



SUSTAINABLE AND SMART MOBILITY

UITP input to the European strategy

UITP is looking forward to the Commission's upcoming Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy (SSMS), which needs to be bolder and more ambitious than any previous strategies in order to turn the transport sector around and make it Green Deal compatible.

The European transport sector provides high quality mobility services and is on a firm path towards further modernisation and innovation. Each mode of transport plays its part, while the modal share of the private car is still high in Europe. **It is important to recognise the role daily mobility plays** for citizens as well as for issues such as climate change, congestion, quality of urban life, social cohesion and health. These challenges cannot be tackled through technological improvements alone.

In order to achieve its ambitious goals, we urge the Commission to recognise and strengthen public transport as the backbone of sustainable mobility and to foster modal shift in its upcoming strategy.



THE CHALLENGES

Climate change is one of the biggest challenges of our generation, as it constitutes a fundamental threat to our way of life and to the survival of future generations; we are most likely the last generation that is able to put a halt to the irreversible global warming before it reaches a point beyond containment. UITP therefore welcomes the Green Deal as the central European instrument to stop climate change and expects that it will bring about serious changes. This is most relevant for the transport sector, where CO₂ emissions have continued to grow over the past decade despite earlier efforts to curb emissions, especially due to car use that causes roughly half of these emissions. This experience shows that technological change and moderate modal shift ambitions are not enough to transform the sector. This time, the Commission should be bolder and consider all three aspects of the “avoid – shift – improve” approach.

Air pollution is a big concern in many cities and has been recognised as the biggest environmental health risk in Europe. Traditional fuels and the overall dense traffic both contribute to this problem. **Congestion** has been growing, both in the urban context and on the highways, costing the European economy €100 billion per year. If much of the scarce urban space is occupied by cars and other motorised vehicles, which also contribute to air pollution, this diminishes quality of life of those living in cities. Things will get worse over time as cities grow (hence increasing the demand for transport) and when the effects of climate change are felt in cities. Working towards **more quality of (urban) life**, which includes a greener, more sustainable and fair distribution of urban space and significantly improving air quality, should be one of the central topics for this mobility strategy. Progress in this area is also required by Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) no. 11 on “Sustainable cities and communities”.

The **COVID-19 pandemic** has shaken up our daily lives. For weeks and months, physical meetings and leisure activities have been reduced to a minimum. Public transport was heavily impacted – losing up to 90 percent of its ridership and farebox revenues – and will continue for a long while to feel the effect of citizens' fear of using mass transport. UITP estimates that, in Europe, farebox revenue losses in urban and local public transport amount to €40 billion until the end of 2020. Political and financial support from the EU towards public transport is vital to reduce these losses and ensure that public transport is at the core of sustainable recovery in Europe. It is key to avoid a post-crisis modal shift towards private cars. Our sector therefore needs new concepts that will allow people to use public transport again in complete safety, as well as concepts preparing the sector for future pandemics and similarly disruptive events.

Unsecure financing of public transport may put future investments at risk. Tight public budgets aggravated by the current economic crisis, reduced income from fuel taxes due to the expected shift to alternative fuels, uncertain income from other taxes, and the hesitation of authorities to establish local road tolling systems and to earmark income for public transport, all together contribute to a situation of unsecure financing beyond the next decade. However, long-term financial planning and commitment to public transport is vital for the sector.

Digitalisation is both an opportunity and a challenge for the transport sector. Many customers are or want to be constantly connected, while others are not. New players enter the mobility market with IT-based offers, challenging established transport companies; some of them are enriching citizens' mobility options with new sustainable travel tools that can be complementary to and integrated with mass transit systems. Data sharing and open data policies affect business models and can distort competition between various types of service providers, unless a fair level playing field is assured.

