



Social partners in the local public transport sector UITP and ETF¹

TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE URBAN MOBILITY JOINT UITP/ETF STATEMENT

UITP and ETF welcome the Own Initiative Report of the European Parliament on Sustainable Urban Mobility and encourage the Commission to take this opportunity to strongly promote and support action at local level in this area with a European added value.

Taking into account the growing proportion of Europe's population living in cities, the ambitious European Union targets in terms of climate change, economic growth and job creation can only be achieved by action in urban areas.

From the experience of the European Social Partners UITP and ETF, the challenges faced by cities are similar across Europe: poor air quality, ageing population, physical inactivity (obesity, cardio-vascular disease), noise, congestion, social exclusion, a lack of funds for investment, etc.

Although the policy responses in local areas will be different for historical, cultural and topographic reasons among others, a wider use of public transport can help tackle many of these challenges at once.

Without ignoring the principle of subsidiarity, the UITP and ETF believe that through relevant and coordinated initiatives at European level, sustainable urban mobility, in particular the use of urban public transport should be promoted.

Role of cities in the economy and society

Cities are the powerhouses of the European Union. Around 80% of the European population lives in urban areas where more than 80% of the European GDP is generated. The needed wealth creation in European countries leading to more and better jobs therefore largely depends on the economic health and the attractiveness of European cities.

The most commonly identified drivers of the competitiveness of cities include: economic strength, human capital, physical capital, global appeal, quality of life, institutional effectiveness, and financial maturity². Evidence collected from studies in various countries shows that most of these factors are strongly supported by public transport.

¹ So-called in the document below as UPT (Urban Public Transport) social partners.

² Economist Intelligence Unit, Hot Spots: Benchmarking Global City Competitiveness, 2013; Robert J. Rogerson, Quality of life and City Competitiveness, 1999



As an example, in the field of human capital, the public transport sector contributes to the drivers of the attractiveness of cities by:

- **Attracting talent** - A majority of senior executives from leading European companies say that the quality of transport links is one of the most important factors for considering business location in Europe^[i]. The quality of urban mobility and the urban environment also help attracting young talent.
- **Building skills** - Improved public transport increases the mobility of the labour force giving access to a larger variety of job and learning opportunities. This enables more rapid build-up of skills and knowledge than would otherwise have occurred. The appraisal of the Melbourne Metro project showed that it would not only support the overall development of human capital in Melbourne, but it would also help address significant imbalances between different parts of the city, contributing to improved equality within the area^[iii]. A good connection between cities and their surroundings is therefore an essential element.
- **Job opportunities in public transport** - Public transport organizations provide diverse and qualified jobs for urban dwellers. In many cities the local public transport operator is one of the largest employers (e.g. Amsterdam, Barcelona, Paris). Public transport organisations also help support jobs in other regions through their supply chain.

However, urban mobility is being increasingly challenged by traffic congestion and the attributable costs were estimated as 0,66% of EU GDP if nothing is done. Increased traffic and urban congestion go hand in hand with more accidents, as well as air and noise pollution. 40% of fatal accidents take place in urban areas³ and usually involves a car. Urban transport accounts for 40% of road-based CO₂ emissions and up to 70% of other pollutants. In urban areas where problems of congestion, pollution, noise and risk of accidents are increasing, the inhabitants, road users but as well public transport employees are all exposed to higher risks including stress, respiratory and cardiovascular diseases and personal security hazards. While cities should retain the flexibility to choose the best measures and policy instruments to suit their particular needs, the European institutions can play an important role by producing guidance and promoting best practice.

Sustainable urban transport therefore represents an important lever for growth, innovation, employment, inclusion and sustainable development of cities. There is a robust argument to be made in favour of placing a strong emphasis on the development of urban infrastructures, in particular urban transport infrastructures within the EU Package for Jobs, Growth and Investment. We also believe that well-integrated mobility in urban areas, linking long-distance transport with urban modes (development of urban nodes) will help improve the competitiveness and attractiveness of cities by ensuring the missing link of the first and the last miles of every journey.

Modal shift to urban public transport, investments and financing

Without ignoring the principle of subsidiarity UITP and ETF believe that the European institutions should take action to promote sustainable urban mobility. Modal shift in favour of more sustainable means of transport as clean, efficient, affordable and safe urban mobility, notably mass public transport modes (urban rail, metro, tramway and clean buses), as well as walking and cycling, is essential to promote economic growth, employment and thus the

³ Road Safety Vademecum - Road safety trends, statistics and challenges in the EU 2010-2013, March 2014



vitality of European cities and to preserve the health, safety and quality of life of its inhabitants.

The economic and societal benefits of public transport for the city are optimized when public transport schemes are adequately integrated into economic development strategies, urban development and housing policies, education and employment strategies, tourism and culture policies, and of course other aspects of urban transport policy.

Local governments should be empowered to successfully carry out such integrated urban strategies. In particular, their ability to adequately generate funding to implement such strategies should be strengthened. This will create value at local level, which can be captured by local governments for the funding of infrastructures and services. Furthermore, UITP and ETF underline the importance of SUMP (sustainable urban mobility plans) as an important instrument and call on the European Commission to promote the establishment of SUMP in particular by making the granting of European Union funds conditional on the establishment of SUMP or equivalent measures.

