

PREPARATION OF A GREEN PAPER ON URBAN TRANSPORT

STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE "URBAN TRANSPORT: PROBLEMS,
SOLUTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES"

MINUTES OF MEETING

CONTRACT TREN/CC/05-2005/06/8/S07.67131

31/1/2007



TABLE OF CONTENT

1.	PROGRAMME	1
2.	OPENING	2
2.1	SUMMARY OF THE PRESENTATIONS	2
3.	FIRST SESSION: THE GREEN PAPER ON URBAN TRANSPORT: WHAT ARE THE EXPECTATIONS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND THE ACTORS CONCERNED?	6
3.1	SUMMARY OF THE PRESENTATIONS	6
3.2	DEBATE	10
4.	SECOND SESSION: URBAN TRANSPORT: WHAT IS THE ADDED VALUE OF ACTIONS AT THE EU LEVEL, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE SUBSIDIARITY PRINCIPLE?	14
4.1	SUMMARY OF THE PRESENTATIONS	14
4.2	DEBATE	22
4.3	SUMMARY OF THE PRESENTATIONS (CONTINUED)	25

Disclaimer

Neither the European Commission, nor any person acting on behalf of the Commission, is responsible for the use which might be made of the information contained in this document. The views expressed in this document have not been adopted or in any way approved by the Commission and should not be relied upon as a statement of the Commission's views.

1. PROGRAMME

Brussels, 31 January 2007

14h00	Opening
14h15	Results of the morning workshop on urban transport and green propulsion Mr. Fotis Karamitsos, Director, European Commission, DG TREN
14h30	Mr. Matthias Ruete, Director General, European Commission, DG TREN <i>Why a Green Paper on urban transport?</i>
14h45	First session <i>The Green paper on urban transport: what are the expectations of local authorities and the actors concerned?</i> Session chair: Mr. Oldřich Vlasák, Member of the European Parliament, Executive President of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) Panel Members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ms Inès Ayala Sender, Member of the European Parliament and of the Committee on Transport and Tourism ➤ Mr. Arcangelo Merella, Urban mobility and transport councillor, Municipality of Genoa ➤ Mr. Camille Durand, Vice-president of Nantes-Métropole ➤ Mr. Emil Calota, Mayor of Ploiesti
15h20	Debate
15h50-16h15	Pause
16h15	Second session <i>Urban transport: what is the added value of actions at the EU level, taking into account the subsidiarity principle?</i> Session chair: Mr. Jörg Hennerkes, State Secretary, German Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Affairs Panel Members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mr. Jacques Barrot, Vice-President of the European Commission in charge of Transport ➤ Ms Danuta Hübner, Commissioner for Regional Policy ➤ Ms Grammatiki Tsingou-Papadopetrou, Director General for Lending Operations, European Investment Bank ➤ Mr. Albert Bore, President of the Commission for Territorial Cohesion Policy, Committee of the Regions ➤ Mr. Paolo Costa, Member of the European Parliament, President of the Committee on Transport and Tourism
17h00	Debate
17h30	Mr. Michel Delebarre, President of the Committee of the Regions of the European Union
17h40	Concluding session, chaired by Mr. Jacques Barrot, Vice-President of the European Commission in charge of Transport
18h00	Closure

2. OPENING

2.1 SUMMARY OF THE PRESENTATIONS

2.1.1 Presentation of the results of the morning workshop on urban transport and green propulsion by Mr. Fotis Karamitsos, Director, European Commission, DG TREN

Mr. Karamitsos welcomes the participants to the launching conference on the preparation of the Green Paper on Urban Transport. He mentions that during the wide public consultations on the different aspects of urban transport, the EC is organising a number of technical workshops. In the morning, the first of these workshops took place, devoted to Urban Transport and Green Propulsion. Mr. Karamitsos gives a short summary of the main themes discussed during this workshop, before going to the wider scope of this afternoon's conference on urban transport at large.

Green propulsion has become a core element of the European transport policy, with the objective to contribute to sustainable mobility in the future. The main challenges to be tackled are:

- To secure energy supply by reducing the dependence of transport on fossil fuels
- To protect the climate by reducing CO₂ emissions from transport
- To improve air quality by decreasing pollutant emissions from vehicles.

The Commission therefore has taken action to improve energy efficiency in transport, counter the growth of CO₂ emissions from transport, and lower pollutant emissions from transport.

Specific policy measures have been taken by the Commission:

- To improve the energy efficiency and CO₂ emissions of cars through voluntary agreements between the EC and the automotive industry
- To promote the market development of alternative fuels through setting of market targets and the possibility of tax reductions and other economic incentives
- To reduce over the years the limits for polluting exhaust gases from vehicles through gradual tightening of the corresponding Euro standards.

Recent policy development on the European level has taken a strategically oriented, holistic approach. Sustainable development has been integrated into sectoral policy.

In the workshop of this morning, we devoted the first session to technological and economical aspects of clean and energy efficient vehicles, and a second session to possible ways of political and economic support for these technologies.

In the first session, the automotive industry presented an impressive record of technological improvements, leading to lower emissions of the main pollutants, as regulated by the Euro standards. They also reported on the introduction of fuel saving technologies and the market penetration of low-consumption cars. For the future, they advocated an integrated approach,

with all actors involved, industry, policy makers, consumers, taking their responsibility as developed in CARS 21, the pioneering Commission's initiative in this field. The research and development projects under way in industry and funded by the Community Framework Programme gave a bright outlook into further possible reduction of energy consumption, CO₂ emissions and pollutant emissions through technological improvements of vehicles.

An integrated view on the environmental and economic bill of the different fuels was presented by a speaker of the European consortium, who has established the most complete well-to-wheels analysis of all possible fuel pathways in a joint effort of the European automotive and oil industry, together with the Joint Research Centre Ispra of the European Commission. The result shows that there is no single golden solution, but an optimised mix of different routes will be needed. More than with the present single supply from oil, a holistic assessment will be required, which takes fully into account not only the emissions and the energy efficiency during the use of a vehicle, but also the bill on the way of the fuel from the energy source to the tank on board a vehicle.

A speaker from the NGO's has presented interesting proposals on how public procurement could send an example and promote advanced technologies. He has asked the European manufacturers to produce less powerful and less energy-consuming vehicles. Procurement criteria should include pollution, energy consumption, CO₂ emissions and noise. A possible approach could be a point score system for these impacts. Public authorities could choose which criteria they want to include, but they should reach a minimum score at the end.

The discussion that followed focused on the ways that "heavy smokers" could be helped to go out of the city centres. It is worthwhile to note that in one of the cities mentioned, 10% of all the vehicles contributed to more than half of the NO_x emissions.

The second session opened with a brief presentation on the Commission's initiative on the promotion of clean and energy efficient vehicles through public procurement.

A possible new way forward could include vehicle procurement on a voluntary basis of new Euro standards, after these standards are adopted by the Council and the Parliament and before they have to be applied on a general mandatory basis. Another element could be the introduction of life-time costs for energy consumption, CO₂ emissions and pollutant emissions as award criteria for the procurement of vehicles.

