

Joint Stakeholder statement on the EU's Urban Mobility Framework

23 September 2021

Urban Mobility has to change – substantively, and fast. The most recent IPCC report is clear about the threats posed by the climate crisis and the need for action, both to revert global warming, and to prepare for some of its now inevitable effects. The new World Health Organisation (WHO) Air Quality Guidelines, released on 22 September 2022, underline the importance of clean air for our health. Public transport and active mobility are the most sustainable, affordable, democratic, dependable, and resilient transport modes, and the most solid foundation on which to build the changes we need.

Clean collective mobility must be a priority for towns and cities if Europe is to achieve its climate targets and improve quality of urban life. Tackling the environmental challenges, achieving renewed economic growth, and enhancing health and wellbeing must be linked with ensuring important societal objectives of affordable and accessible mobility. To realise these important goals **affordable and attractive public transport and active mobility (walking and cycling) should be central to the future Urban Mobility Framework.**

The International Association of Public Transport (UITP), The European Passenger Transport Operators (EPTO), POLIS (the network of European cities and regions for transport innovation), SGI Europe, Walk 21, the European Cyclists' Federation (ECF), the European Metropolitan Transport Authorities (EMTA), Eurocities, the European Disability Forum (EDF), the European Passengers Federation (EPF), the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA), the Community of European Railways (CER) and UNIFE jointly call upon the European Commission to **adopt an Urban Mobility framework that places accessible public transport at the forefront, enabling it to achieve its maximum potential** to deliver these objectives. The scale and speed of these changes requires a wide and concerted effort across all levels of government. The Commission must ensure Member States fulfil their obligations and support their local authorities in delivering sustainable urban mobility.

While each association provides individual input to the European Commission, we jointly express that these key points are central to the development and delivery of the Urban Mobility Initiative:

1. Ensure that SUMPs accelerate the uptake of sustainable and collective mobility

Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs) have been established as a concept in many of Europe's larger and medium-sized cities, and capacity in cities has been improved over the years. Yet, for SUMPs to be successful, they need to be the output of a process that involves many stakeholders and requires sufficient resources. The EU should ensure that all cities that are urban nodes on the TEN-T network and as many other cities as possible produce a high-quality SUMP or have a similar strategy document in place by 2025.

It is now time that these strategies become the basis of mobility transition. Future SUMPs should go beyond traffic management and instead focus on creating an accessible and attractive public transport offer and incentivising active mobility. They should work towards climate-neutrality, while also improving quality of urban life, and consider accessibility as a key element of sustainability.

The climate crisis, particularly the fact that 40% of road-related CO₂ emissions in Europe stem from urban areas, requires towns and cities across Europe to devote much greater attention to public transport, walking and cycling. Public transport networks have a key role to play in decarbonising urban transport, improving air quality, facilitating social cohesion and accessibility for all, including for persons with disabilities, and connecting rural areas to cities.¹ The short travel distances in and around towns and cities present supportive conditions for the promotion of walking and cycling, which is also essential for the first and last km of public transport trips.

SUMP developed by cities should have active mobility and public transport at their core, helping to prioritise safer and healthier communities. Cities must be encouraged and supported to build upon the potential of existing public transport networks and thus allow them to realise their full benefits, become more efficient, sustainable and attractive to passengers. Doing so will consolidate positive mode choices, support modal shift and thereby reduce congestion, which the European Court of Auditors has estimated as costing the EU around €270bn a year.² **A more optimal allocation of scarce urban road space remains one of the core levers for a mobility transformation**, allowing cities to move away from car-centric strategies in favour of people and place-based resources, through improved movement of people rather than vehicles.

New and updated SUMPs should be aligned with EU objectives (the Green Deal, air quality, road safety, accessibility and inclusion, etc.) and international commitments (such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities). They should start with a vision, followed by an analysis of problems, and contain clear measures on how to achieve the goals. They should include an infrastructure dimension and prioritise public transport when it comes to building new infrastructure or attributing road space to transport modes. The SUMPs should also address accessibility and affordability of transport, as well as links into the wider region, and include an analysis of public finances, risk management and planning for the future. Businesses, educational facilities, healthcare, and local government can lead the urban mobility transition by adopting effective mobility management policies, encouraging the use of public transport, and promoting active mobility.

¹ More about public transport benefits: <http://ptbenefits.uitp.org>

² According to the European Court of Auditors „Sustainable Urban Mobility“ report (2020), achieving fluid movement of people in urban areas could spur economic growth and boost workers' productivity by up to 30%.

If the EU could provide additional funding to cities that have a sustainable urban mobility plan that follows European good practice, this would not only incentivise more cities to adopt such plans, but also create direct accountability and stimulate a virtuous cycle of improvement. At the same time, the EU should continue to provide cities with the necessary support to set up and update their own SUMP.

The European Commission should better incentivise the reporting of cities and Member States on the development and implementation of SUMPS, on progress and challenges, based on key indicators, which should include modal shares and journey times by mode to facilitate the identification of areas to be improved.³ They should also report on the impact of measures which have been implemented. Collating these reports will create an accessible European library of best practices and provide useful examples, encouraging more cities to develop their own SUMPs.

