An efficient and well-functioning passenger and freight transport system is vital for European Union (EU) enterprises and inhabitants. The EU’s transport policy aims to foster clean, safe and efficient travel throughout Europe, underpinning the internal market for goods (transferring them between their place of production and consumption) and the right of citizens to travel freely throughout the EU (for both work and pleasure).

Broad transport policies

The European Commission’s Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport is responsible for developing transport policy within the EU. Its remit is to ensure mobility in a single European transport area, integrating the needs of the population, environmental policy and competitiveness. The Directorate-General seeks to establish an efficient and effective EU transport policy, including:

- **an efficient, sustainable, safe and secure single European transport area** — improving regulation, ensuring a high degree of implementation of EU legislation in the transport area and open and fair competition both in the EU and in relations with key partner countries;

- **a modern European transport infrastructure** — ensuring the effective implementation of funding for the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) within the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) and using innovative financial instruments (such as the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI));

- **an innovative transport sector** — ensuring the effective implementation of funding for research and innovation activities in the transport area within the Horizon 2020 programme.

A roadmap to a single European transport area

In March 2011, the European Commission adopted a white paper *Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area — Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system* (COM(2011) 144 final). This strategy contains 40 specific initiatives to build a competitive transport system that aims to increase mobility, remove major barriers, and stimulate growth and employment. Some initiatives concern a specific mode of transport, such as developing a true internal market for rail services or a suitable framework for inland navigation. Some deal with road safety, civil aviation safety and rail safety, while others concern transport terminals, notably the capacity and quality of airports and market access to ports. There are also initiatives relating to freight transport, including road freight, multimodal transport of goods (e-freight), cargo security, the transport of dangerous goods or multimodal freight corridors for sustainable transport networks and passenger rights.

The overall aim of the strategy is to reduce CO2 emissions from transport by 60 % (compared with 1990 levels) by 2050 and to reduce dependence on imported oil. To accomplish this, there are a range of different goals, which include:

- halving the use of conventionally-fuelled cars in urban transport by 2030; phasing them out in cities by 2050; achieving essentially CO2-free city logistics in major urban centres by 2030;
• moving to 40% use of low-carbon sustainable fuels in aviation; cutting EU CO2 emissions from maritime bunker fuels by at least 40% by 2050;
• a majority of medium-distance inter-city passengers travelling by rail by 2050;
• achieving a 50% shift in freight journeys of more than 300 km from road to other transport modes by 2050.

The strategy also has a range of targets that relate to criteria other than sustainability, for example:
• moving closer to zero fatalities from road transport accidents by 2050; or
• tripling the length of the EU’s high-speed rail network by 2050.

An implementation report on the white paper, taking stock of the progress made, was published in 2016.

**Transport infrastructure**

In December 2013, the EU Member States and the European Parliament agreed upon a new framework for transport infrastructure, setting guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) and the Connecting Europe Facility. These form an ambitious package that aims to provide businesses and individuals with a fully functional transport network, combining different transport modes through swift services, uniting Europe from north to south and from east to west and creating a network infrastructure that may act as a backbone for developing economic growth and prosperity.

The TEN-T guidelines envisage the development of a multimodal and intelligent core transport network by 2030. In addition, a comprehensive network ensuring accessibility of all regions is to be developed by 2050. The strategic focus of TEN-T is nine core network corridors and two horizontal priorities, namely, the European rail traffic management system (ERTMS) and the motorways of the sea (MoS).

The TEN-T policy aims to develop a more efficient transport network, streamline cross-border transport operations for passengers and businesses, improve connections between different modes of transport, and contribute to the EU’s climate change objectives. For the 2014-2020 funding period, a budget of EUR 24 billion has been allocated for the transport sector under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF).