The oil industry gave an overview of the development of standards for clean vehicles and fuels, showing a substantial improvement of regulated pollutant emissions until recently. They stressed the need to consider fuels and vehicle as a single system. The integrated view of a well-to-wheels assessment was underlined. Significant potential for further reductions in fuel consumption and emissions was projected and gave reason to believe that political actions in support of clean and energy efficient vehicles are a worthwhile undertaking.

The French Agency for Environment and Energy Management gave an overview on their support programme and economic incentives to promote clean and energy efficient vehicles and their progress in market penetration. They asked for a definition of clean and energy efficient vehicles at European level.

UITP¹, representing public transport operators, gave examples of local actions in support of green procurement. They have worked out recommendations for a model of harmonised green tendering based on lifecycle cost analysis, and including environmental impact and

¹ International Association of Public Transport

fuel consumption. The need for public funding and fiscal incentives for clean energy use was underlined as well.

The experience of a municipality with green procurement was presented by the Vice-President of Nantes Métropole, a city well known in the network of CIVITAS, and with a great potential to transfer their acquired knowledge to other cities across Europe. A pragmatic approach with concrete ideas was assessed, including harmonisation of vehicle homologation at European level, harmonisation of methods for public procurement, need for promotion of joint procurement among EU cities to reduce costs.

During the discussion, the city of Bremen mentioned their initiative to procure buses with EEV (Enhanced environmentally friendly vehicles) standards, which initially faced a negative attitude from the industry. However, the second procurement with the same standards was won by that industry.

2.1.2 "Why a Green Paper on urban transport?" by Mr. Matthias Ruete, Director General, European Commission, DG TREN

Urban transport is one the 21 strategic priorities of the European Commission in 2007, which reflects the importance attached to the sector: 80% of the EU citizens live in urban areas; urban transport is a day to day concern to all of them and directly involves many actors.

For many years, the issue of urban transport was kept hidden behind the principle of subsidiarity. As a consequence, very little initiatives and proposals were put forward by the EC for the last ten years.

Time has come to change that attitude. Messages received from politicians, representatives of the European Institutions, local authorities and citizens call for actions at European level. There are expectations from the EU while its real competences are limited.

We have already been working indirectly on that sector through regulating questions of the internal market, of public procurement, through developing rules on energy, rules on air quality, through fixing rules for regional policy and research actions. We have always been indirectly interfering with Urban Transport Policy, but without integrating the urban transport dimension and the effects on urban transport.

Urban transport is about cities and their surrounding areas, where change for the better is possible when led by determined local politicians who are best placed to implement such change in terms of appropriate mix of measures. There have been successful stories and exchanges of best practices, but now we have to go beyond the exchange of best practices.

With the Green Paper and the subsequent debate, we can do more and better and we are convinced that, while fully respecting the principle of subsidiarity, the EU can add value to actions already being taken at local level. In partnership with you, we want to identify barriers to successful Urban Transport Policies and, for specific actions, propose joint solutions. Subsidiarity is not an obstacle, but a challenge and an opportunity to enrich each other.

There will be opportunities for a European policy to achieve harmonisation, better coordination and cooperation at European level and to identify good ways for financial support, and if and when necessary, new legislation. We will repeal existing legislation or

possibly introduce new legislation regarding for example interoperability questions, cross-border pursuit of traffic offenders, air quality, etc.

The Green Paper and the subsequent debate will only be the beginning of a process of finding solutions to problems, exchanging views and making progress towards the development of a genuine European policy on Urban Transport.

It should also be emphasized that the Urban Transport Policy is to be seen as part of the European Energy Policy, whose major problem is the reduction of GHG emissions and climate warming. In the urban transport sector, there are opportunities to set up win-win solutions to achieve GHG² emission reductions, energy consumption reductions, i.e. to consistently integrate energy and transport policies.

Ten years ago, when Commissioner Neil Kinnock launched the Citizen's Network initiative, the Member States said: "hands off, subsidiarity!" While respecting the Member States request, we launched actions such as the CIVITAS initiative, or actions addressing the public service obligations, but these were rather modest contributions. All elements and initiatives have to be pulled together and structured in the view to develop a consistent Urban Transport Policy.

Today we are launching a new process. Europe will be contributing to urban mobility while at the same time respecting the principle of subsidiarity.

Mr. Ruete then briefly presents the agenda of the conference and the different speakers who will intervene. Time for a debate is limited today and therefore there will be no time for long interventions. If the stakeholders have contributions to make, they are invited to make them in writing in the coming weeks.

² Greenhouse gas

3. FIRST SESSION: THE GREEN PAPER ON URBAN TRANSPORT: WHAT ARE THE EXPECTATIONS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND THE ACTORS CONCERNED?

3.1 SUMMARY OF THE PRESENTATIONS

3.1.1 Presentation of Mr. Oldřich Vlasák, Member of the European Parliament, Executive President of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)

The Green Paper is a policy instrument that aims to launch a wide public consultation on sustainable urban transport. In CEMR, we all believe that all European policies should be based on the subsidiarity principle and respect the local governments. They should be respected in any regulatory measure having impacts on urban and regional transport.

The panellists will share their views and expectations on the role of the EU regarding aspects of the urban transport. They will address questions such as:

- Is there added value for European Union actions in urban transport?
- If yes, in which fields?
- Do EU policies create any barriers to efficient transport policies in our cities?

Mr Mark Watts and Mr Michel Destot were not in a position to attend this Conference, but Mr Vlasák informed the participants that Ms Inès Ayala Sender, who is member of the European Parliament, member of the Commission of Transport and Tourism, member of the Commission on Budgetary Control and substitute member of the Commission on Regional Development will participate to this panel.

3.1.2 Presentation of Ms Inès Ayala Sender, Member of the European Parliament and of the Committee on Transport and Tourism

Ms Ayala Sender started through congratulating Mr Barrot for having launched this initiative and having made it a priority for 2007. 80% of EU citizens live in cities and urban transport problems are part of their everyday life. She mentioned she was not surprised by this initiative because Mr Barrot is very aware of territorial and local problems and he also has an integrated approach of the European transport policy.

In this European framework, all is about cooperation of different players, which is essential for success. In the Transport Commission, the members are drawing their opinion on this.

Small and large cities are facing a common challenge:

- How can we increase mobility? Mobility is more and more democratised and citizens claim a right for mobility.
- How can we reduce its negative related effects: accidents, congestion, pollutant emissions?

Initiatives have already been taken by the EC: the CIVITAS initiative, research programmes are steps towards this debate.

Under the German presidency – the German Minister of Transport is very sensitive to such problems: he himself led a very successful story in the difficult context of the City of Leipzig – the Transport Council has proposed that urban transport be included in the general proposal. This is linked to the Lisbon strategy wherein transport, of course including urban transport, should be given a rightful place.

