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**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN  
PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL  
COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

**Action Plan on Urban Mobility**

***Summary of the Impact Assessment***

{COM(2009) 490}  
{SEC(2009) 1211}

# IMPACT ASSESSMENT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Action Plan on Urban Mobility follows the adoption of a Green Paper on Urban Mobility<sup>1</sup> on 25 September 2007. The Action Plan is part of the Commission's work programme with reference 2008/TREN/036.

The Green Paper on Urban Mobility identified five main challenges in urban mobility and launched a debate on the added value of action at EU level to support local, regional and national authorities in addressing the challenges. Although responsibilities for addressing these challenges lie primarily with local, regional and national authorities, decisions regarding urban mobility also take place within the framework of EU legislation and policy and may in turn affect the global environment and free movement of persons, goods and services within the EU. The impact assessment investigates what the exact added value of EU action could be.

The impact assessment has been prepared by the Directorate General for Energy and Transport of the European Commission. An Interservice Group, with representatives from the different Commission services that have an interest in the action plan, participated in its preparations. Support was obtained through a study contract. The Impact Assessment Board provided opinions on drafts of the impact assessment on 23 July 2008, 1 October 2008 and 4 November 2008.

The Action Plan on Urban Mobility provides a framework for possible future intervention at EU level and announces non-legislative measures to increase knowledge, promote dialogue and exchange of best practice and provide incentives to cities. These measures will help decision-makers to take better informed decisions and improve policy-making and implementation relevant to urban mobility at all levels. The impact of these measures cannot be easily estimated in quantitative or qualitative terms.

## 2. CONSULTATION OF INTERESTED PARTIES

The consultation of interested parties was divided into two phases. The first phase consisted of a consultation to prepare the Green Paper on Urban Mobility during the first six months of 2007. The second phase followed after the adoption of the Green Paper, between 25 September 2007 and 15 March 2008.

The Green Paper on Urban Mobility included 25 questions to steer the consultation and focus responses from interested parties. Stakeholders and interested parties were also invited to respond to the general issues raised in the Green Paper. In total, 431 written contributions have been received. The input received in response to the consultation has been carefully examined. The results from the consultation have been made available<sup>2</sup> and have been fed into the impact assessment.

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<sup>1</sup> Towards a new culture for urban mobility - COM(2007) 551.

<sup>2</sup> See: [http://ec.europa.eu/transport/urban/urban\\_mobility/green\\_paper/green\\_paper\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/urban/urban_mobility/green_paper/green_paper_en.htm)

In addition, the European Parliament adopted a Resolution on the Green Paper on 9 July 2008<sup>3</sup> and an own-initiative Report on an Action Plan on Urban Mobility on 23 April 2009<sup>4</sup>. The European Economic and Social Committee adopted its Opinion on the Green Paper on 29 May 2008<sup>5</sup> and the Committee of the Regions did so on 9 April 2008<sup>6</sup>. The Committee of the Regions adopted an Opinion on the European Parliament's Report on 21 April 2009<sup>7</sup>. The Council has also held informal discussions on this subject<sup>8</sup>.

The overall conclusion from the consultation is that there is broad agreement among stakeholders and interested parties that there is a role for the EU in the field of urban mobility in the form of actions to support authorities, operators and other stakeholders and interested parties at the local, regional and national levels. While there were varying views expressed about which specific actions at the EU level could add value, the consultation has helped to identify 'common ground'.

The consultation respected the minimum standards for consultation of interested parties<sup>9</sup>.

### **3. PROBLEM DEFINITION**

Why do we need an Action Plan on Urban Mobility at EU level? The reason is that many cities across the EU are confronted with common problems related to sustainable urban mobility, such as high levels of traffic and congestion, harmful emissions and imbalanced development with an impact on social exclusion and economic growth. These problems are significant. They are dealt with at local, regional and national levels, according to the subsidiarity principle.

Policy-makers in the Member States that have joined the EU in recent years face specific challenges. Economic development is leading to rapidly rising car ownership and car use. The lack of sufficiently adapted tools means that the improvements of urban transport do not always meet minimum standards required for sustainable development and social cohesion.

Looking at the initiatives taken locally across the EU, a picture emerges of broad diversification of the policies, action and financing solutions that authorities use to address the problems of urban mobility and transport. Besides fragmentation of approaches, inaction or inappropriate action may have an impact across borders. In addition it may lead to costly duplication of efforts.