**Strategy for low-emission mobility**

In July 2016, the European Commission proposed a European strategy for low-emission mobility (COM(2016)501 final). The strategy provides a framework for the initiatives that the European Commission is planning in the coming years, and it sets out the areas in which it is exploring options. It also shows how initiatives in related fields are linked and how synergies can be achieved. It should be seen as one of the tools to modernise the European economy and strengthen its single market. The main elements of the strategy include:

• increasing the efficiency of the transport system by making the most of digital technologies, smart pricing and further encouraging the shift to lower emission transport modes;

• speeding-up the deployment of low-emission alternative energy for transport, such as advanced biofuels, electricity, hydrogen and renewable synthetic fuels, and removing obstacles to the electrification of transport;

• moving towards zero-emission vehicles — while further improvements to the internal combustion engine will be needed, the strategy argues that Europe needs to accelerate the transition towards low- and zero-emission vehicles (EU legislation currently refers to low-emission vehicles as vehicles having tailpipe emissions below 50g/km; this would include some plug-in hybrids, full electric cars and fuel cell (in other words hydrogen-powered) vehicles; the latter two examples also represent zero-emission vehicles).

Cities and local authorities are considered crucial for the delivery of the low-emission mobility strategy. They are already implementing incentives for low-emission alternative energies and vehicles, encouraging a modal shift to active travel (cycling and walking), public transport and/or shared mobility schemes, such as bike or car-sharing and car-pooling, with the goal of reducing congestion and pollution.

Finally, the strategy also reiterates the EU’s commitment in pursuing global efforts to control emissions from international aviation and maritime transport.
Recent developments

Road transport

In April 2015, Directive (EU) 2015/719 was adopted, amending the existing legislation concerning the design of lorries, with the aim to improve environmental performance and road safety, reduce operational costs and reduce road damage.

Rail transport

Adopted in 2016, the 4th railway package is a set of six legislative texts designed to complete the single market for rail services (single European rail area). The package comprises two 'pillars':

- a 'technical pillar', related to the EU’s Agency for Railways (Regulation (EU) 2016/796), the interoperability of the rail system within the EU (Directive (EU) 2016/797) and rail safety (Directive (EU) 2016/798), each adopted in April 2016; and
- a 'market pillar', dealing with the opening of the market and the award of public service contracts for domestic passenger transport services by rail (Regulation (EU) 2016/2338), the governance of railway infrastructure (Directive (EU) 2016/2370) and the normalisation of the accounts of railway undertakings (Regulation (EU) 2016/2337), each adopted in December 2016.

The 4th railway package aims to contribute towards creating a more efficient and customer-responsive rail industry, improving the relative attractiveness of the rail sector with respect to other transport modes through the opening-up of the rail transport market to competition, improving the interoperability and safety of national rail networks, and developing rail transport infrastructure.

Air transport

The Single European Sky initiative, launched in 2004, is designed to respond to the challenges raised by airspace congestion and the increased strain on airport and airspace capacity as the volume of air traffic is expected to continue to grow through to 2030. The initiative was followed in 2009 by a second package of measures, Single European Sky II, which placed greater emphasis on the environment and cost efficiency. However, the pace of change was considered slow and in June 2013 the European Commission made further proposals to accelerate implementation, Single European Sky 2+ (COM(2013) 408 final). This included a range of further initiatives in relation to better safety and oversight, as well as greater customer focus, with the aim of making more ambitious performance targets. The ultimate objective of these initiatives is to increase the economic, financial and environmental performance of air navigation services, while removing the fragmentation of the European air traffic management system.

In December 2015, the European Commission adopted an Aviation Strategy for Europe (COM(2015) 598 final) with the aim to ensure that the European aviation sector remains competitive and reaps the benefits of a fast-changing and developing global economy. The three priorities are:

- tapping into growth markets, by improving services, market access and investment opportunities with non-member countries, while guaranteeing a level playing field;
- tackling limits to growth in the air and on the ground, by reducing capacity constraints and improving efficiency and connectivity;
- maintaining high EU safety and security standards, by shifting to a risk and performance based approach.

Inland waterways

In September 2013, the European Commission adopted the NAIADES II package, Towards quality inland waterway transport. The package includes a set of initiatives to:

- improve infrastructure;
- enhance innovation and market functioning;
- promote green initiatives;
- encourage training and professional qualifications in the sector;
- improve its integration in the multimodal logistic chain.
There is great potential to increase the modal share of inland waterway transport, especially in the light of other transport modes often being confronted with congestion and capacity problems. By contrast, inland waterway transport is often viewed as being reliable, while it has a low environmental impact and offers additional capacity for its use.

