

## **FROM TRANSPORT EXPANSION TO MOBILITY MANAGEMENT**

### Introduction

The transport sector's unchecked expansion in Europe has led to environmental degradation, social injustice and economic inefficiency. It has also led to higher health costs for citizens, and lower quality of life, particularly in cities. Meanwhile, the transport sector's greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise at an alarming rate as other economic sectors strive to reduce their emissions and international organisations issue repeated warnings about the EU's ability to meet its Kyoto commitments. All of this is bad news for citizens, large and small towns and for business.

EU transport needs better technical standards. But more importantly, the EU desperately needs to break the transport expansion habit. There should be less transport to fulfil the same functions, not more. For example, not only is developing new transport infrastructure expensive, it is damaging to environment and health, frequently involves social injustice and often does not deliver what it is supposed to.

The Treaty requires transport to be environmentally sound. Europe's heads of state and government have repeatedly called for the integration of environmental concerns into the transport sector, and for specific policies to improve the transport sector's environmental performance. They insist on a 'significant decoupling of transport growth and GDP growth'. However, we have seen few positive developments in the last years. The Commission has failed to respond to the expectations of the European Council and citizens of the EU in this matter.

### THE NEXT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT SHOULD:

1. Ensure that transport policies fulfil environmental objectives – including biodiversity protection. Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) should be fully implemented before the adoption of transport plans to ensure the achievement of these objectives.
2. Insist that the next Commission does what the current Commission promised, including introducing a framework Directive on infrastructure pricing, development of quantitative environmental targets for the transport sector, on the basis of the indicator work conducted by the European Environment Agency (EEA), and taking real steps to decouple transport growth from economic growth.
3. Promote the review of the role of transport and mobility in the European integration process. This should include a revision of the role of the Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T) in the Treaty. SEA should be applied to the TEN-T and its extension into Central and Eastern European countries (TINA);
4. Promote the adoption of a set of social indicators for the transport sector at the EU level to measure transport's contribution to problems such as social injustice.
5. Raise questions about the development of the hydrogen economy. At present, it appears as if the EU is in danger of rushing to support this promising technology before having a clear idea of its potential pitfalls.
6. Ensure that the health aspects of transport receive sufficient regulatory attention. This is particularly important in two areas. The negative effect of particulate matter, especially from diesel engines, on public health is increasingly recognised. And noise, one of the issues of greatest concerns to citizens, has a range of negative health effects, particularly on the young and the infirm.
7. Insist that European Commission consults with all stakeholders, including environmental NGOs, when developing transport policy.

- **What important decisions were taken at EU level in the past where the EP made a difference?**

Noise is a good example. The Commission originally wanted the noise directive to be just about measuring. Now it's effectively a framework directive, requiring action plans and the Commission to come up with further legislative proposals in the future.

The TENs guidelines are another example: the Parliament said that new TENs projects should undergo an evaluation prior to being built. The new TENs guidelines revisions ignores the Parliament's previous work.

The air quality framework directive and the daughter directives are excellent examples of where the Parliament has done very good work.

- **What could have been better with a stronger pro-environmental vote in the European Parliament?**

Just about everything else. The Parliament could have stood firm against the actions of one commissioner (De Palacio) and her followers on a range of issues.

More importantly, a more strongly pro-environment EP vote would have put much greater pressure on the Commission to produce the initiatives on, for example, a framework directive for transport pricing that have been promised many times and has never been delivered.

- **Two examples of areas where you could add information to show the relevance of the issue at national level**

Two examples: transport infrastructure and air quality legislation.

EU decisions about transport infrastructure have a huge impact on national development, seen from many different angles. And the air quality legislation which is presently in force will, if actually implemented, lead to much less polluted cities and towns and therefore much better quality of life and better public health – again, with several implications.

- **What is in the pipeline for the months after the elections?**

- TENs – the revision of the guidelines for the Trans-European Transport Networks will be decided, probably quite early in the life of the new European Parliament. This is about deciding on priorities for large infrastructure projects, none of which has yet undergone a decent analysis. They will be very expensive, very environmentally damaging, and their economic benefits are not proven. There is a chance that this dossier will be dealt with under the present Parliament, but we think it is more likely that it will be left for the new Parliament.
- Eurovignette – this is about setting a framework for pricing heavy goods vehicles across Europe. The Commission's proposal is terrible on a number of fronts, and it looks as if the new Parliament will be the one to have the last say on this. There is a chance that this dossier will be dealt with under the present Parliament, but we think it is more likely that it will be left for the new Parliament.
- Euro V – the Commission should come up with a proposal on Euro V on new passenger vehicles in the second half of this year, on the basis of work done in the first half of the year. This will be important for helping improve quality of life.
- Urban strategy – the 6th EAP will have a thematic strategy on the urban environment and this will be finalised within the first year of the new Parliament. There will be a section in this strategy on transport which is supposed to be very specific.

- **Some pertinent subjects for questions to be asked of candidates to get to know their positions and level of commitment**

- Noise from night flights
- How they would approach the use of EU money for transport projects – particularly infrastructure and public transport
- Supporting initiatives to reduce citizens' dependency on the car
- Eurovignette (see explanation above).