The Community framework is essential for discussion of this initiative. There is a need for a strong institutional cooperation to make this process a serious commitment for the future, as citizens wish. Urban transport should among other elements contribute to increase the economic efficiency of the cities.

Subsidiarity must be an essential aspect of the decision making process: there has to be that autonomy for the local decision makers. There should however be a role for Europe. The Green Paper will help us define the respective decision making powers, and there must of course be cooperation between local and regional authorities, the Member States and the EC.

Urban transport is a very complex matter and the EC is right in having a broad set of consultations: all parties, all players have to contribute in bringing their respective best experience and know-how. Congestion and pollution happen everywhere, but they are felt most severely in cities. So experiences as well as best practices must be exchanged in the framework of European networks of cities. Cities differ from each other and they tackle the urban transport problems considering their respective cultures and traditions.

Ms Ayala Sender comes from Saragossa, a medium size city with a population of one million inhabitants, so it benefits from the advantages of the large cities without facing their problems. Saragossa faced in the past problems of access to water and most of the population of its rather large region is concentrated in the city. The city has applied to host the 2008 International Exhibition on Water and Sustainable Development.

The city is wholly committed towards sustainable development and energy efficiency. Urban transport is mainly based on bus and taxi fleets. Solutions such as traffic management schemes have been implemented and the bus fleet is going to be renewed.

Questioning the fact that private car could be the solution for urban transport, the transport plan of the city of Saragossa is committed towards public transport intermodality, notably through considering developing a light rail network (going back to the previous situation: up to the sixties, Saragossa was served by a tramway network), which is somewhat difficult because a river flows across the city and many streets are narrow, and trying to make better use of the taxis. Ms Ayala Sender also urges those cities which still have a tramway network, notably cities in the new Member States, to keep and modernise it. To summarise the above, the city is trying to recover a sustainable mobility.

The Spanish Ministry of Transport has drawn a Strategic Plan to assist all the cities in the country to develop sustainable urban transports.

3.1.3 Presentation of Mr. Arcangelo Merella, Urban mobility and transport councillor, Municipality of Genoa

Mr Merella expresses its thanks to the EC in his name and on behalf of the Italian cities. He is of the opinion that this initiative will reinforce the European spirit among the EU citizens.

In Italy, mayors have the responsibility of the local administration and thereby they stand as the right speaking partners for the EC. Transport problems are usually managed by local authorities under the subsidiarity principle but limited available financial resources do not enable them to offer efficient and economic transport services.

As far as the EC wants to hear our views, we need systems which meet our economic, environmental and social needs. When local authorities draw their mobility plans, they have to take account of these. The added value of EC initiative could be in providing local authorities with a framework enabling them to take actions and to draw measures facilitating vehicles traffic in cities and public transport services and cofinancing of the necessary investments to implement efficient and economic public transport services.

As far as subsidiarity is concerned, a reference framework should be aimed at clarifying the distribution of decision powers among the different authority levels.

It should be useful to look at the need and the opportunity of coordination policies of the different modes of transport to reduce barriers to entry on the national market and to guarantee a high level of quality and safety of public transport services in urban areas.

Possible barriers are not to be found at community decision level but sometimes artificial barriers based on local rules are used by local authorities to maintain costly and inefficient public transport services.

The accessibility principle is sacrosanct; however we also see cities whose inhabitants have to travel greater and greater distances to access their workplace, which presents a high social exclusion risk.

A reference framework could assist local administrations in reducing functioning costs, improving efficiency and reducing social costs of public transport systems and thereby increase the competitiveness of our urban areas.

3.1.4 Presentation of Mr. Emil Calota, Mayor of Ploiesti

Mr Calota explains that in his position as Mayor of a Romanian city and his other activities at national and European levels, he is submitted to a strong pressure of time. Notably because as Mayor of Ploiesti he faces the problems of drawing new programmes, designing and implementing new regulatory measures, etc.

For him, difficulties result from the facts that he represents a new Member State and he is also member of the CIVITAS Initiative Political Committee. Also to be noted the fact that Ploiesti is not comparable to bigger cities such as Bremen or Genoa.

In Romania in the domain of urban transport, cities are suffering from infrastructures and equipments being in poor condition and thereby generating negative environmental impacts, very limited financial capacities and poor managerial qualifications.

The opinions expressed hereafter are linked to the discussions which took place during the last meetings of the Political Committee of the CIVITAS Initiative.

His answers to the questions raised in the context of the preparation of the Green Paper are as follows:

- Methods: A good technical assistance for the stakeholders at local level is expected. Also, through the dissemination of the Green Paper, access should be available to recommendations which will be very helpful to implement actions at local level and draw transport plans.
- Added value would be in having packages of convergent measures, to coordinate local plans in accordance with the European policy and to enable better use of the Structural Funds.
- Barriers to the implementation of appropriate actions could be avoided through a good assessment of integrated urban planning measures based on knowledge gained in the context of the participation to the CIVITAS Initiative: therefore regional networks should be considered and created to assist cities in the new Member States.
- The justification of action at EU level considering the principle of subsidiarity: for him the present situation requires clarification and harmonisation from the EC.

Last but not least, Mr Calota puts forward a strong need for skilled civil servants at local level, capable of drawing appropriate measures and transport plans. In other words actions for building operational capacities and finance support for training are crucial and very welcome.

Mr Calota thanks the organisers: he is convinced that having the Green Paper based on the experience of European cities is the best way to draw a useful document.

3.1.5 Presentation of Mr. Camille Durand, Vice-president of Nantes-Métropole

The Green Paper must be the essential element enabling local authorities to develop urban transport with a view to prevent climatic warming. Mayors and other organising authorities need criteria to select best solutions so that the transport system contributes to improve air quality. This implies the need to rethink both the urban planning and the urban mobility.

Nantes goes back to a tramway system. There has been a tramway network in Nantes from 1870 to 1950, when the public transport network was wholly converted to bus operation. In 1977, it became obvious that the city was going to be asphyxiated by private cars traffic and parking.

Newly elected local politicians on the one hand opposed decisions of the French State regarding the construction of urban motorways and obtained that motorways by-passed the city instead of penetrating it. On the other hand they decided to consider and build a new tramway network, operated separately from the general road traffic, notably with a view to restore links between disadvantaged neighbourhoods and the city centre. This illustrates what must be an objective of the Green Paper: it must help to rethink the city and to take into account the intermodality and the urbanism.

Cities are also facing the urban sprawl process: the Nantes urban area (following INSEE definition) included 26 municipalities in 1977 and 100 municipalities today! Therefore, in France, organising authorities must conclude agreements with regional authorities – which are competent regarding regional railway services – to integrate urban and suburban-regional public transport services in terms of time schedule coordination and common fares. In Nantes, tariff integration has been done seven years ago and railway patronage in the urban area was thereby multiplied by 10, 15, 20 and even 40 and the regional authorities should buy additional trains to meet the new demand.

The Green Paper should insist on the need to offer attractive perspectives and forecast related resources.

