



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Bundesrat for its Opinion concerning the Commission Communication ‘Together towards competitive and resource-efficient urban mobility’ {COM (2013) 913 final}.

The Commission welcomes the positive reaction of the Bundesrat to the Commission’s current initiative in the field of urban mobility. It appears that there is broad agreement on the objectives to be pursued as well as on the strategic approach presented by the Commission for complementary and coordinated action at EU level and in Member States in this important area of transport policy.

The Bundesrat and the Commission share the view that tackling the urban mobility issues faced today is primarily the responsibility of competent authorities at local level. Furthermore, the Bundesrat and the Commission agree that these issues are closely linked to central EU policy objectives for the transport sector and for related policy areas such as air quality and climate protection.

In light of the above, the Commission shares the Bundesrat’s view that objectives and policies in areas such as transport and air quality should remain consistent and compatible.

The Commission welcomes the Bundesrat’s support for further EU action aimed at promoting the exchange of best practices, promoting research and innovation and providing targeted financial support for urban transport projects.

The Commission also welcomes the Bundesrat’s support for action in areas such as urban mobility planning, urban logistics, urban intelligent transport systems and urban road safety.

The Bundesrat highlights the potential of ‘sharing models’ (bike sharing, car sharing and car-pooling) as a way of reducing the number of road vehicles and tackling congestion in urban areas. The Commission agrees that the use of sharing models is growing in cities across the EU. The Commission has already taken steps to support the development of such schemes and to promote the exchange of relevant experiences through initiatives such as

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CIVITAS and the Eltis web portal. The Commission expects the interest in sharing models to continue to grow and is keen to support developments in this area through appropriate measures, including by providing suitable platforms for publishing information and sharing experiences.

The Bundesrat and the Commission agree that greater harmonisation in the implementation of urban mobility measures, fully consistent with subsidiarity, can help to improve the transparency and hence also public acceptance of measures being taken. Greater harmonisation could also improve the effectiveness and cost-efficiency of the measures, and could make it possible to limit emissions while at the same time improving the accessibility of existing transport infrastructure.

The Commission notes the Bundesrat's position in respect of urban road charging and city toll systems. The Commission would like to clarify that the active promotion of such schemes has not been proposed. The Commission however believes that where local authorities decide to implement urban road charging and city toll systems, a better understanding of and more information about the existing approaches may facilitate the design of such schemes.

The Commission also notes the Bundesrat's suggestion that measures currently in place should be carefully evaluated before initiatives for sharing experiences and showcasing best practices are broadened. The Commission agrees that there is a risk of proliferation and duplication that needs to be addressed. In view of this, the Commission is currently reviewing the use and development of both the Eltis web portal and the website on sustainable urban mobility planning. Efforts should primarily be focused on consolidating existing platforms and initiatives.

The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the issues raised by the Bundesrat and looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*