Similarly, **automation** is an opportunity as much as it is a challenge for the future mobility system. Urban rail automation is well advanced and very successful. Autonomous road vehicles present huge opportunities when integrated into an effective local public transport network. The risk is that, if the private use of fully autonomous (electric) cars becomes prevalent, cities will face an increase of traffic and congestion, as the cost of circulating in the streets will be close to zero. It will be important for local authorities to anticipate this and to encourage shared mobility, limit single car occupancy, and to consider road tolls in order to put a price on traffic.

In Europe and elsewhere in the world, the **social division** is growing – a situation that has become even more severe during the COVID-19 crisis. The level of income affects the variety of mobility choices and the level of certainty about reaching one's destination. In order to strengthen social cohesion, it is important to offer affordable, shared, and reliable mobility choices to all citizens. Public services play an important role for this.

Another societal trend to be mindful of is **demographic change**, with the share of elderly people in the population growing over the next decade. Likewise, in order to achieve a fully inclusive society, all private and public transport services should be accessible for **persons with disabilities and with reduced mobility** to the extent possible.

Mobility in rural areas is currently a problem, as the public transport network is not very dense, there are often only few links to larger cities, and citizens living in these areas rely quite heavily on their private car. In order to provide equal opportunities and access to mobility services, the rural areas and suburbs require special attention.

Despite lots of initiatives to attract new and qualified employees, the public transport sector experiences a **shortage of staff**. Considering that the public transport sector is forecast to grow and cater for more passengers in the future, the need for new employees in the companies will continue to grow as well – and if not met, will slow down the shift to sustainable public transport.

OUR VISION FOR URBAN AND REGIONAL TRANSPORT

The public transport sector represented by UITP is striving for excellence in delivering its mission of providing public services to all citizens. In the future, using public transport should become as easy as taking a private car today.

We want to be the preferred choice of citizens when it comes to their daily mobility.

This requires a change in the way individual mobility is treated; in the future, we hope that the public transport sector will operate in a favourable regulatory environment. With the support of the Green Deal, the public transport sector is sure to achieve **net-zero greenhouse gas emissions** at the latest by 2050.

UITP's vision of future public transport services includes the following characteristics:

AVAILABLE AND ACCESSIBLE

- Covering all parts of cities, suburbs and rural areas (“no blank spot without public transport”), providing better commuter opportunities between cities as “core” and the suburbs and the wider (rural) environment;
- Increased capacities to allow for safe distancing and to cater for additional passengers;
- Affordable services to all citizens including the elderly and persons with reduced mobility;
- Multiple, easy links to other modes of transport;

HIGH QUALITY

- Comfortable;
- Clean;
- Excellent quality of service, including up-to-date customer information;
- Improved commercial speed, frequency and reliability thanks to dedicated (bus/tram) infrastructure and public transport prioritisation;
- Providing new services and flexible capacities, depending on demand;
- Safe and secure for passengers, employees and third parties;
- Providing quick information and restoration of services in case of an incident;
- Customer friendly, offering positive human interactions with the staff;

SUSTAINABLE AND RESOURCE EFFICIENT

- Providing carbon neutral public transport by 2050;
- Fully applying the circular economy approach;
- Guaranteeing a sound financial management;
- Flexible services better adapted to the demand (on-demand mobility);

INNOVATIVE AND INTEGRATED

- Improving operations based on artificial intelligence and new tools;
- Smooth digital customer information, ticketing services and complaint/incident handling;
- Effective multimodal and cross-border cooperation;
- Traditional mass public transit with complementary, shared sustainable mobility options, all co-ordinated in a MaaS-like system with the oversight of a strong public regulator;
- Cooperation based on mutual and fair data exchange between all (public and private) actors involved;

RESILIENT

- Prepared for and able to withstand new crises linked to climate change, pandemics, changing mobility behaviour, flexible demand, etc.;
- Backed by sustainable public financing plans that guarantee that sufficient funding for the necessary investments is available in the short and long term;

GOOD EMPLOYER

- Offering safe jobs that cannot be delocalised;
- Employing people at all levels of education;
- Offering equal opportunities to people of all genders and backgrounds.



WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE: 25 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM UITP

In order to make daily mobility Green Deal compatible, resilient and socially sound, UITP recommends the following approaches and actions to be included in the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy.

- 1** UITP is an advocate of the “**avoid-shift-improve**” principle to successfully transform the transport system: avoiding unnecessary traffic, shifting to the most sustainable modes of transport (i.e. public transport, walking and cycling), and improving each mode of transport. Recent years have shown that improving transport alone will not be sufficient. Much rather, the EU's strategy should make the shift towards public transport and other sustainable mobility a priority. The 2011 White Paper stated that curbing mobility was not an option; this position should now be re-considered. While it is clear that citizens cannot be told not to travel, it is key to help them reflect on their own choices and encourage them to adopt a healthy, climate-friendly and resource-efficient lifestyle, which includes reducing unsustainable habits. Employers play a role, too, as they can facilitate working from home, provide job tickets for public transport, and encourage business trips by sustainable modes. The Climate Pact can contribute to engaging citizens and businesses in achieving this goal. Europe needs mobility, but with less traffic.
- 2** **Achieving a modal shift for local and daily mobility has to be a European priority.** In fact, the fastest and most cost-efficient way to decarbonise people's daily mobility and reduce CO₂ and pollutant emissions is to accelerate the shift towards mass transit, multi-modal mobility, walking and cycling. Each of these components shall be strengthened in order to enable a life without owning a private car. Local authorities should be encouraged to set specific modal shift targets for their territory; these could either be expressed as increase of public transport ridership, in terms of a changed modal split, or as “zero growth” target for motorized individual transport. Massive investments into high-level public transport services (such as commuter railways; bus rapid transit (BRT) systems; extension of urban metro and tram systems) are required. **The European Union should create a framework that is favourable to the shift towards sustainable public transport.** The ambitious objectives of the Green Deal can only be attained when urban and regional mobility and the shift towards public transport becomes a priority for Europe.
- 3** **Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans** are an important tool and should be linked to EU funding in order to incentivise more cities to adopt such plans. A focus could be put, for example, on separate or dedicated infrastructure for public transport as well as the prioritisation of public transport, which can significantly improve the speed and reliability of shared, collective transport. Dedicated bike lanes and pedestrian areas with a good connection to public transport should also be established. In general, SUMP's should integrate more areas like **energy, spatial and climate protection planning** into mobility planning. All these areas have to play together with the common aim of designing our cities in a more thoughtful and greener way.
- 4** The European framework should be designed in a way that it enables competent **local authorities to find the most appropriate mobility solutions** for their territory. In order to

contribute to strengthening the social cohesion, it is important to offer affordable, shared, high quality mobility choices to all citizens.

