

Ghent, January 2015

Open Letter

Subject: Mid-term review of the European Commission's transport White Paper of 2011

Please reply to: Trevor Garrod, Chair EPF, secretariat@epf.eu

Dear Friend,

The Council of the European Passengers' Federation has been reviewing the prospects for public transport users in the European Union in the near to medium term. The forth-coming mid-term review of the European Commission's transport White Paper of 2011, *Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – towards a competitive and resource-efficient transport system*, will have major implications for all of us. The 2011 White Paper marked a welcome shift of European policy towards recognising the importance of sustainable transport. It identified a number of key goals such as, for 2050:

- No more conventionally-fuelled cars in cities
- The majority of medium-distance travel should be by rail
- Completion of a fully functional, high-quality and capacity multi-modal EU network
- A 60% cut in transport emissions

These have provided a basis for policy initiatives, a number of which provide a framework for the provision of more attractive transport services for end users, including passengers. EPF is concerned that the goals and initiatives identified by the White Paper could be jeopardised by the mid-term review. There are some indications that the Commission's services may have been deterred in their commitment by the difficulties experienced with securing their legislative initiatives. We may be seeing a subtle shift in policy emphasis, particularly in relation to measures to limit climate change and the priority attached to the provision of public transport. Changed priorities could have consequences with profound social and economic impacts for public transport providers and users.

If the long-term interests of providers and users are to remain central following the mid-term review stakeholders will need to work together. Aeronautical and automotive interests have already devoted significant resources to shaping the terms of the forth-coming debate. Rail interests along with other parts of the public transport sector must not allow themselves to lose out by default.

We must be ready to think imaginatively and intelligently if we are to regain the high ground. We need to help those responsible for the mid-term review by identifying any new drivers that might be usefully reflected in its conclusions. For example:

- Did the 2011 White Paper deal with the wider safety and health impacts of transport adequately? It identified a cluster of safety initiatives, including a ‘zero-vision’ on road safety, but these did not attempt to tackle the wider safety and health effects of transport, such as road transport in particular and internal combustion more generally. In May 2014 the OECD published a study which concluded that the cost of the health impact of air pollution (including deaths and illness) in the 34 OECD countries was about \$1.7trillion in 2010 – about \$1trillion of which was attributable to road transport. Outdoor air pollution cost an estimated 212k deaths annually in the 21 countries of the EU monitored for the OECD study: this means that the number of fatalities caused by outdoor air pollution was more than eight times greater than that caused by road accidents (with slightly more than 26k road deaths in 2013 reported throughout the EU as a whole). No allowance is made for the far greater number of people adversely affected but not actually killed.
- The 2011 White Paper expected that by 2050 congestion costs would have increased by 50% but it failed to present any specific initiatives for dealing with this burden. There needs to be a well-informed debate on road congestion and the greater use of public transport as a means by which it might be ameliorated. UITP has pointed out that buses use nearly 20 times less space to transport the same number of people than private cars. To carry 50,000 people per hour per direction it is necessary to have:
 - 175 m wide road if used only by cars, or
 - 35 m wide road when used only by buses.If everybody travelled to work by car, the total space needed for parking cars would be as great as the space needed for business activities.
- The White Paper referred to the potential of land use planning in the context of demand management. It appears to have ignored the potential benefits of public transport provision in citizen-friendly spatial planning, of growing importance as Europe becomes increasingly urbanised, and in facilitating economic growth.

EPF would like to see this list discussed and developed further over the coming weeks with a view to it providing the basis of a collective position which can be argued by a wide range of stakeholders with clarity and effectiveness in the run-up to the forth-coming mid-term review.

EPF would welcome your considered reaction.

Christopher Irwin, Vice-Chair EPF



Trevor Garrod, Chair EPF

