

# **Statement by the Committee on Transport and Communications 2020/21:TU17**

## **Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy**

### **Summary**

The Committee has examined the Communication from the Commission *Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy – putting European transport on track for the future*. In its Communication, the Commission proposes a strategy for transformation of the transport system. The purpose of the strategy is to achieve the objectives of a sustainable, smart and resilient mobility. The strategy contains measures to ensure that the objectives are achieved, and the appendix to the strategy contains an action plan with 82 initiatives that the Commission intends to present during the coming four years. The Committee welcomes the Commission's Communication on Sustainable and Smart Mobility and shares the Commission's assessment that the transformation to a transport system that is sustainable in the long term is the most important challenge facing transport policy. The Committee recalls that a long-term results-oriented policy is required for a transformation to a more sustainable transport sector including the necessary infrastructure. The Committee also stresses that several different initiatives and a combination of policy instruments are required to reduce the climate impact of transportation, for example more efficient transport and a transition to renewable fuels, as well as taking advantage of the opportunities of new technologies. The Committee further highlights the fact that Sweden and the EU should have a robust, environmentally sound and reliable transport infrastructure with a high level of transport safety and which is well equipped to deal with both expected and unexpected incidents and disturbances. Prior to forthcoming work in connection with the strategy, the Committee would like to stress how important it is that the transport system pays due regard to gender equality and that it is accessible to people with functional disabilities. The Committee would also like to emphasise the importance of thorough impact assessments of the initiatives at EU level and that the draft legislative acts that the Commission presents are well justified regarding the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. The Committee proposes that the Riksdag file the statement.

### *The examined document*

The Communication from the Commission Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy – putting European transport on track for the future (COM(2020) 789).

## **The position of the Committee**

### *General position on the Commission's Communication*

Firstly, the Committee would like to stress that it welcomes the Communication from the Commission on sustainable and smart mobility. The Committee shares the Commission's assessment that the transformation to a transport system that is sustainable in the long term is the most important challenge facing transport policy. The Riksdag has therefore also decided that greenhouse gas emissions from domestic transport should decrease by at least 70 per cent by 2030 at the latest compared with 2010. The Committee is of the opinion that emissions from the transport sector must be dramatically reduced and must be reduced much more quickly than they have so far to ensure that Sweden and the EU will reach their climate targets and the international commitments resulting from the Paris Agreement. In this connection, the Committee would like to recall Agenda 2030 and goal 13 stating that urgent action should be taken to combat climate change and its impacts.

The Committee considers that a long-term results-oriented policy is required for a transformation to a more sustainable transport sector including the necessary infrastructure. The Committee would like to stress that several different initiatives and a combination of policy instruments are required to reduce the climate impact of transportation, for example more efficient transport and a transition to renewable fuels, as well as taking advantage of the opportunities of new technologies. Initiatives to reduce the climate impact of transport should, in the opinion of the Committee, contribute to both technological developments and changed behaviour, as well as increased use of more sustainable solutions. The Committee therefore welcomes the Commission's ambition to get back with concrete proposals, in which it is proposed that various political instruments are used to achieve a more sustainable transport system.

### *Smart and sustainable mobility*

The Committee welcomes the Commission's statements, among other things, about stimulating demand for zero-emission vehicles, as well as renewable and low-carbon fuels. The Committee notes that many passenger cars in the EU are vehicles with high emission levels which will be on the roads for a long time to come. The Committee therefore considers that renewable fuels are a prerequisite in achieving the climate targets. In this context, the Committee wishes to highlight the fact that an inquiry is currently being conducted in Sweden regarding a ban on the sale of new passenger cars that run on petrol or diesel. The Committee also wishes to underline that electrification is an important measure for the transition of the transport system to zero fossil fuels. The Committee shares the Commission's assessment regarding the importance of a comprehensive network of recharging and refuelling infrastructure. The Committee furthermore highlights the importance of promoting measures initiated to accelerate the development and facilitate the introduction of electric aircraft.

The Committee wishes to stress that, in a transport-efficient society, accessibility can increase, at the same time as the volume of traffic required to achieve a corresponding accessibility can be reduced. The Committee notes that efficiency of the transport system is achieved through a number of different measures, including land use planning, access to reliable public transport, coordinated freight transport, a transition to less energy-intensive modes of transport and vehicles and innovative mobility solutions. In view of this, the Committee is also positive to the Commission's statements regarding a more sustainable and healthy interurban and urban mobility. The Committee stresses the importance of encouraging changes in behaviour and measures to promote public transport and cycling. The Committee therefore welcomes the fact that the Commission points out that the EU must

contribute to creating suitable conditions for increased use of sustainable transport modes, as well as active modes such as cycling, for example, by promoting more cycling infrastructures.