- 5 The big “blank spot” are the **suburbs and rural areas**, which lack attractive alternatives to the private car; these areas should be encouraged to look into shared mobility options. Better commuter connections to larger cities need to be provided via railways or bus rapid transit systems. European legislation should not hinder the developments of such vital links.
- 6 Future **investments and research funding** for sustainable urban mobility and collective transportation modes should be further strengthened by means of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) – increasing the financing dedicated to urban nodes –, European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Cohesion Fund (CF), and an array of other financing tools under **forthcoming EU budgets**. The funds are directly contributing to expanding and improving local public transport networks, hence enabling more people to use sustainable mobility options. Dedicated EU funds and financing towards public transport means – among others – shifting to clean vehicles (requiring the set-up of charging and refuelling infrastructure), fostering digitalisation, maintaining and modernizing existing infrastructures and making them resilient to extreme weather and climate change, and enabling flexible forms of public transport (such as on-demand transport). Moreover, any new legislation affecting the public transport sector should be accompanied by a relevant financing package that must be easily and readily available to cover additional costs.
- 7 Set up a grant scheme for investments in **smart public transport** and **digitalisation** in order to accelerate the deployment of ITS solutions that can help reduce energy consumption (e.g. smart heating of vehicles at the depot), enable transport integration (e.g. the digitisation of tariffs), etc.
- 8 Generally, in line with its own policy approach towards sustainable financing, the European Union should channel its own investments to sustainable sectors and **taxonomy-compatible** projects.
- 9 The Commission should also encourage Member States to analyse in-depth the situation of funding for public transport and the **resilience and long-term security of funding streams**; it should also **encourage ear-marked contributions** e.g. from road tolls or taxes in support of public transport, if this is not yet the case in Member States.
- 10 We urge the Commission to support a **level playing field** between transport modes, taking into account their externalities. This could be achieved e.g. via the “**beneficiary pays**” and “**polluter pays**” principle, through the promotion of congestion charges (depending on the local context and not via European regulation), taxation for CO₂-emitting modes or a reduced energy taxation for public transport services.
- 11 Set up a working group including the Member States and stakeholders dedicated to the follow-up and implementation of the European Commission's 2019 Handbook on the Internalisation of Transport External Costs. Publish guidelines on how best to **recognise and internalise these external costs** (looking at both positive and negative externalities) in all different transport modes. Work towards a legislative instrument to ensure better customer

information on the different externalities caused by each transport mode and more adequate pricing strategies that reflect the costs incurred by these externalities.

- 12 **Smart mobility solutions** are most useful in conjunction with a focus on sustainable mobility. Any **MaaS** (Mobility as a Service) governance framework should contribute to modal shift and guarantee the transport authority's ability to organise mobility on its territory on equal and inclusive terms. Shared mobility solutions should not replace, but complement and feed mass transit services, which remain the backbone of urban mobility. The provision of shared mobility services should be encouraged and facilitated. Given their experience in planning and organising mobility services, public transport operators could in particular contribute to the establishment and fast development of such services. Integrated mobility systems involving several companies should follow the principle of reciprocity (of data exchange and liability) and ultimately enable life without having to own a car.
- 13 Similarly, initiatives like **Cooperative Intelligent Transport Systems** (C-ITS) and the development of **automated vehicles** can become true success stories for future sustainable mobility and benefit all citizens by **putting public transport at their core**. The regulatory framework to test and implement operations with shared autonomous vehicles should be simplified and harmonised across Europe.
- 14 High quality **interchanges** between sustainable transport modes are at the heart of a successful multimodal transport system. Best practices can help local authorities to design such interchanges in a way to minimise walking distance, provide clear and sufficient (real-time) information, provide and promote park and ride facilities as well as safe parking for private modes (bikes and cars). This should also be considered when connecting the TEN-T network to local services via urban nodes.
- 15 When it comes to **open data** or **mobility data sharing**, the EU should consider the role and interests of public services; any initiative shall be governed by the principles of reciprocity and level playing field between all (public and private) actors active in the field of mobility, and should protect the general interest; preferably such issues should be dealt with through sectoral legislation (such as the ITS Directive and delegated regulation 2017/1926) rather than cross-sectoral legislation (like the Open Data Directive).
- 16 Daily local travel remains the principal focus of public transport and accounts by far for the highest share of passengers, as opposed to long-distance, cross-border travels. Accordingly, the development of initiatives **servicing the "European traveller"** remains an additional task beyond the core business. The European Commission can accelerate such services (e.g. the creation of interfaces between existing ticketing systems), based on the know-how in our sector, by ensuring that the necessary government structures are being set up and funded at a larger scale for the whole of Europe.
- 17 Having established targets for clean buses by the revised Clean Vehicles Directive in 2019, there is now an urgent need to scale up effort and funding to set up the **charging, refuelling and depot infrastructure for clean public transport** in the Member States. During the upcoming revision of the DAFI Directive (Dir. 2014/94/EU), the Commission should make the set-up of charging and refuelling stations for buses a priority – including on private

property, for example at bus depots of the transport companies. Without the necessary infrastructure in place, the CVD targets cannot be met in the set timeframe. The EU should not alter the list of alternative fuels in article 2 of the Directive, in order to maintain policy coherence with the recently reviewed Clean Vehicles Directive and to maintain its technology neutrality. Extending the scope of the DAFI Directive to rail transport should be considered in order to facilitate a shift away from diesel propulsion in low-density lines.

