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CEMR key points on sustainable mobility

Sustainable mobility

Context

Transport is a competence shared between the European Union and the Member States, addressing road, air, maritime, inland waterways and rail transport modes. It covers a broad range of issues, from infrastructures (e.g. Trans-European transport network), to safety and security (e.g. Directive on cross-border enforcement in the field of road safety), through satellite navigation (e.g. Galileo programme) and internal market (e.g. Regulation on public passenger transport services by rail and road).

EU sustainable mobility policies strive to achieve a transportation of passengers and goods that is energy-efficient and environment-friendly, with the objective to disconnect mobility from its adverse effects, such as poor air quality, noise, congestion, health problems and climate worsening. The EU is thus developing an extensive legislation, aiming in particular at:

- Enhancing the environmental performances of vehicles (e.g. Regulation setting legally-binding standards for CO₂ emissions from new passenger cars);
- Promoting clean transport modes (e.g. Directive on the promotion of clean and energy efficient vehicles addressing purchases of environmentally-friendly vehicles for public transport services).
- Supporting the use of new energy sources (e.g. Directive on the promotion of renewable energy aiming at achieving 10% share of renewable energy in each Member States' transport energy consumption by 2020);
- Reducing the environmental damages of transport (e.g. the 'greening transport package' which first targets the road sector with the proposal on road tolls for lorries, so-called 'Eurovignette directive');
- Facilitating the development of information and communication technologies (e.g. deployment of Intelligent Transport Systems).

Of specific interest for local authorities is the European Action plan on urban mobility that the Commission will publish this year, considering the concentration of population and transport-related problems in towns and cities.

Further to legislation, the EU is promoting sustainable mobility through other instruments such as:

- Programmes supporting research, technological development and eco-innovation (e.g. 7th Framework programme, Competitiveness and Innovation framework Programme);
- Funding activities (e.g. Marco Polo programme on the environmental performance of the freight transport system);
- Exchange of best practices and awareness raising activities (e.g. European Mobility Week).

Finally, the European Commission has started reflections on the long-term challenges of transport after 2010 and is preparing a Communication on the future of transport to be published in June 2009.

CEMR key points on sustainable mobility

1. The ever-growing demand for mobility, in particular in urban areas, is posing an increasing threat to the environment and the citizen's well being. Urgent action is needed, involving all levels of government, industry and civil society to address the future of mobility in Europe.
2. The significant contribution of transport to climate change is now well acknowledged. Local and regional authorities already implement innovative measures to reduce the climate impact of transport, such as running their fleets on biofuels, promote cycling and walking and improving public transport.
3. The European Union brings added value in policy areas and challenges that are common to EU Member States, regions and municipalities. However, the respect of the principles of subsidiarity is crucial in relation to urban mobility.
4. Sustainable mobility implies a shift towards more sustainable modes of transport, including public transport. Therefore, modal shift should be a priority in the upcoming Action plan on urban mobility.
5. The provision of sustainable mobility requires considerable funding and the EU should further secure its financial support to municipalities and regions, especially with the contribution of the European Investment Bank.
6. Innovative economic instruments implemented at local level such as road pricing schemes may bring additional financial resources for local decision-makers to improve sustainable mobility, and act as a financial incentive to trigger the shift of consciousness among transport users.
7. Being a major investor in public transport, local and regional governments have a key role in implementing green procurement. Stimulating demand for clean vehicles should be complemented by an essential contribution of the car industry.
8. The deployment of information and communication technologies and the setting of technical standards at EU level will greatly contribute to improving the necessary interoperability between different transport modes.
9. The local and regional authorities are well positioned to offer information and awareness raising activities to citizens and mobilise economic actors on their territories, thus creating the conditions for the development of a "new mobility culture".
10. The decoupling of road transport growth from economic growth is a priority of any sustainable transport policy and should be recognised as an essential objective in the upcoming communication of the future of transport.

CEMR position papers related to transport:

Declaration of Stuttgart on the role of European local and regional governments regarding sustainable mobility, December 2007

www.ccre.org/docs/stuttgart_urban_mobility_en.pdf

CEMR response to the Green paper on urban mobility COM(2007)55, March 2008

www.ccre.org/docs/CEMR_response_Green_paper_urban_mobility_EN_070308.pdf

CEMR position paper on the proposal for a directive on the promotion of clean and energy efficient road transport vehicles COM(2007) 817 final, May 2008

www.ccre.org/prises_de_positions_detail_en.htm?ID=78&idca=1

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