There is also a need at European level to standardise new bus technologies (for example for Natural Gas vehicles) to facilitate their market insertion, i.e. to reduce the development and manufacturing costs by economies of scale to be generated through large numbers of vehicles being manufactured. In other words there should be an additional step towards integration. There are presently a number of new technological orientations being favoured, but if efforts are too dispersed, costs will remain high.

Public transports must be attractive, comfortable and reliable: some kind of harmonisation could be achieved in that direction.

The Green Paper should open the debate addressing competition for public space between the public transport and the private car. How can this be achieved at detriment of the private car? Mr Durand refuses the option of urban road pricing because the disadvantaged inhabitants are to suffer most from it.

In Nantes, Mr Durand retained the solution which consists of reducing the public space dedicated to general road traffic thereby facilitating public transport vehicles traffic; in addition free of charge park-and-ride facilities have been created at the periphery of the city and more expensive parking in the city centre for the home to work trips.

The texts emanating from the European institutions and in particular the Green Paper should be such that there is one community instead of a patchwork of 27 countries.

3.2 DEBATE

3.2.1 Question from Mr. Stefan Heimlich, representative of the European Transport Workers' Federation

A joint statement by the UITP³-European Union Committee and the European Transport Workers' Federation on the proposed Green Paper on urban mobility is available at the conference.

The Green Paper should address the problem of the training of the workers of the public transport sector. Transport safety could be enhanced if staff members are properly trained,

³ International Association of Public Transport

so clients would be well serviced and patronage would increase. Drivers training should be such that they can always react appropriately in case of accident risk.

3.2.2 Question from Mr. Claudio Cicatiello, President of the CEEP⁴

The public transport operators are to provide good accessibility, so that it would be easier to use public transport instead of private transport means. This implies the need for qualities such as comfort of vehicles, security of driving, regularity and high commercial speed of services. Comfort and security are a matter of concern for the sole operators while regularity and punctuality are adversely impacted by road traffic congestion. The Green Paper could greatly help operators through giving prescriptions to local authorities to improve such situations, while respecting the principle of subsidiarity.

When the size of the urban area increases, the main question is about trip duration. The reduction of road traffic congestion is an essential prerequisite for this.

3.2.3 Question from Mr. Paul Astier Vice-president of the Urban Community of Lille Métropole

The Green Paper should also open the debate to the freight transport and delivery problems in urban areas: they contribute to congestion, often block roads by stopping on traffic lanes and cause pollution.

3.2.4 Question from the Secretary General of the European Cycling Federation

There has been little or nearly no contribution regarding the role of cycling in urban areas. Mr Ruete spoke about intermodality and pronounced the word cycling, but nothing more. We estimate that the role of cycling should be more widely addressed in the Green Paper.

3.2.5 Question from Mr. Dionelis, Secretary General of the ASECAP-Association of Motorways with tolls

Mr Dionelis' concern is about traffic management in cities. According to him, municipalities actually make micro-management of traffic while there should be an integrated management for the urban area as a whole. His question is about who will manage the micro-managers.

⁴ Centre européen des entreprises à participation publique et des entreprises d'intérêt économique général

3.2.6 Answers from Mr. Durand

Concerning the cyclists, walking and cycling must be taken into consideration in mobility plans. The main concern is mobility whatever be the means being used. There must of course be concern for cycling and walking, including provision of specific infrastructure for them.

Mobility should be mentioned in the Green Paper and in particular companies' mobility plans.

Freight transport and delivery operation is another concern that must be addressed: freight transport operators want to use bigger vehicles in cities. Therefore, the organisation of the cities should be thought so that appropriate means for long and short distance transport are used. Solutions such as night operation have been envisaged but inducing possible noise problems. There is obviously a need for a chapter addressing the urban logistics in the Green Paper.

3.2.7 Answers from Mr. Merella

Adequate solutions should be found for freight transport in urban areas. CIVITAS is an innovative system, aiming at disseminating information to all cities.

3.2.8 Answers from Ms. Ayala

Public transport drivers' training is a matter of the Lisbon Strategy, which aims at reinforcing staff training.

Especially people with reduced mobility and women with children must feel safe when travelling by public means.

Regarding quality of public transport operation, Ms Ayala Sender mentions that users often complain about the lack of information about transport services. User information systems can bring solutions concerning real time information about trip duration, regularity and compliance to the time schedules, possible problems on route.

3.2.9 Summary of the different issues and answers from Mr. Ruete

As far as prevention of climate warming and energy consumption are concerned, modal shift in favour of public transport or soft transport modes is one of the most effective ways of progressing, but this was practically never mentioned here.

Road safety should also be addressed as there are still too many accidents.

Regarding mobility of persons and goods, these must be reflected in the Green Paper. As far as delivery of goods is concerned, it could be envisaged to have such operations being performed at night, but this raises the problem of noise nuisances and the need for more severe related standards.

ITS⁵ can actually contribute to improve public transport user information. Punctuality and reliability depend on ITS.

Training of public transport drivers is a condition for quality of service and modal shift.

3.2.10 Mr. Vlasák adds the following highlights

The priorities for future actions are the following:

- Exchange experiences.
- Achieve a better balance between public and private transport.
- Tackle environmental issues in terms of reducing pollutant, CO₂ emissions and noise.
- Incentives and support should be brought to cities through financial assistance of the Structural and Cohesion Funds.
- Cities should be incited to concentrate on education, transport management and training of human resources at all necessary levels.

⁵ Intelligent Transport Systems

4. SECOND SESSION: URBAN TRANSPORT: WHAT IS THE ADDED VALUE OF ACTIONS AT THE EU LEVEL, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE SUBSIDIARITY PRINCIPLE?

4.1 SUMMARY OF THE PRESENTATIONS

4.1.1 Presentation of Mr. Jörg Hennerkes, State Secretary, German Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Affairs, session Chairman

European cities are a model of success: they are the expression of our historical development, they give our continent its features and their diversity is a precious part of our cultural heritage.

Mobility is a basic need of our society: it creates possibilities for social development and it represents the basic condition for economic life and division of labour.

Cities have a very specific role: more clearly than anywhere else the close link with the city designs mobility and the quality of life.

As in many parts of Europe, a large part of the German population lives in cities, and as many cities continue to grow the need for mobility increases as well. But if our towns and cities continue to fulfil their function as centre for the residents, economic operators, trade and cultural life, then the continuously growing traffic has to be managed in an environmentally friendly manner as possible.

So traffic problems in our regions have to be reduced without mobility of citizens and location of activities having to suffer from this. Therefore efficient and economic public transport systems represent the foundation for urban mobility. However, to some extent, clean cars and lorries are also vehicles to be considered in this context.

Infrastructure suited to the needs of pedestrians and cyclists must be available in the city for short distance trips.

And above all we have to face the demographic changes whereby we are all getting older. This is altogether a challenge and an opportunity to design urban mobility systems for the future.

Now, to solve urban transport problems, a lot of solutions have already been explored and there have been many contributions made in different domains and different Member States.

The concept of avoiding traffic has not been mentioned during the first session, however this is something very important for the development of our towns.

