilitate the deployment of vehicle to vehicle and vehicle to infrastructure communication systems in urban areas.

The proposed approach is set out in detail in the accompanying Commission Staff Working Document *"Mobilising Intelligent Transport Systems for EU cities"*.

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20 http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=groupDetail.groupDetail&groupID=2520

21 europa.eu/transport/themes/its/road/action_plan/its_for_urban_areas_en.htm

22 Directive 2010/40/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2010 on the framework for the deployment of Intelligent Transport Systems in the field of road transport and for interfaces with other modes of transport, OJ L 207, 6.8.2010, p. 1 (Article 3 a & b),

Urban Road Safety

Some 11 000 people die in road traffic in EU urban areas every year[23]. The majority of fatal or serious road traffic crashes involving *vulnerable road users* take place inside urban areas. Around two thirds of pedestrian fatalities take place in urban areas and 50% of those killed in accidents in urban areas are pedestrians or cyclists. During the last decade, the number of pedestrian fatalities decreased by only 39% compared to 49% for car driver fatalities.[24]

Additional effort is therefore needed to enhance urban road safety and protect in particular the vulnerable users from death and serious injury.

Member States should consider:

- Ensuring that Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans take account of road safety aspects as a horizontal issue, at all steps of the planning process and address appropriately issues like safe urban infrastructure, especially for vulnerable road users, the use of modern technology for enhanced urban road safety, traffic rules enforcement, and road safety education;
- Ensuring proper gathering of data on road safety indicators at the most detailed level possible and encourage local authorities to use such data for local analysis and road safety planning.

The Commission will, during 2014-2015:

- Gather and disseminate good practice examples for road safety planning;
- Analyse measures for reducing the number of serious road traffic injuries in urban areas.

The proposed approach is set out in more detail in the accompanying Commission Staff Working Document *"Targeted action on urban road safety"*.

5. REINFORCING EU SUPPORT

Sharing experiences, showcasing best-practices, and fostering cooperation

The value of sharing experiences, showcasing best-practice examples, and fostering cooperation across the Union is uncontested. The Commission will strengthen its support for relevant activities in the future:

The Urban Mobility Observatory

With the Action Plan on Urban Mobility of 2009, the Commission set up an Urban Mobility Observatory in the form of a virtual platform – the ELTIS website.[25] This provides a one-stop

[23] CARE database on road traffic accidents in the EU
[24] Idem
[25] www.eltis.org

shop for sharing knowledge and experience, or discussing urban mobility and transport related issues.

The Commission intends to improve the scope of the portal by developing the present Mobility Plans portal[26] into a comprehensive knowledge and competence centre which will consolidate information on urban transport planning from across the EU. The Mobility Plans portal will be integrated into ELTIS.

Furthermore, a European Platform on Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans will be set up. This Platform will support the further development of the concept and the tools required for its successful application by local planning authorities, by coordinating all relevant Commission-supported activities in this area[27] and fostering broader exchange.

URBACT – Exchange of good practice on sustainable urban development

URBACT[28] is a European exchange and learning programme – financed by the European Territorial Cooperation Programme – which promotes sustainable urban development. It enables cities to work together to develop pragmatic solutions that are new and sustainable, and that integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions. For the next programming period, URBACT III will continue to support exchange and capacity building between European cities.

Data and statistics and the Urban Mobility Scoreboard

Based inter alia on the results of the study on the "Collection of European Data and Statistics in the Field of Urban Mobility"[29], the Commission will explore how the quality and availability of data and statistics for urban transport systems operations and decision making at local, regional, national and EU level can be improved.

In particular, the Commission will continue to support the development of an Urban Mobility Scoreboard, by identifying harmonised indicators to benchmark and compare the progress of urban areas across the EU[30]. The Commission will build on work conducted in projects like EcoMobility Shift[31] and Conduits[32].

Member States Expert Group on Urban Mobility

The Commission will set up a Member States' Expert Group on Urban Mobility and Transport to foster an exchange on how national and EU policies on urban mobility and transport can be strengthened and better coordinated;

26 www.mobilityplans.eu

27 Conducted e.g. by the present projects ENDURANCE, QUEST, ADVANCE, etc.

28 www.urbact.eu

29 Study on Harmonised Collection of European Data and Statistics in the Field of Urban Mobility; MOVE/B4/196-2/2010 (2013)

30 Since urban transport is mostly covered by the Effort Sharing Decision (ESD) rather than the EU Emissions trading scheme (ETS), it could be of interest to enable benchmarking of CO2 emissions from urban transport to assist Member States in their actions to reduce emissions.

