ITS Conference 2012

Vienna, 22 October 2012

Vice-President Siim KALLAS

– Speech –

Introduction

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my pleasure to welcome you all here today to our conference on Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS). This is already the third of a planned series of ITS conferences with the purpose of discussing progress in implementing our ITS policies.

Two years ago in Brussels, we introduced the ITS Action Plan and the ITS Directive, which was adopted shortly after in July 2010.

Last year in Lyon, we reviewed progress in some of the key actions and I officially launched the 1st Smart Mobility Challenge on European Multimodal Journey Planners.

Today in Vienna, we are happy to be able to present the key characteristics of the first specifications under the ITS Directive. We will also discuss later, together with the winners of the 1st Smart Mobility Challenge, how we can work together to overcome the barriers to the multi-modal solutions that offer citizens and businesses the necessary reliability, flexibility and safety in their transport needs.

Role of ITS

At the outset, I would like to re-affirm that I am, more than ever, convinced that Intelligent Transport Systems play a key role to achieve a more efficient, more sustainable and more inclusive mobility. Indeed, ITS is one of the leitmotiv themes in our European Transport Roadmap to 2050.

Challenges and Innovation

Ladies and Gentlemen, in this Roadmap we say clearly, that curbing mobility cannot be an option. But also that we need to give convincing answers how to deal with multiple, interlinked, challenges transport is facing, such as:

- An increasing oil price and persistent oil dependency

- A deteriorating climate and local environment

- Poorer accessibility and growing congestion [the estimated annual cost of congestion is EUR 100 billion – almost the size of the EU budget!]

These circumstances require transport to re-shape itself; transport has to innovate. [And Europe's industry, it's research institutions, it's people, have an extraordinary potential for innovation, not the least in the transport sector.]

Smart Mobility

ICT has given us the opportunity to do this in a smarter way. We have to make the transport system as "intelligent" as possible. This is not just an issue of technology, it goes further.

What I mean is making the system - to the largest extent possible – "learn", capable of coping with unexpected situations and new developments (traffic congestion, ash cloud, security, shift of client behaviour). The system should be able to link, at any time, its knowledge of network events with available information from all sources of transport data for all relevant modes.

I am convinced that the deployment of "smart mobility" solutions …

- within and across all modes of transport (air, road, rail, water)

- for passengers and freight

- for urban, regional and long distance journeys

… plays a central role in meeting the challenges set out, ensuring a high level of affordable mobility for passengers and freight. The challenges are complex but the solutions are largely ready for use and, compared with other infrastructure investments, do not require a lot of money to roll out. It requires an intelligent approach.

I want to illustrate this with an ITS application such as the European Multimodal Journey Planners. Intermodal Journey Planning helps users identify the best solution to their individual transport needs. They permit making informed choices based on financial, time, voyage preferences or environmental criteria.

They show users alternative choices they would not have seen otherwise, limited to one or two modal offers. Intermodal planners allow for a smarter and more resource efficient usage of the whole transport system.

The results of our first Smart Mobility challenge underlined that intelligent systems and applications to facilitate mobility exist and are sought after by users, but that their scope and uptake is not yet fully there. We can not yet claim to have truly pan-European and fully inter-modal travel planners.

Jointly, we need to address the remaining technical, legal or organisational barriers that prevent their wider development. The identified issues include the availability and access to transport data; some persisting legal uncertainties related to liability or the protection of personal data; the lack of standardised interfaces to make existing solutions interoperable.

As I clearly spelled during the Informal Council on ITS in Cyprus in July, my role and the role of the Commission is not to develop products and solutions. There are plenty of bright brains and talented entrepreneurs in Europe who can do that better than us. The Commission's role is to set an enabling framework in which competitive solutions can emerge.

The aim is to have a multitude of competing services which respond to the needs of users and make our transport system more resilient and more effective. We will in the coming weeks present concrete steps how to set this framework.

The ITS Action Plan and Directive 2010/40/EU

Ladies and Gentlemen, let me now turn to the instruments, that give us a strong framework to accelerate the deployment of ITS throughout Europe, the ITS Action Plan and the ITS Directive.

Director-General Matthias Ruete and other colleagues will, a little later, go into detail on progress made to date, so let me just say a few words on that:

- The implementation of the **ITS Action Plan**, in our view, is advancing well. It is not only about identifying the right solutions for EU-wide ITS services – it is also about bringing the stakeholders closer together, both public and private. Since its adoption in December 2008, the ITS Action Plan has sparked a lively debate on ITS in many Member States, and raised its prominence in transport policies. This was underlined by the Cyprus Presidency who organised a dedicated informal Council on ITS earlier this year, a much appreciated policy signal. You will hear about it in a moment, directly from Minister Flourentzou.

- With the **ITS Directive** we are taking a substantial step towards harmonised use of ITS while leaving full freedom to develop and deploy systems at local, regional or national levels. The directive's core work on functional, technical and organisational specifications has started well. There will be harmonisation how deployment is done, but we will not prescribe whether it is done or how the systems work in detail. The first implementation act stemming from the ITS Directive, related to eCall, will be adopted by the Commission before the end of the year.

Support initiatives ahead: Horizon 2020 and Connecting Europe Facility

Before concluding, allow me to stress that, beyond the regulatory instruments just described, we also need strong research and funding support to stimulate innovation in transport. We have recently adopted a "European transport-technology strategy" which lists critical areas of transport and will develop roadmaps focusing on the deployment of technologies and innovation. This is part of the "Horizon 2020" EU Framework for research and innovation (2014 - 2020) which has a dedicated proposed budget of €6.8 billion euros for research and innovation on "smart, green and integrated transport".

I am also hopeful, despite the difficult debates surrounding it, that we will be able to rely on, the "Connecting Europe Facility" for transport funding. Innovative in itself, the CEF - if adopted - will give

us a clear infrastructure planning and funding framework, attracting private sector involvement and accelerate coordinated development of the transport system, including ITS.

Final words

Ladies and Gentlemen, I hope I was able to demonstrate why ITS is so important for us and what our approach is to accelerate the use of ITS services throughout Europe.

Let me conclude: intelligent transport is an approach: how to intelligently make use of the technological developments to provide effective services for real people with concrete needs. Thank you very much for your kind attention. I wish you a successful day at our ITS Conference and a very stimulating week at the World Congress here in Vienna.