Consumers have to deal with fragmented information systems and non-streamlined solutions. Persons with reduced mobility do not always have access on an equal basis with others to urban transport.

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<sup>3</sup> INI/2008/2041.

<sup>4</sup> INI/2008/2217.

<sup>5</sup> TEN/320 - CESE 982/2008.

<sup>6</sup> CdR 236/2007.

<sup>7</sup> CdR 417/2008.

<sup>8</sup> [www.ue2008.fr/PFUE/lang/en/accueil/PFUE-09\\_2008/PFUE-01.09.2008/Informelle\\_Transports](http://www.ue2008.fr/PFUE/lang/en/accueil/PFUE-09_2008/PFUE-01.09.2008/Informelle_Transports).

<sup>9</sup> COM(2002) 704.

Urban transport is also a critical part of the overall transport chain for both passengers and freight traffic (the "last mile" problem and the need to have efficient intermodal nodes which are often located in or near urban areas). The effectiveness of the policies on urban mobility developed at local, regional and national levels have therefore an impact on the European transport system as a whole, while these authorities don't necessarily have the means or the interest to take this dimension into account.

Without an appropriate exchange and spread of tested, best practice solutions, policy-makers may develop solutions with unnecessarily high costs, design policies that take insufficient account of experience elsewhere or propose solutions that could result in conflicts with EU principles or legislation.

#### **4. THE EU'S RIGHT TO ACT**

The Treaties delimit the range of powers of the EU. The subject of urban mobility and transport falls under Article 70 of the Treaty which provides for a common transport policy<sup>10</sup>. Articles 71(c) and 71(d) are relevant to urban mobility and transport. They state that for the purpose of implementing Article 70 the Council and the European Parliament will lay down measures to improve transport safety and any other appropriate provisions. Responsibility for transport is shared between the EU and Member States. The arguments set out below demonstrate that the problem cannot be solved in an optimum way by the Member States alone (necessity test) and that the objectives can be better achieved at EU level (added value test).

The right to act at EU level in the field of urban mobility stems from the Commission's obligation to achieve and protect the fundamental goals set out in the Treaty. EU legislation and financial instruments directly affect decisions at the local, regional and national level in the field of urban mobility. The Commission is therefore empowered to ensure that these decisions are in line with EU legislation and to help authorities to implement EU policies and make best use of EU funding. In addition, actions taken in the field of urban mobility at local, regional and national levels directly affects freight operators and travellers from other countries. This cross-border impact justifies EU action to ensure smooth functioning of the single market and proper implementation of EU policies and legislation, for example in the field of the environment, State aid, the social agenda or research and development.

Market failures in the field of urban mobility make public intervention necessary in order to address the problems of congestion, pollution and imbalanced development. The EU has a right to ensure that this public intervention is in line with EU legislation and coherent with EU policies. EU policies in areas other than transport, such as the environment, regional policy or energy, have in the past already developed measures related to urban mobility. Insufficient attention has been paid to the possible impact of these policies on urban mobility and transport. In some cases, appropriate tools and instruments to support authorities have not been made available, have not been taken up

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<sup>10</sup> The Commission can also make specific proposals on the basis of articles other than Article 70. For example, to address specific problems related to urban mobility and transport it could use articles covering environment policy (Articles 174 and 175) or economic and social cohesion (Article 158).

or have not taken sufficient account of urban mobility issues. It is therefore important, in specific cases, to propose actions to strengthen coherence and support implementation of such past and present EU initiatives.

The EU also has a right to act to address those problems where public intervention at EU level brings added value. Without impinging on the powers of the local, regional or national authority in charge, the EU can bring added value to local action in different ways<sup>11</sup>. The EU can offer authorities a toolbox with tried and tested solutions to address the risks caused by fragmentation of local, regional and national approaches. The EU can help to correct regulatory failures, for example in the form of insufficient collection and sharing of market data, which prevents comprehensive monitoring of relevant trends. It can support data and information exchange, offer financial support and launch RTD activities at EU level. It can help to promote efficient use of public resources, for example by avoiding reinventing the wheel or by joining forces in benchmarking, procurement or information provision. It can also help to promote innovation and standards and to create markets for industry.