Public transport should be an integral part of any urban development agenda and urban infrastructure projects should be prioritized in future investment packages, notably at the European Union level.

UITP and ETF therefore request the European Commission within the revision of the 2011 Transport White Paper to take up the target of doubling the market share of public transport by 2030 and to shape its policies and initiatives around this objective.

Concrete proposals include:

- Member states should be asked to develop a long-term financing perspective for accessible and affordable public transport and report on it. In this respect, Member States shall take into account the economic and societal benefits of avoiding costs due to excessive traffic and by promoting public transport such as health costs, unemployment costs, congestion costs etc.
- Increasing the share of public transport in the modal split across urban areas requires a clear European political commitment to prioritise public transport.
- Urban space is a scarce resource and public transport is often the most space-efficient means of transport. A clear political commitment to evaluating and prioritising the modes depending on their use of space and energy (including the level of emissions) is required.
- With regard to urban e-mobility, the focus should be on shared mobility. Individual e-mobility should not negatively impact on public transport or contribute to further congestion.

Public transport operators continue to wrestle with financial insecurity. Revenues face erosion from pressure on public finances and continuing competition from private car use. In addition, increasing traffic congestion can slow down road-based public transport, making it less reliable. This can increase fuel consumption and maintenance costs and cause longer journeys and waiting times for users. The attractiveness of public transport as an alternative to the private car is reduced which could lead to further reduced levels of service and employment.

Greater financial stability should ensure the objectives to facilitate access to public transport as a service of general interest by all inhabitants, facilitate access to essential services and redress the competitive balance between public transport and private motoring. A more creative and sophisticated approach to funding and financing is required, including the use of financial instruments within the categories 'polluter pays', 'beneficiary pays' and 'general public pays'. Those instruments also represent the premise to achieve the deterrence of



private transport in order to gain space for public transport, by the internalisation of external costs.

UITP and ETF call on the Member states to establish a long-term strategy on public transport financing, including investment, by using all forms and sources of funding at national, regional and local level.

Employment, quality public transport, working environment and social dialogue

UITP and ETF underline the high potential of the urban public transport sector to create quality jobs in urban areas. In many cities and agglomerations the sector makes a valuable contribution to the inclusion of disadvantaged groups in the labour market and social partners develop and implement diversity policies at company level. Moreover, in urban areas public transport companies play an important role in providing qualifications and traineeship especially to young people.

Furthermore, UITP and ETF underline the importance of the quality of public transport service as a crucial aspect to attract and retain users. In this regard, employees are key to the success of public transport operations. The quality of the working environment as well as motivated, well trained and rewarded staff represent essential elements for delivering quality services to the customers, which are at the heart of the process.

The sector is currently facing several challenges:

- On the one hand, many technological changes are introduced to better respond to customer needs (smart city initiatives) which are fast paced and challenging to foresee. Many of those innovations in urban public transport will have a direct impact on employment (e.g. e-ticketing) and on working conditions (e.g. ITS in urban public transport, surveillance technologies to tackle safety and security problems, IT tools for drivers). They will affect all areas of operations from the drivers, maintenance, services, administration or IT and require a strong social dialogue to assure a just transition.
- On the other hand, public transport is a labour intensive sector and the demographic changes in Europe constitute challenges for the sector in many member states. This has also to be addressed in urban public transport and may lead to a need for recruiting and training a higher number of employees than in the past. It is necessary to analyse the image of the sector as employer and its conditions for attracting is the staff needed to deliver high quality services. It also requires a focus on the ageing population in the companies. Providing job security is an important element to attract and retain public transport workers.
- Work intensification, congestion (health), safety (accidents) and security (aggressive passengers) are elements jeopardizing the working environment and thus the attractiveness of the sector including for young workers or women.
- The problem of insecurity, unsocial behaviour, aggressions and violence affect public transport front line workers as well as passengers require strong action not only at the level of social partners but also in close cooperation with local governments. The importance of human presence in public transport for the feeling of security has to be recognised.

In this context, it is crucial to emphasize the responsibility of all levels of government including the European level to ensure quality in public transport and thus quality working conditions, the provision of appropriate financing as well as a close cooperation among employers, employees and trade unions to pursue common objectives.

UITP and ETF therefore underline the importance of the social dialogue at all levels including the European level and wish to remind their joint letter dated 9 February 2015. Furthermore, the European social partners in urban public transport call on the European Commission to



inform, consult in due time and hear the social partners on all initiatives relevant for the urban public transport sector with direct and indirect social impact. UITP and ETF reaffirm their availability to discuss with the European institutions proposals and solutions.

ⁱ Tim Moonen et al, The Business of Cities, 2013

ⁱⁱ Public Transport Victoria, Agglomeration Benefits of Melbourne Metro, 2012

Signed in Brussels on March 14th, 2016

For ETF

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The **European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF)** is a pan-European trade union organisation embracing 243 transport trade unions from the European Union, the European Economic Area and the Central and Eastern European countries. The ETF is the recognised Social Partner in seven European Sectoral Social Dialogue Committees and represents the interests of more than 3.5 million transport workers from 41 European countries vis-à-vis the European Institutions.

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UITP is the international organisation of public transport, based in Brussels. In the European Union, UITP represents the views of the public transport undertakings of the 28 member countries. It is closely following and participating in the elaboration of the different European policies and initiatives that have an impact on urban, suburban and regional public passenger transport.

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