31 www.ecomobility-shift.org/index.php/en/

32 www.polisnetwork.eu/eu-projects/eu-projects-2/conduits-city-pool

In agreement with the Member States, dedicated Working Groups might be set up to discuss specific issues such as urban access regulations, urban logistics, ITS, or the Urban Mobility Scoreboard in more detail.

Focussing research and innovation on delivering solutions for urban mobility challenges

Primarily through its Research Framework Programmes, the European Union has provided support for urban transport-related research and innovation projects for many years. This support has made an important contribution in taking new technologies and mobility concepts to the stage of deployment.

Since its launch ten years ago, the Commission's CIVITAS Initiative has become an engine of urban mobility innovation and made European cities key players in the innovation process. Some 700 demonstration activities have been implemented in over 60 European cities and undergone a rigorous impact and process evaluation. Today, the CIVITAS network of cities counts over 200 member cities and covers virtually all Member States. CIVITAS has become a brand name for change in urban mobility and transport paradigms but also for European partnership.

CIVITAS 2020

The Commission intends to launch a reinvigorated CIVITAS 2020 Initiative under Horizon 2020, the Union's framework programme for research and innovation for 2014-2020[33]. In particular, the Horizon 2020 work programme for 2014 and 2015 will drive the innovative policies and technologies needed for the move towards a competitive and resource-efficient urban mobility.

CIVITAS will continue to support local partnerships in implementing and testing new approaches under real-life conditions on issues such as: tackling urban road congestion, reducing the use of conventionally-fuelled vehicles in urban areas, reducing impacts and costs of urban freight, and strengthening the capacities of local authorities to develop and implement sustainable urban mobility plans.

A second strategic initiative in European innovation policy, the Smart Cities and Communities European Innovation Partnership was launched in 2012[34]. Its objective is to accelerate the wide-scale deployment of innovations where energy production, distribution and use; mobility and transport; as well as ICT are intimately linked. This initiative contributes to the EU climate action goals by improving energy efficiency, increasing the use of renewable energy, and reducing energy consumption, green-house-gas emissions, bad air quality and congestion.

Smart Cities and Communities – A European Innovation Partnership

The Partnership aims to overcome bottlenecks to wide-scale deployment of smart city solutions. The Partnership will pay significant attention to key 'enablers', such as governance and financing (including procurement). Smart Cities looks to facilitate strategic partnerships

33 http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm

34 www.ec.europa.eu/eip/smartcities/

between industry, European cities and other parties to develop the urban systems and infrastructures of tomorrow and to achieve widespread roll out of smart city solutions. The initiative will foster closer cooperation across sectors like transport, energy, and information and communication technologies.

Although most actions of the Partnership are likely to be implemented by local administrations, businesses, research organisations and civil society organisations, there will be EU financial support under Horizon 2020.

Furthermore, the coming European Green Vehicles Initiative (EGVI) for Energy Efficiency of Vehicles & Alternative Powertrains will provide a strengthened framework for supporting the development of clean, safe and efficient urban vehicles for rail and road.

Taking innovative solutions to the market

Innovative solutions can make an important contribution to improving the efficiency and sustainability of urban mobility. But it is crucial to ensure that promising technologies are turned into mature products which can be successfully introduced to the market. The Commission and Member States should facilitate the creation of a single market for innovative urban transport solutions, e.g. by developing common standards and technical specifications or by facilitating joint and clean procurement.

Providing targeted financial support

European Structural and Investment Funds

The structural funds are today the single most important source of EU funding for urban transport and mobility projects. For the period 2007-13 some €8 billion were earmarked for clean urban transport.[35]

In the less-developed regions of the Union, this financial support has helped improve the accessibility of urban areas, close the gap between the more and the less developed regions, and thereby achieve a higher degree of territorial cohesion.

It is therefore important to explore how best to use the *European Structural and Investment Funds* (ESI-funds) for key policy objectives in transport and related policy areas in the period 2014-2020.[36]

ESI-funds should be used more systematically for the funding of integrated packages of measures, where cities have developed an integrated local transport plan, such as a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan, and identified the appropriate actions.