Significant progress was achieved in the implementation of NAIADES II action programme through the adoption of the European Commission proposal for a Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications in inland navigation on 18 February 2016 and the adoption by the Council and European Parliament of Directive (EU) 2016/1629 laying down technical requirements for inland waterway vessels on 14 September 2016.

As regards the international governance of the inland waterway sector, a milestone was achieved in early 2016 with the launching of a three-year support action for the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR) to operate the European Committee for Inland Navigation Standards (CESNI) on the basis of strategic guidelines for 2016-2018.

Maritime transport

EU maritime policy addresses the competitiveness of maritime transport, the implementation of safety and security rules, the reduction of the risk of serious maritime accidents, and the environmental impact of maritime transport. The European Commission also works to ensure the protection of citizens as users of maritime transport services, ensuring safe and secure conditions, looking after their rights as passengers, examining the adequacy of the public service maritime transport connections, and reducing administrative burden through the simplification of procedures.


On specific measures for the attainment of these goals, the blue belt initiative introduced in 2013 (COM(2013) 510 final) aims to develop a single transport area for shipping, to ease customs formalities for ships, reduce red tape, cut delays in ports, and make the maritime sector more competitive. The policy framework for the blue belt initiative consists of two measures: the simplification of the regular shipping service scheme since March 2014 and the development of an electronic manifest (the ‘customs goods manifest’) making it possible to distinguish between EU and non-EU cargo on board a vessel. This latter measure applies as of 1 May 2016 for authorised issuers; non-authorised issuers will have the possibility to register proofs of EU status in a new central database managed by customs, expected to be fully functional as of October 2019. This development could also improve the availability of more reliable and near real time data (especially from Directive 2010/65/EU on reporting formalities for ships arriving in and/or departing ports of the Member States — the reporting formalities Directive (RFD) — and Directive 2014/100/EU establishing a Community vessel traffic monitoring and information system (VTMIS) ) that could be used for statistical purposes, for example, on routes, type of goods, passengers as well as type of vessels and port calls.

Furthermore, in March 2017, a regulation establishing a framework for the provision of port services and common rules on the financial transparency of ports was adopted (Regulation (EU) 2017/352). It is hoped that its implementation will contribute to the promotion of short-sea shipping and a better integration of maritime transport with rail, inland waterway and road transport.

Transport statistics

In order to monitor and trace the developments and policies outlined above, the European Commission seeks to analyse a range of transport statistics. Eurostat’s statistics in this field describe the most important features of transport, not only in terms of the quantities of freight and numbers of passengers that are moved each year, or the number of vehicles and infrastructure that are used, but also the contribution of transport services to the economy as a whole. Data collection is supported by several legal acts obliging the EU Member States to report statistical data, as well as voluntary agreements to supply additional data.

As part of the work to prepare the implementation report on the roadmap to a single European transport area, several topics for the possible development of transport statistics were identified, including improving the
collection and quality of transport statistics, especially in the areas of:

- vehicle ownership;
- obtaining mobility information through smart communication technologies and by linking national registers;
- urban passenger mobility.

Other areas where there is a perceived need for statistics include: monitoring alternative fuel infrastructure and stock of vehicles; energy efficiency indicators; monitoring the user and polluter pays principles for the internalisation of external costs of infrastructure use.

See also
- All articles on transport

Main tables
- Transport, see:

  Regional transport statistics (t_tran_r)
  Transport, volume and modal split (t_tran_hv)
  Railway transport (t_rail)
  Road transport (t_road)
  Inland waterways transport (t_iww)
  Maritime transport (t_mar)
  Air transport (t_avia)

Database
- Transport, see:

  Multimodal data (tran)
  Railway transport (rail)
  Road transport (road)
  Inland waterways transport (iww)
  Oil pipeline transport (pipe)
  Maritime transport (mar)
  Air transport (avia)

Dedicated section
- Transport

Publications
- Energy, transport and environment indicators, 2016 edition
Legislation


External links

- European Commission: Mobility and Transport
- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) — transport statistics

View this article online at http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Transport_statistics_introduced