2. Support sustainable mobility with appropriate funding opportunities

Public transport is undergoing several changes at once: *Alternative fuels* infrastructure and fleet investment – which could be facilitated by improved operational efficiency delivered by priority measures – are essential for decarbonisation. *Digitalisation* holds the potential to provide more connected, smart mobility. Most importantly, if public transport is expected to take on a larger share of passengers in the years to come, *capacity* must be created as a matter of urgency. With an ageing society, *accessibility* will also become crucial. While authorities and operators are facing significant cost pressures following the COVID-19 crisis, public and private investments are needed to accelerate decarbonisation, digitalisation, accessibility for persons with disabilities, and capacity-creation in public transport.

At the city level, public administrations should assess whether their revenue streams are sustainable and sufficient in the short, medium, and long term to tackle the mobility transition. The EU's urban mobility initiative should promote best practices including the application of the "polluter pays" and "user pays" principles and the potential for land value capture. Where possible, cities could earmark the income derived from measures such as Urban Vehicle Access Restrictions⁴ – which could unlock further sources of additional funding and help replace the funding vacuum that could result from decreased other sources (tax-based funding, Member States contributions, etc.). These could then be used to support sustainable transport development in the city and become a core instrument for future mobility management, making provision for future innovation such as deployment of autonomous vehicle technology.

³ The SUMI project can provide a good basis for useful indicators.

⁴ There are different ways to set up Urban Vehicle Access Restriction (UVAR) which may include or exclude collective passenger transport. It is important that these schemes are technologically compatible with each other across Europe and do not impede cross-border traveling.

While it is important that the EU continues to support cities in the delivery of their SUMP's and in supporting the decarbonisation, digitalisation, and expansion of public transport, EU funding is currently very fragmented. **The Commission should monitor what money is spent on public transport and to what extent its fragmented budget is delivering.** In the future, the adoption of a SUMP could become a precondition for access to additional European funding instruments, provided that cities have the capacity and resources to set up SUMP's.

3. Create multimodal mobility on the ground and by harnessing the benefits of data

While multimodality is often discussed in a digital context, physical multimodality will make the difference in improving people's everyday life. **Multimodal integration must happen first and foremost on the ground: through a sufficient offer of (accessible) collective and shared services, high quality infrastructure for walking, cycling and public transport, and more stations becoming multimodal,** linking for example active mobility with multi-modal public transport services and connecting city dwellers with long-distance trains, suburban and regional public transport networks. Walking and cycling can be supported by bicycle parking spots at bus stops and stations, and by providing information on walkable key destinations (such as schools, hospitals, retail, parks). For longer distances, sustainable mobility services should be supported, and at strategic locations, longer-distance car users should be encouraged to leave their cars and continue by public transport into the city. Such "park & ride" hubs can facilitate modal shift. Development planning and control should be reviewed to ensure that priority of access is focussed on public transport and that the value of such developments is harnessed in turn to improve such networks further. The EU should support multimodality through best practice sharing and financial support.

Digital multimodal transport systems can support the EU's efforts to achieve climate and societal targets if they promote sustainable mobility options. While "Mobility as a Service" (MaaS) systems do not usually solve the barriers towards multimodal mobility on the ground, they can help provide easier access and match demand and supply. **MaaS systems require access to mobility data held by all stakeholders and can deliver their full potential thanks to smart governance.** The sharing of non-commercially sensitive data in central data hubs, such as required by the EU's delegated regulation on multi-modal travel information systems (MMTIS), is key to establishing multimodal mobility systems. Data sharing needs to be based on interoperable standardised interfaces and formats, building on previous experience in the integration of diverse data sets. Data hubs should include data held by transport authorities, public transport operators, taxis, ride-hailing platforms, resource sharing services (e.g. bike sharing, e-scooter sharing) and bodies holding data about individual motorized mobility (e.g. routing services, mobility management bodies). The European Union should ensure that transport authorities, for mobility management purposes, get easier access to publicly valuable non-commercially sensitive data from any service provider⁵.

⁵ This should be ensured through the EU's Data Act.



With many MaaS applications expected to be developed over the next decade, there is an important role for local transport authorities to play in their governance, ensuring fairness and reciprocity in mobility data exchange and safeguarding the objectives of promotion of sustainable mobility – principally modal shift and sustainability.

Conclusions

The joint authors of this paper believe that the potential of the existing public transport networks to achieve the objectives of climate neutrality, improved environmental conditions, social inclusion and equality and economic regeneration can be more readily achieved through the adoption of more targeted Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans. This includes the prioritisation of accessible, affordable and attractive public transport, its decarbonisation and digitisation, and transportation/land use integrated planning focussed on public transport, walking and cycling. Through access to additional EU funding streams, and a framework of shared development and experience, pathfinder towns and cities, including the 100 carbon-neutral cities, can help share these benefits across Europe's urban environment.

