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PRESS RELEASE

SUPPORTING THE LOCAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT SECTOR DURING THE ENERGY CRISIS: UITP ISSUES NEW STATEMENT



BRUSSELS, 27 OCTOBER 2022

The European Commission has recognised public transport as the backbone of urban mobility and highlighted its contribution to saving energy – and fulfilling this role means being available and affordable for all citizens.

But the current energy crisis and the increasing inflation have disastrous consequences for the local public transport sector, impacting the mobility of people.

The sector's quick reactions to recent challenges demonstrate the unfailing commitment of public transport to guarantee the mobility of European citizens.

Now, UITP is issuing a statement calling for coordinated measures to secure an uninterrupted and affordable energy supply for public transport.

At this moment, the sector is still confronted with multiple challenges: despite ongoing efforts to bring back passengers from the pandemic ridership falls, staff shortage is a serious concern, especially concerning drivers.

Various reflections and initiatives on tariffs are also ongoing across Europe. Overall, exploding costs, fewer passengers, lower revenues and a growing staff shortage are making it hard to maintain the current service level when the goal should be to increase and improve the offer.

These issues coincide with one another at a time where Europe urgently needs to reduce the emissions of the transport sector. Despite the energy crisis, the goals of the Green Deal need to remain firmly in place.

“Energy expenses represent the second highest operating costs of public transport. Metros, trams, buses, and local trains – they all cannot run without electricity or fuels. We need to ensure that the public transport sector does not have to reduce its offer or pass the high costs on to passengers. Especially during an energy crisis, people need to have affordable mobility options.”

Minna Soininen, President of UITP’s European Union Committee

Local public transport operators and authorities need strong support from European and national leaders to weather this crisis. Beyond the much-needed discussions on restructuring the EU’s energy market and decoupling electricity and gas prices, **UITP calls for coordinated measures to secure an undisrupted and affordable energy supply for public transport:**

The Commission and Member States should acknowledge public transport as a strategic priority. Both the sector’s needs and its contributions to saving energy and providing affordable mobility options to households should be highlighted in future crisis-related communications.

Energy supply to public transport companies should be prioritised in case of a shortage. Member States need to consider public transport in their national crisis responses.

Member States should clarify how the increasing costs for providing public services will be covered. Operators and authorities need as much certainty as possible to plan for the months to come.

European and national leaders should enter in a dialogue with public transport stakeholders. Regular exchanges are needed to identify additional appropriate measures for the local level.

Support for change is high: According to the most recent Eurobarometer survey, 89 per cent of EU citizens are in favour of increasing their country’s investments in public transport infrastructure.

But, if left unaddressed, the impact of increasing energy prices on public transport will dramatically affect the sector’s capacity to continue its role as the backbone of urban mobility and achieve modal shift.

[Read the Statement in full](#)

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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**.

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