- 18 A **circular economy** approach (re. batteries, vehicles, etc.) should be integrated in to transport planning in order to reach the carbon neutrality goal at city level.
- 19 For the development of the European internal market, it is vital to continue **standardisation** activities in order to embrace innovations and accelerate their deployment.
- 20 In its **research and innovation** activities, the Commission should support innovations that accelerate the shift to sustainable mobility (such as public transport) and make mobility more efficient and inclusive.
- 21 The European, national and local level should jointly assess which lessons can be drawn from the **COVID-19** crisis, putting the emphasis on measures that **improve the resilience** of public transport systems and prepare them for future disruptive events. Such measures could include enhancing the flexibility of operations, new hygiene concepts, more automation, or a different engagement with customers.
- 22 COVID-19 has also shown us that **flexibility is needed when it comes to the governance of transport services**, e.g. to enable public transport operators to re-negotiate contracts due to a change in passenger demand or to enter into partnerships with on-demand mobility providers when required.
- 23 As public transport is a business that plans and invests for decades ahead, the sector needs **regulatory stability**. This includes, for instance, the European Regulation 1370/2007.
- 24 Before suggesting any new legislation, the European Commission should **assess** whether this legislation will contribute to modal shift (i.e. whether it will benefit or harm public transport).
- 25 The European institutions themselves can **lead by good example** by using the most sustainable travel options and avoiding travel when possible. The promotion of public transport should be included in each institution's communication strategy: they can ensure regular tweets, photos and other messages about their experiences and/or general developments in the public transport sector (and not only in other, less sustainable transport modes).

CONCLUSION

The forthcoming Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy will become a critical framework shaping the transport and mobility ecosystem in the years to come. In order to succeed, the Strategy must prioritize sustainable public transport as the backbone of the local mobility. By applying the “avoid-shift-improve” principle, the EU can meet the Green Deal objectives for transport. Beyond decarbonisation, public transport also supports the achievement of further strategic political and economic priorities, such as reducing congestion, accelerating digitalisation, and ensuring social justice. During the COVID-19 pandemic, public transport continued to provide reliable services to essential workers and all those who needed mobility options. Collective and active modes of transport should now be an essential part of sustainable post-lockdown economic recovery.

The European Commission, supported by the Member States and local governments, should take all the initiatives necessary to create a policy framework that supports modal shift. As the public transport sector also needs a substantial level of investments in order to become more attractive and move towards net-zero carbon mobility, a good mix of funding and financial instruments under the Next Generation EU and the MFF 2021-2027 should go towards sustainable urban mobility. In fact, any mobility project presented as part of the national recovery and resilience plans should contribute and accelerate the shift to clean and shared mobility. **In fact, any mobility project presented as part of the national recovery and resilience plans should contribute and accelerate the shift to clean and shared mobility.**

