



To:
Mrs Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission

Mr David Sassoli
President of the European Parliament

Mr Charles Michel
President of the European Council

Mrs Adina-Ioana Vălean
European Commissioner for Transport

Mr Frans Timmermans
First Executive Vice President of the European Commission
for the European Green Deal

Brussels, 3 June 2021

Subject: Make 2022 the European year of rail and public transport

Dear Mrs von der Leyen,
Dear Mr Sassoli,
Dear Mr Michel
Dear Mrs Vălean,
Dear Mr Timmermans,

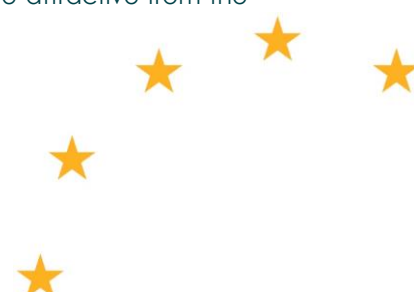
As you may know, there are suggestions by a number of stakeholders to extend the European Year of Rail, currently planned from 1 January to 31 December 2021, by one more year, i.e. until 31 December 2022. UITP agrees with the principle behind this suggestion, i.e. the constraining sanitary context is impeding the full deployment of stakeholders' activities to promote rail – and obviously promoting rail transport in a context of travel restrictions is rather difficult.

UITP's members, public transport operators and authorities, EMTA, EPTO, Polis, EPF are ready to go one step further: **make 2022 a European Year of Rail and Public Transport.**

Because of the key role of public transport to achieve the environmental goals of the European Union, and also because of the complementarity of services between rail and other (overground) public transport, UITP, together with EMTA, EPTO, Polis, and EPF strongly believe that the year 2022 should be a unique opportunity to promote the most sustainable modes of transport, i.e. local, regional, long distance rail, as well as urban public transport in general.

Prior to COVID-19, urban/suburban/regional public transport in Europe accounted for about 180 million passenger journeys daily - including 28 millions of rail passengers who use regional or suburban trains, 30 million passengers using metro, 27 million using tram/light rail, and most of the remainder on urban and suburban bus and interurban coach services. Playing such an important role in the daily life of millions of European citizens, these daily public services deserve to be put in the spotlight. Besides, most rail journeys (including long distance) start and end with a local public transport journey.

Additionally, needless to tell you that the whole public transport sector, be it international / long distance / local rail, and urban public transport in general, needs strong support to regain passengers' confidence in times of COVID; this includes making rail and public transport more attractive from the users' perspective in terms of affordability, reliability and comfort.





The public transport sector has lost about 40% to 70% of passengers since the outreach of the pandemic, and it seems unlikely the situation will improve shortly.

Besides, expanding and extending the activities of the current Year of Rail can be a chance to put current and potential new customers of all public transport systems at the centre of the activities. The sector as a whole could use the opportunities to re-assess customer interests, monitor current performance and advance both customer and environmentally friendly systems across all modes.

Your backing will be essential to give our proposal the best chance to be successful. We would therefore like to ask for **your support to make 2022 a European year of rail and public transport**.

We would be happy to further discuss this idea with you, and look forward to hearing back from you.

Best regards,



Thomas AVANZATA
Senior Director
International Association of
Public Transport



Ruud van der Ploeg
Secretary General
European Metropolitan Transport
Authorities



Josef SCHNEIDER
Chairman
European Passengers' Federation



John Birtwistle
President
European Passenger Transport
Operators



Karen Vancluysen
Secretary General
POLIS





UITP (International Association of Public Transport) is a passionate champion of sustainable urban mobility and is the only worldwide network to bring together all public transport stakeholders and all sustainable transport modes. We have more than 1,600 member companies coming from 99 countries. Our members are public transport authorities and operators, policy decision-makers, research institutes and the public transport supply and service industry.



EMTA (European Metropolitan Transport Authorities) is a not for profit association that unites public transport authorities from 30 larger European cities and metropolitan areas sharing knowledge and experience to manage common challenges in transport and mobility. EMTA connects high executives from public bodies endowed with legal competence to procure, plan, fund and coordinate public transport services.



Because of the growing impact of EU transport policy, passenger organisations from Belgium, Austria, Great Britain, Ireland, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, Luxembourg, and France decided early 2002 to join forces and establish a federation of passenger organisations which could promote the interests of public transport users on the European level.



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.



POLIS is the leading network of European cities and regions working together to develop innovative technologies and policies for local transport. Since 1989, European local and regional authorities have been working together within POLIS to promote sustainable mobility through the deployment of innovative transport solutions.