## **5. OBJECTIVES**

The main policy objectives of the Action Plan on Urban Mobility are twofold:

- to give incentives and support to the cities, regional and national authorities to help them to develop and implement urban mobility policies which contribute to the common objectives of combating climate change, achieving a functioning internal market for the benefit of businesses and consumers and promoting an efficient European transport system, social cohesion and well-being;
- to increase the knowledge base for decision-makers at all levels to help them to develop and implement integrated, well-informed and innovative policies which are needed today to solve the very complex and multidimensional issues related to urban mobility.

## **6. POLICY OPTIONS**

To achieve these two main objectives, a wide range of possible policy options was considered. The selection and assessment of policy options started with the compilation of an initial list of thirty-one possible policy options, drawing on various sources. These sources include the contributions that were received to support preparation of the Green Paper on urban mobility and during the stakeholder consultation on the Green Paper on urban mobility, work carried out in the framework of past EU-funded RTD activities and best practice exchange programmes, discussions on the Green Paper that took place in the EU institutions and suggestions provided by the Commission services.

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<sup>11</sup> The basis for the EU action in urban areas is strengthened by the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment (COM(2005) 718), which was mandated by the Council and European Parliament through the 6th Environment Action Programme.

This broad approach made it possible to review a wide variety of policy options, ranging from a more strategic to a more practical level. The list includes options that may not seem likely or desirable but that were put forward by stakeholders. This means that some of the policy options might seem problematic, because of the subsidiarity principle or because they might not seem efficient or effective. However, for reasons of transparency, they were not excluded in advance.

Eight possible instruments were identified that could possibly be used at EU level for the implementation of a policy option, for example the monitoring of self-regulation, disseminating information, preparing guidelines, providing financial incentives and taking regulatory action.

Each policy option, together with each instrument that could possibly be used for its implementation, was first screened on subsidiarity. If an option failed this test, it was no longer taken into account and no further analysis was carried out. However, if a policy option successfully passed the screening on subsidiarity, it was subsequently assessed against efficiency, effectiveness and consistency criteria. The screening on subsidiarity, efficiency, effectiveness and consistency reduced the number of policy options from thirty-one options to eighteen options.

As a next step, the possible impacts of the eighteen remaining policy options were identified. The indicators that were used for this assessment cover mobility, congestion, energy, the environment, economic and social issues and policy-making. This was followed by a selection of the most appropriate instrument to implement each of the eighteen options. This analysis looked at cost-effectiveness, proportionality, consistency with other initiatives and administrative burden.

In a final step, twenty suggestions for possible actions at EU level were elaborated. This was done by exploiting synergies between options and synergies between instruments. In addition, the identity, visibility and manageability of the possible actions were fine-tuned. No proposals for immediate legislative action are included. It should however be noted that this process of selecting and assessing the possible actions in no way prejudices the contents of action plan and the outcome of impact assessments that might be made for specific proposals.

## **7. AREAS OF ACTION**

The following possible actions could be launched through the action plan:

In the year 2009:

- Study on access rules for green zones
- Internet guide on clean and energy-efficient vehicles
- Web portal to improve access to information on public transport
- Demonstration project on clean vehicles
- Information exchange on urban pricing schemes
- Internet guide on legislation, funding and best practice
- Setting up an urban mobility observatory
- Accelerating the take-up of sustainable urban mobility plans

In the year 2010:

- Dialogue on passenger rights in urban public transport
- Preparing future funding sources
- Setting up a forum on urban mobility
- Energy-efficient driving as part of driving training
- Upgrading data and statistics
- Campaign on sustainable mobility behaviour
- Contributing to international dialogue and information exchange

In the year 2011:

- Guidance on safe walking and safe cycling
- Guidance on sustainable urban mobility and regional policy
- Study on urban aspects of internalisation of external costs

In the year 2012:

- Guidance on intelligent transport systems (ITS) for urban mobility
- Guidance on urban freight transport

These suggestions for possible actions formed the basis for the preparation of the Action Plan on Urban Mobility. During the preparations of the action plan the actions were further specified, prioritised and politically validated, taking into account – among other things – the available resources.

## **8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The overall impact and success of the Action Plan will depend on active involvement and take-up by operators and other stakeholders and interested parties at the local, regional and national levels. The Commission will monitor the development of urban mobility and transport in the EU and the performance of the EU actions launched in the framework of the action plan. A review will be undertaken in 2012. The Commission will then assess the impact of the Action Plan and the need to revise it or to launch additional actions.