In this context, the Committee wishes to mention that it is very positive to measures that contribute to enabling efficient cross-border rail transport and which will therefore increase the competitiveness of railways. The Committee shares the Commission's assessment that action must be taken to boost freight transport by rail. The Committee therefore welcomes the Commission's statements about improving and promoting conditions for rail transport. The Committee also agrees with the Commission's statements about the importance of greener freight transport and wishes, in this context, to stress that electric roads, but also longer and heavier trains and lorries, can help to make freight transport more efficient and to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

The Committee is also positive to the Commission's statements on the importance of securing multimodality and operational compatibility between different modes of transport, and of completing the single European transport area. The Committee wishes to stress that it is important that the entire Union, including the sparsely populated northern parts, are brought together by the TEN-T core network.

The Committee stresses that the growing digitalisation with new services and social functions and automation of vehicles opens the way for new mobility solutions which can offer new and increased accessibility, and be sustainable at the same time. The Committee is therefore positive to the Commission's ambition to bring about digitalised and automated mobility. The Committee emphasises that a sustainable, efficient and accessible transport system requires new knowledge and new innovative solutions. The Committee therefore points out the importance of investing in research and innovation in order to be able to meet the challenges within the transport system. In the opinion of the Committee, these investments should have a multimodal perspective and should aim to satisfy the needs of both citizens and businesses. In this context, the Committee also wishes to highlight the importance of pilot schemes and of test and demonstration environments. In the opinion of the Committee, self-driving, fossil-free vehicles which are safely operated can have a significant impact and make up an important part of the future transport system. In the opinion of the Committee, artificial intelligence (AI) has the potential to contribute with significant benefit in a number of areas, including the transport sector, through increased quality and efficiency within various activities and, in the long run, to lead to solutions to environmental and social challenges. The Committee considers that the use of data is a central prerequisite for data-driven innovation, including AI.

The Committee especially wishes to point out that it is difficult to plan and purchase tickets for cross-border travel within the EU. The Committee therefore welcomes the Commission's ambition to make it easier to use and buy tickets for travel across borders.

In many cases, effective solutions to the challenges of the transport sector require supranational regulation. For example, the Committee wishes to highlight that international decisions are decisive in reducing emissions from shipping, but also that the major climate challenges for air transport are of a cross-border nature. International cooperation is therefore required in order to reduce the climate impact of shipping and air transport. In the opinion of the Committee, it is important that the EU is proactive in the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and other international fora to ensure that climate policy instruments at an international

level are optimal and as effective as possible in order to achieve a real shift in the fossil dependency and climate impact of international aviation. The Committee therefore welcomes the fact that the Commission highlights the EU's role in international contexts, as the global environmental and climate ambitions cannot be achieved by the EU alone, and being a forerunner also serves to strengthen the EU's competitiveness.

Security of the transport system is a high priority for the Committee, which considers that Sweden and the EU should have a robust, environmentally sound and reliable transport infrastructure with a high level of transport safety and which is well equipped to deal with both expected and unexpected incidents and disturbances. In this context, the Committee welcomes the fact that the Commission raises matters relating to speed, alcohol and drug consumption. It is also very positive, in the opinion of the Committee, that the Commission identifies unprotected passengers as a priority. The Committee furthermore welcomes the Commission's statements in the Communication that transport workers should feel secure and that their work should be organised in such a way as to prevent risks and ill-health, in as far as this is possible. Anything else is unacceptable in the opinion of the Committee.

*In preparation for the upcoming legislative process*

The Committee notes that the Commission's Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy is comprehensive, and that the 82 initiatives in the strategy's action plan cover a large number of areas. This presupposes an ambitious implementation of measures in the coming years. In the opinion of the Committee, it is crucial that the strategy is translated into concrete policy and legislation which can effectively lead to achieving the climate targets. The Committee will follow this work closely.

In this context, the Committee wishes to underline the importance, in forthcoming legislative proposals, of securing transport services for people and businesses in the EU's respective member states that are socially and economically effective. Transport links people and countries together and is a central prerequisite for a growing economy, growing population and enhanced opportunities for commuting and visits, as well as increased employment. A smoothly functioning transport system is also a precondition for companies being able to operate throughout Sweden and in other EU member states. The Committee furthermore wishes to highlight the importance of a gender equal transport system which meets the various needs of women and men equally, and that it is accessible for people with functional disabilities.

The Committee further wishes to stress that it is important to take into account the need for adapting measures to regional and local conditions. The Committee wishes to mention out that comprehensive efforts are currently being undertaken in Sweden, which are in line with several of the initiatives presented by the Commission, within the Government, public agencies, the transport sector and civil society, to achieve sustainable and smart mobility. For example, measures are being taken to promote electrification, automation, the use of and access to sustainable fuels and increased efficiency of the transport sector. The Committee notes that several of the initiatives in the action plan will have an impact on Swedish legislation. When the Commission gets back with concrete proposals for measures, detailed Swedish positions will be developed. The Riksdag will naturally play a very active role in this work. Finally, the Committee would like to emphasise the importance of thorough impact assessments of the initiatives at EU level, and that the draft legislative acts that the Commission presents are well justified regarding the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. With regard to what has been stated above, the Committee proposes that the Riksdag file the statement.