



## EU Sustainable Tourism Strategy

### EPF response – September 2025

EPF welcomes the inclusion of a strong transport component in the future EU tourism strategy. A well-functioning public transport system enhances the overall travel experience – making destinations more attractive, accessible, and environmentally responsible – and benefits both visitors and local residents. It is hence a cornerstone of sustainable tourism development.

Passengers want a transport system that is safe, affordable, dependable, accessible, sustainable and coordinated, with sufficient capacity to get comfortably to their destinations, at their preferred times, using whichever combination of modes is most efficient overall, in social, environmental as well as economic terms. While tourists' specific needs may differ – such as a greater emphasis on comfort, scenic routes, or stress-free travel – the core expectations remain the same.

The journey to the holiday destination sets the tone for the entire trip and strongly influences mobility choices on arrival. However, making sustainable choices is only possible if the available transport offer – both for long-distance travel and local mobility – is sufficient, easy to use, well-connected, and affordable. Otherwise, even those willing to travel sustainably may be forced to rely on less sustainable options.

At the destination level, promoting sustainable mobility requires cooperation between public transport providers, accommodation, and leisure services. A good example is Germany's Schwarzwald region, where hotel guests receive a free public transport ticket. For day trips, e.g. to theme parks or museums, car travel is often promoted through combined ticket and parking offers. PT-inclusive tickets are rarely available, and typically sold through PT operators, meaning only regular users are aware of them. EU-level action on open ticketing could help make multimodal options more visible and accessible.

Further reading (available here: <https://www.epf.eu/wp/position-papers/>)

- EPF has identified [Priorities for EU action](#) (2024) that will help unleash the potential of the public transport sector – relevant across all types of travel, including tourism-related mobility. These priorities include: A seamless European passenger transport system; Integrated information and ticketing; Passenger protection; Overcoming administrative and political barriers; Better informed decision-making; and Greater focus on end-users.
- EPF and Pro Bahn's joint paper [Enjoyable holidays with public transport](#) (2020) includes concrete recommendations covering four key themes: The journey to the holiday destination; Mobility at the holiday destination; Day trips from the place of residence; Luggage and passenger transfer.