There is a need to develop environmentally friendly cars for the city: to have vehicles with low emissions or better no emissions at all.

Walking and cycling must be seen as very environmentally friendly modes of transport, especially for short distances.

Many different policies have already been considered in conjunction with the transport policy: environment policy, regional development policy, etc, but solutions have been developed within sectors taken individually.

What is missing is an integrated approach to resolve urban mobility problems in Europe. This approach has to take up all these approaches in separated areas and to gear them towards urban transport finding solutions to its problems.

This brings us to the question of the added value of the Green Paper on Urban Transport. It is necessary to make the public sensitive to the fact that sector-based approaches are not appropriate and aware that only an integrated approach can really make a significant contribution to resolve problems. But added value can also take the form of proposals for the delimitation of responsibilities when it comes to resolving specific urban problems. Drawing Community standards for vehicles or elaborating air quality directives can be seen as a form of added value, but added value can also be found in mutual exchange of experiences or good examples which are available and can be demonstrated. And we should not forget attempts to provide financing of the sustainable urban transport policy in Europe.

So, a Green Paper which stimulates discussions, makes policy proposals, encourages the exchange of best practices, fosters research, is of interest for everyone. A Green Paper, which organises a debate with a maximum of participants in the respect of the subsidiarity principle, is the good approach.

The panellists are invited to express their opinions regarding the following four questions:

- What expectations do you have about the Green Paper on urban transport?
- In which areas could measures taken by the European Community represent a potential added value?
- Are there obstacles which would prevent transposing efficient and sensible urban transport policy measures?
- Which role should subsidiarity and Member State actions play in the debate about measures taken at the EU level in urban transport?

4.1.2 Presentation of Mr. Jacques Barrot, Vice-President of the European Commission in charge of transport

The Green Paper on urban transport should be adopted in autumn 2007 as this initiative is one of the 21 priority initiatives of the EC for 2007. Priority because:

- 80% of the EU citizens live in cities;
- All citizens use the same infrastructures, whatever be the mode of transport used;
- 40% of CO₂ emissions are generated by urban transport as well as 70% of the other pollutants;
- One third of the fatal road accidents take place in cities;

- The congestion problem which the citizens are facing in their everyday life is concentrated in and around cities.

To improve mobility means to reduce emissions, accidents and congestion. Innovating solutions are requested and related work must start right now. The Green Paper must identify obstacles to the implementation of an urban transport policy. The EU must indeed respect the subsidiarity principle, but the EC may promote studies, research, legislative and financial frameworks. The EC may play the role of a catalyst and utilise several instruments, possibly of legislative nature, and federate qualifications in the view of achieving common objectives. Concerns about the respect of the subsidiarity principle should not be in any way a barrier to proposals for new initiatives.

The public consultation which will be launched within a few days on the Internet will enable stakeholders and citizens to express their opinions. The debate must be quite free, widely open and innovative.

Mr Barrot thanks Ms Hübner for participating and for being very attentive to this aspect of the Green Paper process.

Experiences have already been carried out: in the framework of the CIVITAS initiative, 100 million € have been dedicated to help 40 European cities to improve their transport systems with extensive packages of measures. Other Community programmes have been devoted to investments in the development of clean vehicles: buses powered by fuel cells, buses using alternative fuels, etc. The results of these experiences should be evaluated, to identify most promising technologies for the short and long terms.

In short, the situation looks mature enough to envisage translation of successes into common solutions, i.e. these good practices should be gathered within a concrete framework, possibly with legislative aspects.

Several orientations are to be envisaged, such as:

- Regulation of the infrastructure use;
- Pricing of the use of infrastructures: this is an important aspect and results achieved in London through congestion charging should incite to envisage extension to other cities;
- Management of transport demand to influence user behaviour and favour modal shifts;
- Development of new technologies and innovations for vehicles and fuels, implementation of intelligent transport systems (ITS).
- A major concern should be about the integrated character of the approach.

As a conclusion, exchanging experiences will enable to prepare the future of the urban European citizen in a way that suits not only the needs of the economic activities but also everyone's family life and social life.

4.1.3 Presentation of Ms Danuta Hübner, Commissioner for Regional Policy

It should be looked at added value of actions taken at EU level from the point of view of the Commissioner in charge of the Regional policy. The urban dimension of regional policy has been strengthened during the last years and will become still more prominent in the near future.

Messrs Barrot and Ruete are far from being alone in supporting the Green Paper on urban transport initiative. All in the Commission agree on the importance of this initiative and of the implications for their respective domain of competence.

Cities must be appealing to attract investors and potential inhabitants. In short, improved urban transport can contribute to increase cities attractiveness for inhabitants and workers.

Urban transport is a complex policy area that can contribute to improve the situation and achieve objectives in other domains such as environment and climate change, energy efficiency and air quality, public health, social exclusion, etc; therefore cities have to design integrated management strategies for their transport systems.

European largest urban areas are not at the starting point of this process: work has already been carried out in this respect by many cities, and the Green Paper should encourage other cities to do the same.

To those who are asking why initiatives should not be left to the Member States, regional and local authorities, it must be replied that there are several reasons why urban transport is an issue at EU level. Experience has shown that there is a huge added value from common programming and common investment projects. In the cohesion policy, the urban dimension has been reinforced for the next coming period of investment programming. One of the priorities from the Community Strategic Guidelines, as approved last year by the Member States, will be the promotion of sustainable environment networks in the transport sector, particularly in urban areas.

In several Member States, France, Ireland, Spain, Greece, Portugal, projects have been realised and showed that the EU support can make huge differences: for example the development of tramway systems in Valenciennes and Clermont-Ferrand in France or in Santa Cruz in the Canary Islands. During the 2000-2006 period, the EU has devoted 2.3 billions € to investments in urban transport projects. The process was not only about financing but also involved thinking together on how to efficiently improve the cities' situations.

For the 2007-2013 investment period, a new financing instrument has been created jointly with the EIB and the Development Bank of the Council of Europe. This instrument called JESSICA (Joint European Support for Sustainable Investments in City Areas in the EU) has as an aim to help cities to transform grants received from cohesion programmes into repayable and recyclable assistance to PPP⁶ projects and also other investments in urban renewal and development, including sustainable urban transport projects.

Exchange of experience is at the heart of the cohesion policy: there is a huge potential to use it to reinforce cooperation. This will be continued in the framework of the URBACT initiative which is an appropriate platform for such exchanges. Within URBACT there exist already several exchange networks of cities working together on the various urban transport issues which have been evoked today. Examples are the network led by Athens on alternative transport modes, Kassel on mobility policy, Lyon on accessibility. From the discussions held within these networks one will derive a number of valuable input for the Green Paper. In other words it is important that the thereby accumulated experience should be taken into consideration while drawing the Green Paper.

A Communication of the Commission was adopted last year concerning cohesion policies and cities (in the framework of the Lisbon strategy). It included a number of suggestions for

⁶ Public Private Partnership

investments in urban transport and is thereby launching a new project under the form of an integrated strategy for urban transport.