Measures for urban mobility can be supported by ESI-funds if they contribute to low-carbon objectives[37]. Urban mobility measures can also be funded as part of an integrated, sustainable

[35] In the current programming period, 9,63% of the total ERDF and CF funding for transport is allocated to urban transport and the promotion of clean urban transport (Categories 25 + 52); figures from the database INFOVIEW (July 2013)

[36] See ERDF Regulation, in particular Articles 5 and 7

urban development strategy which tackles the economic, environmental, climate, demographic, and social challenges affecting the urban area[38].

Especially for the implementation of territorial strategies, the use of the new instrument of Integrated Territorial Investments is recommended. For all investments in urban mobility, a broad take-up of the supported transport system should be ensured.

With their focus on large-scale projects in the period 2007-2013, the structural funds have primarily benefitted major and capital cities. There are, however, many small and medium-sized cities in Europe's regions and it is important to consider all sizes of cities for urban mobility investments. ESI-funds should create opportunities for capacity building, training, technical assistance and the development of comprehensive and local mobility strategies and plans.

The Commission will work closely with the competent authorities in the Member States to ensure that ESI-funds will be put to best use in realising local aspirations and achieving EU policy goals. Care shall be also taken that cost-effective solutions are supported.

Trans-European Network – Transport (TEN-T)

Urban nodes are key elements for the construction of a comprehensive European transport network. Action by European cities is crucial for achieving the objectives of TEN-T policy.

The Commission proposal for Union Guidelines[39] thus recognises the need to "provide for the development of the comprehensive network in urban nodes, as those nodes are the starting point or the final destination ("last mile") for passengers and freight moving on the trans-European transport network and are points of transfer within or between different transport modes."

Article 36 of the Guidelines identifies priorities in the development of the urban nodes of the comprehensive network through the Connecting Europe Facility[40]. EU financial support will therefore be available for projects of common interest in urban areas, such as improving urban logistics operations which are part of national or international supply chains.

International cooperation

Sustainable urbanisation is widely acknowledged as a key global challenge for the 21st century. The Heads of State and Government meeting at the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) recognised the importance of sustainable transport for economic growth and of sustainable urban development and agreed on "the need to promote an integrated approach to policy making at the national, regional and local levels for transport services and systems to promote sustainable developments"[41].

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37 European Regional Development Fund Regulation Article 5(4) (e) - Investment priority: promoting low-carbon strategies for all types of territories, in particular for urban areas, including the promotion of sustainable multi-modal urban mobility and mitigation relevant adaptation measures

38 European Regional Development Fund Regulation, Article 7

39 COM/2011/0650 final/2 - 2011/0294 (COD)

40 ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/connecting_en.htm

41 United Nations Resolution 66/288 "The future we want" http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/66/288&Lanh=E

The Commission will upgrade its efforts to support sustainable urban mobility policies in its cooperation activities particularly with developing regions. The objective is to pave the way for the export of European expertise and technologies in areas such as reducing emissions, improving energy efficiency and road safety.

More efforts will be made to take advantage of existing EU partnerships with key partner countries and regions (e.g. with the EuroMed countries, Brazil, Singapore, or China).

6. CONCLUSION

Managing a successful transition towards a more sustainable type of urban mobility remains a major challenge for cities across the Union. Local authorities need support to address the adverse economic, environmental, and social impacts associated with today's urban mobility patterns.

It is thus necessary that urban mobility remains prominent on the EU political agenda. The Commission and Member States should reinforce their support for local authorities so that all cities across the Union can achieve a step-change in their efforts for more competitive and resource-efficient urban mobility.

This Communication aims at leveraging action across all levels of government: the Commission will step up its support in areas with established EU added value, while Member States are encouraged to create the right framework conditions for local authorities to develop and implement integrated and comprehensive strategies for better and more sustainable urban mobility. To facilitate closer exchange between the Commission and the Member States, the Commission proposes to host a Member States Expert Group on Urban Mobility.

The Commission is recommending a concrete set of measures to be taken at different levels on several relevant issues like urban logistics, urban access regulations, deployment of urban ITS solutions, and road safety, and will carefully monitor their follow-up.

The actions in this Communication present a basis for moving together towards competitive and resource-efficient urban mobility.