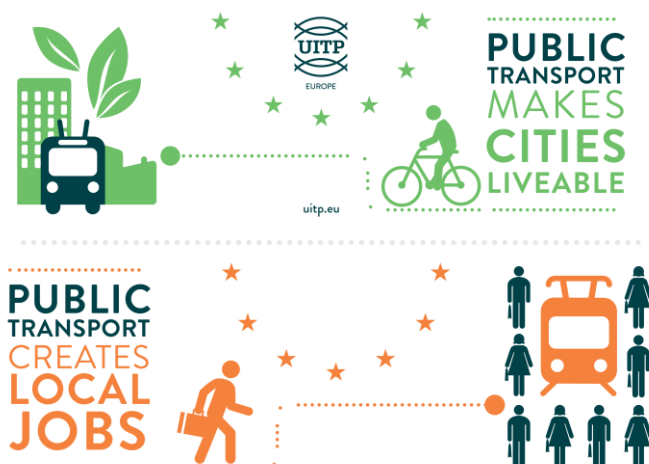
The Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy forms a historic opportunity to increase ambitions, start over and build better living environments for the citizens. Public transport is fundamental to achieving sustainable urban mobility, building resilient cities, combating climate change, and boosting local economies leaving no one and no place behind. All these challenges can only be met with a clear priority given to collective passenger transport as a vital pillar for economic, social and environmental recovery and growth. **After the Covid-19 crisis, we need to go back to better mobility to build better cities, and better lives, across Europe.**

About UITP EUROPE

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. We represent the perspective of short distance passenger transport services by all sustainable modes: bus, regional and suburban rail, metro, light rail, tram and waterborne.

Public transport's contribution to sustainable and smart mobility

- Public transport constitutes the **most climate-friendly way of travelling** besides walking and cycling. Without public transport, the Green Deal and the goal of carbon neutral cities will not be reached.
- Public transport **improves quality of urban life**. In European cities, public transport by rail and road replaces millions of car trips each day, while requiring less energy and less road space than individual mobility, hence **reducing congestion and local pollution**.
- Public transport is a **forerunner of innovations** such as automation, connected vehicles, ticketless payment, etc. It is a tech-savvy sector that constantly improves.
- Public transport **provides vital links** between people and their work places and is a **reliable** service that serves even the less profitable areas in cities and will continue to exist in the long term.
- Public transport **empowers the economy** e.g. through infrastructure investments, cooperation with local SMEs, connecting people with their workplace and other relevant destinations, keeping cities vibrant and alive. The wider economic benefits of public transport are five times higher than the money invested in it.
- The sector directly provides **employment** for more than 2 million people in the EU. Public transport companies are amongst the largest employers in a city and provide many different types of jobs – from less qualified to highly qualified – to people with diverse backgrounds. These jobs cannot be delocalised.
- Public transport is **fully inclusive**, offering affordable services to all European citizens. Travelling by public transport costs half or less of travelling by a private car, allowing those who cannot find housing in city centres or close to their workplace to travel at acceptable cost.
- Public transport is an **enabler of sustainable tourism**, providing the first and last mile of any long-distance trip.
- Public transport authorities and operators are **drivers of integration**, already cooperating with a multitude of mobility providers in their own region.
- Public transport encourages an active lifestyle amongst its regular users and helps to improve air quality, hence contributing to people's **health**.
- Public transport by rail and road is amongst the **safest** modes of transport; expanding public transport can therefore help to reduce the number of (fatal) traffic accidents.
- Due to its multiple benefits, expanding public transport is one of the recommendations stated in the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.



Public transport's contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals

When taking office, Commission President von der Leyen called for the full implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and included this task in each mission letter to her fellow Commissioners. All European Member States have signed up the SDGs, so the statements in the SDG can hence be a good starting point for the European Commission's strategy that wants to get the Member States' support. For instance, the specific target SDG 11.2 aims, by 2030, to provide "access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons".

At the local and regional level, the relevant authorities and public transport undertakings are clearly at the heart of SDG 11.2. In order to implement it, furthermore, citizens and private businesses must be aware and engaged in the process. The Commission can raise awareness on this goal and support its implementation. Furthermore, besides reducing congestion, accidents, noise, pollution and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, public transport systems at the same time facilitate access to education, jobs, markets and a range of other essential services to ensure that "no one is left behind". Accordingly, it can be argued that **at least seven SDGs are linked to mobility**, either explicitly through transport-related targets, or via cross cutting dimensions of sustainable transport in urban and territorial policies.