For the next period the area of urban transport should form part of an integrated strategy for urban areas. This should comprise an integrated approach for urban transport projects and address the various challenges already mentioned by the other panellists. The Green Paper should confirm the decisions taken by Member States in their national strategic plans wherein the urban dimension has been significantly underlined.

There are still barriers to overcome at EC level: everyone at the EC wants to contribute to the Green Paper drawing but policy making has long been sector based. But this now is changing: cross-cutting and coordination are going to be established to bridge policies and use possible synergies to achieve common objectives. This will notably be through inter-service groups (ISG), notably on urban issues and led by the DG Regio and on urban transport issues and led by DG TREN.

There is however still room for improvement and the Green Paper is an important tool to identify any bottleneck for the promotion of an efficient urban transport policy and defining a precise set of policy measures to be launched.

Finally, as far as subsidiarity is concerned, even though by definition urban transport is something best decided at local level, there is no contradiction between EU policy and the different levels of governance. Cohesion policy is an example of the possibility of linking different levels of governance. All levels have important roles to play and it is only together, within and outside the public sector, at the local, regional and national levels, and with the EC, that the development of sustainable urban transport can become a reality in Europe in the years to come.

4.1.4 Presentation of Ms Grammatiki Tsingou-Papadopetrou, Director General for Lending Operations, European Investment Bank

Cities can be defined as the engines for growth: they are centres of education and excellence, centres for research and innovation. If cities do not support residents performing their everyday personal life and working life in an appropriate way, there will be not only pollution, congestion, etc, but also the decline of Europe.

The EIB runs programmes of the amount of 2 to 3 billions € per year for urban transport projects in Member States cities and some other countries, and supports Cohesion and Regional funds. For projects in EU cities, the financial support of the EC is absolutely essential. For example, without this support, the Athens metro should never have existed. There are many other cases of such situation, notably in countries with weak economies, for infrastructures of the size of a metro line.

Some lessons from EIB experience:

- Implementation delays of projects: they not only induce costs overruns, but also induce discomfort for residents and lack of infrastructure availability;
- Weak framework and administrative obstacles: these are issues for which sharing of experience is very important;

- Weak partnership agreements.

This experience would be very helpful for the future.

There is a serious need for public financial support for urban transport projects, to the extent urban public transport will never be self-sustainable, considering infrastructure as well as operation:

- This is an area where EU can bring substantial benefits. This becomes even more important as we ask the private sector to intervene in financing infrastructures and in this case, EU support has to take into consideration the difficulties and constraints faced when setting up such partnership;
- Pricing of the use of public transport services is also an important issue: very often people stay out of the public transport service simply because they cannot afford buying the required number of tickets to travel from home to their workplace for example, notably when they should have to connect between services under way and there isn't any fare integration;
- There is often a lack of user information regarding time tables, and of possibilities to estimate travel time to and from work;
- When there is a transport demand between the city, its periphery and a wider regional area, there is a need for integration between on the one hand purely urban transport services and on the other suburban and regional services, both in terms of time schedule coordination and fare integration.

In answer to the questions raised:

- The expectations from EIB on the Green Paper on urban transport are as follows:
 - The need to assess the costs and benefits brought by an urban transport project. As urban transport has a strong impact on climate change, it should be financed in order to foster energy efficiency.
 - The need to tackle issues such as passenger rights, technical harmonisation, safety and security, transparency of agreements for production of transport services by private operators, etc;
 - The need to create a framework for transport organising authorities at metropolitan level;
- The added value of EU actions and supports is obvious:
 - Positive and negative experiences should be exchanged
 - R & D actions should be strengthened in order to improve energy efficiency;
- The need to remove barriers: one of the barriers is of course the problem of financing investments and operation; beyond this there is also the problem of improving the implementation of public service contracts. There is thus a need for the design of new financial instruments and for initiatives in terms of legislation;
- As far as subsidiarity is concerned, the EIB is of the opinion that local authorities are close to the citizens and know better what these citizens need and wish. However there is a need for EU actions, notably focused on legislative initiatives and on solutions for the financing of transport projects. Another domain of interest for EU initiatives is the problem of integration and harmonisation of public transport servicing cross-border urban areas.

4.1.5 Presentation of Mr. Paolo Costa, Member of the European Parliament, President of the Committee on Transport and Tourism

The Parliament has welcomed the Green Paper on urban transport initiative. Its members wish to contribute to the consultation process.

There is a ghost in this room: Mr Subsidiarity! How to circumvent the subsidiarity principle without breaching it? The Treaties are absolutely clear that plenty of things can be done and when there is a consensus on a measure, it can be implemented.

Examples of possible areas for useful EU action are as follows:

- Environment protection: much has already been said about it;
- Consumer protection: why should there be more exclusion in certain cities than in other ones? Changing the image of the bus as transport mode: typically bus is seen as a transport means for poor people. How can we change citizen's attitude towards bus so that he would accept to take the bus instead of using his own private car? Accessibility for handicapped people: don't we want that handicapped people enjoy the same level of accessibility in any EU city?
- Safe infrastructure through links between infrastructure on the one hand and the driver and vehicle on the other hand. Can't we imagine that the same rules on safety are imposed in all European cities?
- Improvement of quality of life, for private life as well as business, is the most useful area to really enhance the Lisbon strategy: how can we invest therefore? If we are successful, we will have increased the quality of life, and mobility is part of the quality of life, and we will have increased the competitiveness of the European system.

If we read the small lines of the Treaty, we will find out that a lot can be done to improve urban transport.

4.1.6 Presentation of Mr Albert Bore, President of the Commission for Territorial Cohesion Policy, Committee of the Regions

For the Committee of the Regions, urban transport is a very important issue for Europe as a whole but also for any single European city:

- It will shape the future of our civilisation;
- The use of private car in cities is responsible for a huge part of the CO₂ emissions that contribute to the climate changes, is responsible for much of the traffic congestion, for poor air quality and many other environmental problems which are to be faced in our cities.

The first issue to be addressed is that we should fight for sustainable urban transport systems in order to improve the quality of life of our citizens as well as complying with obligations that EU has assumed when signing the Kyoto Protocol.

On the other hand the demand from citizens for greater mobility in urban areas cannot be ignored. Mobility is about the way of life in modern cities and it is very important to show

mobility for our citizens in order for them to secure the fruits of the economic growth and to share a social cohesion order.

Furthermore security of transport has now become a major concern of our citizens. After the terrorist attacks in New York, Madrid and London, no one feels as safe as he did before when taking a train, a metro, a bus within the city. For the EU, the challenge is how to provide a more sustainable, more secure and yet more efficient urban transport system for the 21st century.

Much of the responsibility for this agenda lies in the cities and towns themselves in accordance with the subsidiarity principle. This issue has been debated many times in the Committee of the Regions and it is important to recall it now. The local level is the appropriate level for decision making on urban mobility, but it is not the only one. There are things the EU should do and things the EU can do. Some of them have been done already.

