



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Dear President,

*I would like to thank the Bundesrat for its opinion on our White Paper: "Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area" – {COM (2011)144 final}, and apologises for the undue delay in responding.*

*Transport is crucial for a sustainable society and equal consideration must be given to economic, social and environmental aspects. In this context, the Commission particularly welcomes your support for the target of cutting the transport sector greenhouse gas emissions by 60% by 2050.*

*I also note your concerns in relation to the foreseen pace of emission abatement. Indeed, meeting the 60% target without curbing mobility requires the implementation of ambitious policy actions as described in the White Paper. In general terms, the modelling exercises laid down in the Impact Assessment on the White Paper show that several policy instruments need to be used to put the transport system on a sustainable path, lowering CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, oil dependency and congestion.*

*The initiatives proposed in the White Paper would lead to significant changes already by 2030: the emissions could decrease by about 1% annually between 2008 and 2030 through, among others, advanced technologies for road vehicles and greater use of rail, waterborne transport, busses and coaches. However, the renewal of the vehicle stock and the adaptation of the infrastructure take time. Therefore, the effects of the penetration of new technologies on a commercial scale are expected to impact more significantly after 2030.*

*In any event, the necessary framework conditions need to be established early on. That is why we intend to launch most of the initiatives presented in the White Paper already during the current mandate of the Commission. We have also indicated 10 EU-level benchmarks to monitor progress and guide policy action.*

Mr Horst SEEHOFER  
President of the Bundesrat  
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*Coordinated action with the national, regional and local authorities is crucial as transport works as a system. It would not make a lot of sense to discuss mobility without addressing the urban context where most journeys start and end. The urban dimension will become even more important as the percentage of Europeans living in urban areas is projected to increase from 74% today to around 85% in 2050. This is why an important aspect that characterises this White Paper is the considerable attention to find solutions adapted to specific circumstances, but is important that cities face their responsibilities. The Commission can help providing tools (best practices, voluntary, standardisation of equipment, funding for research and demonstration projects). For instance, the co-financing of Urban Mobility Plans could indeed be a way of stimulating their adoption. The aim is to encourage cities to have a close look and to integrate measures of land planning, promotion of public transport, traffic management and road charging. .*

*The Commission would like to reassure you that this EU involvement strictly respects the principle of subsidiarity. Each proposal or initiative will be preceded by a thorough impact assessment, which will consider the aspects of EU added value and subsidiarity and to which we hope all stakeholders will actively contribute.*

*Concerning further points raised in your opinion, I wish to add that:*

- The objectives of this White Paper are in line with the Europe 2020 Strategy. They are to be achieved through a holistic approach, sequenced in interventions on a number of interlinked issues, such as internal market, competition, technological innovation and research, eco-friendly and innovative forms of mobility as well as the implementation of TEN-T.*
- For the implementation of the White paper's strategy, as you rightly point out, financing needs particular attention. The White Paper suggests a gradual shift in funding from general taxation to creating a stronger link between revenue generation and the actual use of infrastructure. This would provide additional resources while favouring a better selection of transport projects. Moreover, unlocking the potential of private financing has become essential for the creation of a multimodal pan-European transport network. Therefore, the PPP-screening as part of the ex-ante evaluation process is of great importance.*
- Furthermore, as you rightly pointed out, many branches of transport are treated favourably in terms of taxation, in comparison to the rest of the economy, e.g. VAT exemptions on international sea and air transport. Some of these arrangements can provide conflicting incentives with respect to the efforts to improve the efficiency of the transport system and reduce its external costs. Therefore, the White Paper suggests a restructuring of transport charges and taxes. The aim is to underpin the transport's role in promoting European competitiveness, while the overall burden for the sector should reflect the total costs of transports in terms of infrastructure and external costs.*
- The Commission has adopted its proposal on the Connecting Europe Facility, which combines grant funding with the increased use of innovative financial instruments and in particular on project bonds. Whereas the market is expected to play a major role in delivering the required infrastructures, without public intervention, some of the necessary investments would not take place or will be delayed far beyond 2020. This is why the Commission has proposed an infrastructure package, composed of a new budgetary instrument, the Connecting Europe Facility, as well as revised guidelines*

*for transport, energy and ICT. The Connecting Europe Facility will invest €31.7 billion to upgrade Europe's transport infrastructure, build missing links and remove bottlenecks. The Guidelines set out standards ensuring efficiency and interoperability. Furthermore, they create a more robust, more binding planning framework, composed of two layers: a core network to be completed by 2030 and a comprehensive network feeding into this, to be completed by 2050. The core network will prioritize the most important links and nodes of the TEN-T, to be fully functional by 2030. The comprehensive network will ensure full coverage of the EU and accessibility of all regions.*

- Looking at the aviation sector, the White Paper puts forward a set of ambitious measures in order to reduce its negative environmental effects. These come on top of the existing commitments in place for establishing the Single European Sky, or for including aviation in the EU emissions trading scheme. In this context, it is of great importance that airports do not become bottlenecks. This includes, among others, a revision of ground handling and of rules for slot allocation with the aim of enhancing airport capacity, but also of improving the quality of service. A recent study on the revision of the slot regulation shows that thanks to a more resource-efficient allocation system, more than €5 billion in economic benefits and up to 62,000 jobs could be gained by 2025. That would mean up to 24 million additional passengers being accommodated each year at European airports.*
- For the rail sector, the White Paper proposes many measures to make the rail sector more attractive. In the current situation, it is important to remove the obstacles of technical and administrative nature that impede entry into national railway markets as well as to open the domestic rail passengers market and to optimise the capacity and the use of infrastructure through intelligent technologies (ERTMS).*

*I look forward to further developing our policy dialogue on these important issues.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*Maroš Šefčovič  
Vice-President*