



DECARBONISATION OF TRANSPORT

As public transport users, we have studied the European Commission's Communication on this issue. However, we are disappointed by what it says - or even more - by what it does not say. For example, technical innovation is happening in the public transport sector as well as in the car industry.

We welcome clean technology, particularly the encouragement of electrification - but that is not a panacea. For example, electric cars and other road vehicles still cause congestion.

There must therefore be greater emphasis on rail and on those types of urban collective transport which can be powered electrically; while also accepting and encouraging walking and cycling for shorter distances. After all, most car usage is in or near urban areas.

Modal shift, as advocated in the 2011 White Paper on Transport, is essential, but the Communication only makes brief mention of "behavioural change" and seems to leave this to third parties to encourage.

Apart from digital mobility solutions, which certainly have a role in encouraging modal shift, there must be more active support for improving the quality of public transport and making better use of what already exists. For example, priority measures, especially at peak times, and smarter payment and ticketing systems must be encouraged. So must flexible working patterns, pricing to encourage more off-peak travel, congestion charging which also raises funds to improve public transport.

Such measures can be introduced in a short time. In the longer term we also see the electric bus as an aim to be supported.

The Communication refers to "the opportunities for European industry" and we agree that new technology can boost high-quality employment - but so in many ways can better public transport.

We welcome the opportunity to contribute, as public transport users, to the dialogue and active promotion of good practice which should result from this Communication.

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