First of all, it is important to provide an adequate legal framework for local public transport, more particularly after the judgement of the Court of Justice. In February 2006 the Committee of the Regions has adopted a position addressing the EC proposal concerning regulation of public service obligations. Its mainly positive view in respect of the EC proposal is actually rather encouraged as the new proposal is much better than the early one.

Secondly, urban mobility has to be managed in a more efficient way, on the demand side as well as on the supply side. On the demand side, some EU cities have already taken significant measures to reduce traffic in the city centres or to ban traffic during certain periods of the day. So did London and Stockholm through establishing congestion charging systems. Other cities have set up traffic ban or parking restriction measures. It is important that the EU supports these initiatives.

Policies oriented towards demand management must be complemented by measures on the supply side. In this respect, the first issue is the huge need of investments which the cities will have to face during the coming years if there are to be efficiently performing urban transport systems in EU cities. It cannot be considered that all EU cities should be on an equal footing. On the supply side there are considerable differences between old and new Member States, and it should be looked for specific measures for each of them.

A first positive step is the inclusion of sustainable urban transport measures in the Cohesion Funds programmes. It is hoped that even with very limited financial resources the EU will provide funds to the Cohesion Fund but also through the ERDF, and it is important that the EC convinces the Member States to adequately identify and indeed fund urban transport issues within these programmes, that is to include them in their national strategic reference frameworks and operational programmes. This is something the EU should focus on.

As has already been remarked, EU funding cannot be sufficient and there is a need to be very imaginative in bringing additional sources to this agenda – and this is also an aspect of the subsidiarity issue – to supplement EU money with money that will come from national, regional and local funding sources.

Security concerns will also reinforce the need for those investments. The Committee of the Regions produced an outlook opinion on safety in all modes of transport and that opinion favoured a programme providing protection of critical transport infrastructures. Other measures can also be taken at EU level such as exchange of experience and intensified exchange of data between cities.

Moreover sustainable urban transport strategy has to be supported by measures in favour of alternative and non polluting transport systems. It is important that EU continues to support

research and applications of new technologies to ensure cleaner ways of transport. In this respect the EU also brings added value by the multiplying effect that these actions can have.

Three of the issues on which the EU can focus are as follows:

- The exchange of experience between cities, which has to be significantly supported by the EC: initiatives like CIVITAS have to continue over the next programming period and have to be accompanied by more serious efforts in awareness raising among potential users of urban transport forms;
- The need for more coherence between EU policies for urban areas: if a European model of the city has to be defended, a coherent European approach is needed and has to involve in particular initiatives taken by a number of DGs: DG TREN, DG REGIO and DG Environment;
- Partnership with local authorities and the civil society: any policy aimed at improving urban mobility has to be agreed with stakeholders in order to be effective. This means that the EC has to consult more actively with cities before setting out on its legislative programmes.

In conclusion, the principle of subsidiarity has to be interpreted carefully, not as a way to defend exclusive competences but as recognition of the multi-level governance and cooperation that could come about. In other places, I have termed this as the concept of "dynamic subsidiarity": it can and should provide enough room for actions at all levels: local, regional, national and European.

The Committee of the Regions is well disposed for this partnership issue, partnership between the EC, the European Parliament and of course the regional and local authorities in the field of urban transport. The proposed Green Paper is a good opportunity to put such a partnership in place and thereby maximise the added value of each partner's contribution in the area of urban transport.

4.2 DEBATE

4.2.1 Question from a representative of the city of Göteborg

Could there be an idea to talk more about accessibility than mobility in a document about urban transport in order to meet the future demand for fuel prices and CO₂ restrictions?

4.2.2 Answer from Mr Barrot

Mobility or accessibility? Accessibility is one of the consequences of mobility.

4.2.3 Question from a representative of the city of Bremen

The terms "behavioural change" were stressed several times today and, as this requires more than technology, how do you intend to integrate things like "mobility culture", i.e. the way we are using our transport tools when we look at the way a car is sold by the automotive

industry? Cars are not sold as a transport means but as a part of life style while we are still mainly selling our things at a rationale level. We can go further and put even car ownership a little bit into question because this determines so much the way we are getting around. And how do you integrate in the coming Green Paper this kind of "software" or additional services such as car sharing where we have so much experience in Bremen?

4.2.4 Answer from Mr Barrot

Car sharing is one of the ways which can be used to avoid multiplication of the number of private cars in cities. The topic is interesting because it also questions the car manufacturers about producing cars which better suit town life and the urban space. When we see 4x4 cars circulating along our urban streets, we have reasons to raise the question of the car being adapted to the city. In the past we used to say that cities should be adapted to car use, and now we have reversed this: it is the car that should be adapted to the city.

4.2.5 Question from a representative of the city of Vienna

Which solutions could be imagined in the Green Paper about distributing costs between public and private transports as we know it is a way to compensate for a great part of the inequalities? There is also the question of the inequalities of chance caused by handicaps, etc: which reply to this question is going to be found in the Green Paper?

4.2.6 Answer from Mr Bore

There are the examples of London and Stockholm in terms of congestion charging which are a way to bring about modal shift, and this modal shift is in fact a key issue. But that is not going to come about unless there are measures taken not simply to encourage modal shift but in fact to make it happen. In my region in England we are looking to become a pilot region for the British government views of dealing with the congestion issues and therefore using road pricing policies to bring about modal shift. And the technology is there! The technology is currently being used by an insurance company in the UK in providing people with car insurance, i.e. the level of your car insurance in the UK through a particular company depends on which road you travel and at which times of the day. If it can be done by an insurance company, we can certainly do it through other measures to bring about that modal shift and therefore to bring about that distribution of costs between public and private transports. These are the measures we need to be looking at because however much we invest in our transport infrastructures we must always keep in mind that available financial resources are limited and we cannot do everything by public investments. Consequently I believe that other measures must be envisaged to make modal shift happen.

4.2.7 Additional comment by Mr Barrot

Road pricing is a good solution but, as the Mayor of London said in Davos, under condition that road pricing profits are reinvested in the urban public transport.

4.2.8 Question from a representative of the UITP

I was very pleased to hear several panellists speaking about the financing problem, for both infrastructure and operation, which is the basic problem. I also want to underline a problem of consistency between policy priorities at EU level and at local level. Mr Bore spoke about partnership and I want to ask him what the Committee of the Regions very concretely does to bring about consistency between priorities at EU level in terms of air quality, climate change, cleaner transport etc, as discussed this morning, and where have these measures to be implemented and financed at local level?

4.2.9 Answer from Mr Bore

One of the problems for our institutions is that they failed to have time to address the coherence issue. For example the problem of air quality is envisaged quite separately vis-à-vis other issues such as road infrastructure. We should face these issues through taking them into account as parts of a whole. As far as the Committee of the Regions is concerned, we have adopted a set of policy priorities for 2007 and 2008 and one of these is in fact to pick up on the sustainable urban transport agenda which we see through committing ourselves to a set of research objectives. We have decided to carry out some research work in advance of the publication of the Green Paper because when we will be asked to provide a view from the local authorities about the Green Paper we will have already made that research work and we will be in a position to enrich the Green Paper. A certain number of issues should be tackled in the Green Paper. It should be a good thing if everyone could perform some work beforehand, draw check lists. We should also find out where best practices are to be found across the EU. It should be a good way to be in a position to shape the Green Paper that has to be published this year.