SIGNATORIES:

About UITP

UITP is the international association representing public transport stakeholders. In the European Union, UITP brings together more than 450 urban, suburban, and regional public transport operators and authorities from all Member States. UITP-Europe represents the perspective of short-distance passenger transport services by all sustainable modes: bus, regional and suburban rail, metro, light rail, tram and waterborne.

About EPTO

EPTO, the association of European Passenger Transport Operators, represents major private sector public transport operators in Europe who have the majority of their business awarded by open tendering and contracts. EPTO is committed to the development of the transport market through liberalisation of bus, rail and other similar transport modes. It helps to shape the framework for delivering real benefits to the economic growth and social wellbeing of communities through quality of services at a price that also represents value for money for taxpayers, government bodies and PTAs.

About POLIS

POLIS is the leading network of over 90 European cities and regions working together to develop innovative technologies and policies for local transport. Our aim is to improve local transport through integrated strategies that address the economic, social and environmental dimensions of transport. We foster cooperation and partnerships across Europe with the aim of making research and innovation in transport accessible to cities and regions. At POLIS we strive to provide decision makers with the necessary information and tools for making sustainable mobility a reality.

About SGI Europe

SGI Europe is one of the three general cross-sectoral European Social Partners. It gathers public and private providers of services of general interest from across Europe. SGI Europe members, active in, amongst others, transport, energy, housing, water, waste management, healthcare or education, contribute to more than 26% of EU GDP and employ 30% of the EU workforce



About Walk21

Walk21, is the international foundation representing the needs of people walking. In the European Union, Walk21 Europe supports national policy development and city policy and projects to create walkable places across the region. Walk21 Europe supports all the people walking already and entices more short distance trips to be walked by people who have a choice to motorise instead.

About ECF

Founded in 1983, ECF is a Brussels-based independent non-governmental organisation dedicated to achieving more and better cycling for all people in Europe. Its mission is to double the levels of cycling in Europe, cut cyclist deaths and serious injuries in half, achieve more political support for cycling and advocate for more EU financial investments in cycling infrastructure. ECF is the single civil society umbrella organisation that promotes cycling for transportation and leisure. With more than 60 member organisations in over 40 countries including in each of the EU's 27 member states, ECF unites cycling movements in Europe as the only civil society voice at the pan-European level, and as one of the world's largest and best-known cyclists' advocacy organisation.

About EMTA

EMTA (European Metropolitan Transport Authorities) is an association that unites the public transport authorities from 30 larger cities and metropolitan areas to share knowledge and professional experience managing challenges in urban transport and mobility. EMTA connects the executives from public bodies endowed with legal competences to plan, finance and coordinate public transport.

About Eurocities

Eurocities is the network of the largest European cities bringing together the local governments of more than 200 cities in 38 European countries, representing 130 million people. Eurocities provides a platform to share knowledge and ideas, to exchange experiences, to analyse common problems and develop innovative solutions, through a wide range of forums, working groups, projects, activities and events. Eurocities gives cities a voice in Europe, by engaging in dialogue with the European institutions on all aspects of EU legislation, policies and programmes that have an impact on cities and their citizens

About EDF

The European Disability Forum (EDF) is an umbrella organisation of persons with disabilities that defends the interests of over 100 million persons with disabilities in Europe. EDF is an independent non-governmental organisation (NGO) that brings together representative organisations of persons with disabilities from across Europe. EDF is run by persons with disabilities and their families and it is a strong united voice of persons with disabilities in Europe

About EPF

The European Passengers' Federation (EPF) links Europe's major passenger organisations. EPF acts as an advocate for passengers' interests at European level. With its end-user focus it is committed to improving passenger rights and achieving a better and more inclusive and accessible (multimodal) door-to-door travel experience. EPF seeks to achieve its objectives by working constructively with other stakeholders throughout the European transport industry, the European institutions and members of the research community (with particular emphasis on research into end-to-end journey needs and integrated and connected travel). Its evidence-led approach and wide network of contacts ensure that it is informed of the diverse needs and aspirations of EU passengers.

About EPHA

The European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) is a member-led organisation made up of public health NGOs, patient groups, health professionals and disease groups, working to improve health and strengthen the voice of public health in Europe.

About CER

The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) brings together railway undertakings, their national associations as well as infrastructure managers and vehicle leasing companies. The membership is made up of long-established bodies, new entrants and both private and public enterprises, representing 73% of the rail network length, 76% of the rail freight business and about 92% of rail passenger operations in EU, EFTA and EU accession countries. CER represents the interests of its members towards EU policy makers and transport stakeholders, advocating rail as the backbone of a competitive and sustainable transport system in Europe.



About UNIFE

Operating in Brussels since 1992, UNIFE represents European train builders and rail suppliers. The association advocates on behalf of more than 100 of Europe's leading rail supply companies – from SMEs to major industrial champions – active in the design, manufacture, maintenance and refurbishment of rail transport systems, subsystems, and related equipment. UNIFE also brings together national rail industry associations from 11 European countries. Our members account for 84% of the European, and 46% of the global, market for rail equipment and services. We communicate members' interests at the European and international levels while actively promoting rail equipment and standards worldwide.