4.2.10 Answer from Ms Danuta Hübner

To respond to what you have been saying, all your questions show evidence of the need to have all levels of governance involved and looking for solutions, finding solutions and then working and investing, physically and intellectually in cooperation.

There is also a need for a combination of instruments to successfully address the problems which you have raised, starting with awareness raising with a lot of advocacy. There should be incentives coming from policies but also incentives of financial and economic nature.

Of course at the end of this there is the development of a strategy for urban transport in cities and for cities in general, in cooperation with those involved at the city level and in the framework of the policy which I represent, i.e. the regional and urban policy and more generally the cohesion policy.

As I said this must be based on this type of partnership and this type of subsidiarity: it is you at the local level who will actually evaluate the needs, who will decide jointly with all those being concerned, not only the local authorities but also the civil society, people from academia and business community, about the direction of change and the orientation of investments.

If we really do want to achieve a sustainable change we have to use all these instruments that we can see in many cities, for example in the UK especially where pedestrianisation of

the city simply made the city easily accessible to pedestrians and also changed the habits and the customs and eliminated the cars from a number of areas in the cities. We can also impose cultural changes by delivering instruments of different types but the basic thing is what we do with the Committee of the Regions which is working within this partnership in close cooperation with all levels of governance in Europe.

Considering the lack of time, the Chairman of this session invites all the attendees to submit their comments and questions on line or by writing a letter to the Commission.

4.3 SUMMARY OF THE PRESENTATIONS (CONTINUED)

4.3.1 Presentation of Mr. Michel Delebarre, President of the Committee of the Regions of the European Union

Mr Delebarre apologies for coming late and mentions that he is supposed to derive conclusions from a session which he did not attend. He states that he agrees with everything that was said before, assuming that it made common sense and was likely useful.

He is very much in favour of the subsidiarity principle, which is a good news because the role of the Committee of the Regions is to ensure that the subsidiarity principle is properly respected and that regional and local authority levels keep control over their destiny and responsibilities.

He was recently attending a meeting on social housing and is now participating to a meeting on urban public transports. These areas are under regional and local authorities, but does it mean that the EU has nothing at all to say? On the opposite he believes that EU has got a part to play. We are all facing the same problems and this means that we are not going to find the solutions in one particular place. We will find solutions by pooling all our initiatives, our experiences and our researches, which means that there should be a constant to and from between the EU level and the management level of the regional and local authorities.

Even if Europe does nothing we still take decisions at our level, we would make decisions as best as we could but we often have a narrow view of the situation. So we would like Europe to provide a reference or a framework that would allow us to discuss the best ways of intelligent governance.

Nobody is the Oracle in this area, and it is not just the question of transport, it is more a horizontal issue. What type of city do we want to build? What type of urban area are we going to continue to allow to sprawl as we did for decades and decades, and the transport system follows that sprawl, or are we going to opt for a different approach? Are we going to make savings in terms of energy and space or are we going to reduce social exclusion, which is a real issue?

Europe should set a framework, the context for our future living together. We need this constant to and from, this constant interaction between green papers, research into technology, research into good practices. Within this constant interaction, hopefully we will be able to build a common mobility culture even though in practice regional and local authorities will keep their initiative.

We don't need more Europe, we need the best of Europe in this context. We visit and we cross Europe all the time and if we go down to the grassroots level we often see useful answers, good answers, and we should promote open days and annual events where we could hear and testify about best practices. We could apply that approach to urban transport issues and it would allow people to confront and compare what people are doing, and then perhaps come forward with useful ideas.

Europe will be able to control its energy costs properly under condition we put the urban transport at the heart of our policy. If we get together, if we work together, we can come up with a Europe which makes more energy savings, which better manages its space, with different structures for these urban areas. There is a lot of experimentation going on and it is time to draw some conclusions, to adopt some of them or to have a real debate. I would urge Commissioner J. Barrot to continue along this path, constantly comparing and contrasting things. He is also an elected person and I know that consultation is good and that it doesn't cost any money. So, once we had this consultation, this comparison, we then need to have the necessary resources to get things moving. That is when the EU should complement the local financial resources to implement new ideas, and Europe could provide that extra elements which will lead to new initiatives being launched so that transport choices are followed through.

Basically the question is to provide encouragements and incentives for getting projects out of the ground level, bringing neighbouring transport systems closer together. If that extra element can be provided which creates an added value or a more intelligent use of transport systems, then you will have done something useful without impinging on subsidiarity; quite the opposite, you will have encouraged subsidiarity in the right direction.

4.3.2 Concluding session, chaired by Mr. Jacques Barrot, Vice-President of the European Commission in charge of transport

Mr Barrot thanks Mr Delebarre for having very well synthesized possible roles for the EU while respecting the subsidiarity principle and that concept of "dynamic subsidiarity" whereby there would be constant up and down relationships between local management levels and the EU level. He underlines that the dynamic subsidiarity concept is well reflected by the work of the Committee of the Regions.

Mr Barrot thanks the German Presidency because it is strongly committed to this urban transport initiative. 2007 is a year of strong commitment to urban transport in general.

He thanks Ms Hübner for her overview of the financial aspects of the assistance that could be provided under her guidance, and for having shown such a strong commitment to the Green Paper initiative, which is essential for its success. He finally thanks the EIB without which nothing could be done.

Mr Barrot explains that the consultation will continue until the end of April so there will be no excuse for not contributing actively.

Mr Barrot himself will attend meetings of POLIS, EUROCITIES, UITP and will meet the representatives of the European Transport Workers' Federation.

As far as the Green Paper itself is concerned, he insists on it being not very long but very punchy. It will be followed by an Action Plan comprising concrete proposals. The Green Paper will address all possible issues: green propulsion, financing of urban transport, intermodality, ITS, integrated approach to urban transport, accessibility, etc. It will also cover all modes of transport, including walking and cycling. It will look in particular at the use of private cars in urban areas.

Mr Barrot reminds the attendees of the issue of the public service obligations, and the Council is going to look at this. He mentioned that there have been attempts to improve competition while also respecting the public service obligations. He also noted what has been said about investments and in particular the necessity to improve the supply of urban transport. He thanks those who will help to find funding for these initiatives.

Mr Barrot reminds that the new initiative doesn't start without any material: there are actually a number of ongoing projects, networks and initiatives. He thanks again the Committee of the Regions for being present and because discussions have already started in this body.

The conclusion of the consultation process will take place on the 4th of June in the same room. The process of the Green Paper drawing will thereafter be supported by the whole Commission, for which it is a priority as well as for the German Presidency.

The Chairman of the session thanks the attendees for their committed participation and wishes them a nice trip back home.