

# Transport



## PARLIAMENTARY GROUP OF THE PARTY OF EUROPEAN SOCIALISTS

**This is a key area of the European economy and the European Union (EU) has, over the years, drawn up common rules for transport operators to ensure open competition within a single market and fair competition between different modes of transport. It also draws up rules to promote sustainable mobility and to protect passenger rights and ensure safety. Other aspects of the policy include more progress towards integrated transport systems, improving transport links with countries outside the EU, progress towards a common and fair way of dealing with transport charges and costs, and development of a Europe-wide navigation network.**

### The European Parliament's role

The Parliament now has equal weight with the Council of Ministers in decisions over most transport policies and was a key player in shifting attitudes so that the true environmental costs of transport will be identified and internalised. Parliament has also been instrumental in pushing for a Union-wide approach to transport and a better balance between different modes of transport, and it has promoted debate about transport charging systems and the scope for more coherent emissions and fuel taxes.

### Socialists and Transport & Communications

A safe, integrated and environmentally sustainable transport policy has always been the priority of the Party of European Socialists (PES) Group transport team. Our work is often diverse; and the expertise that has arisen within the team during the last five years has proved how effective the PES Group has been in ensuring that the needs of the travelling public are put first.

In all modes of transport, we have been actively working to deliver a better service and to ensure that progress is not at the expense of safety nor, indeed, the social conditions of workers within the industry.

In the area of **Maritime Transport**, we have been active in not only promoting the new **Maritime Safety Agency**, but also in putting pressure on the International Maritime Organisation to improve its safety record. We continue to campaign for an end to flags of convenience and for better training for merchant seafarers.

It was the PES Group team which insisted on a full investigation into the Prestige oil tanker disaster, including the effects of the disaster on the local environment, and the banning of single hull oil tankers from EU waters.

Within the area of **Civil Aviation**, we have adamantly advocated not only increases in aviation safety and security, but also increased consumer rights, including better rights and levels of compensation for delayed and cancelled flights.

We have also supported moves to help European airlines in what has been a difficult time for them, and we have been at the forefront of efforts to create a single European Sky and to harmonise the working conditions of pilots and cabin crew throughout the whole of Europe.



On our **roads**, we have been instrumental in pushing through increased safety measures, including regulations on lorry drivers' hours, design of road vehicles, improved rules covering seat belt use, blood alcohol levels, and pedestrian safety. Furthermore, we have supported measures to relieve road congestion and to encourage freight users to move their goods more by rail, inland waterway or coastal shipping rather than by road.

In our towns, cities and local communities, we have campaigned to improve **public transport**. Our priority for a safe, efficient, affordable public transport system has ensured that local services meet the demands of local people. We have supported the principle of integrated public transport and have worked very closely with passenger groups and public transport operators to ensure that legislators, operators, and users can create a public transport system we can all be proud of.

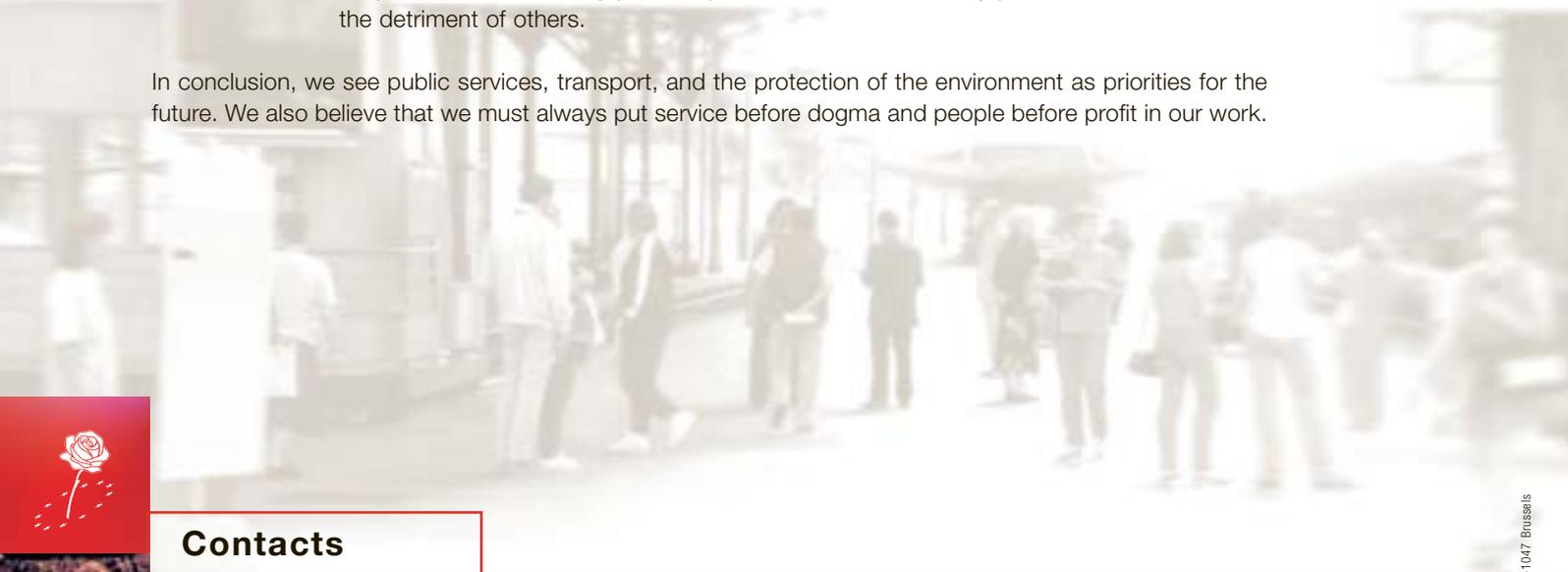
Within the **railway sector**, we have supported the creation of a European Rail safety agency and a European rail freight network, and have also been at the forefront for many years in promoting combined inter-modal transport. We see our next priority being the promotion of greater inter-operability between national railway operators, so that rail can compete effectively with road. Also within the rail sector, our team have been very active in ensuring our railway heritage is protected through our support for the Federation of Museum Railways.

Finally, within the transport sector, it is our wish to move forward with new proposals for Roll-on Roll-off (RoRo) **ferries**. It is our wish to build on legislation in place requiring passenger lists and the introduction of a 'black box' similar to those on aircraft, by extending the denied boarding and delay compensation to ferries and continuing our campaign for segregated car decks.



Another area of responsibility of the PES team is **postal services**, where we have fought the plans of the European Commission for liberalising the whole of the postal sector which would put at great risk the ability of national postal administrations to offer, at an affordable price, a universal service to every citizen of the EU. We feel strongly that the unique nature of our postal services should be preserved so that both rural and urban sustainability can be maintained. We do not believe that our postal network should be subjected to take-over by private operators who could 'cherry pick' the best services, to the detriment of others.

In conclusion, we see public services, transport, and the protection of the environment as priorities for the future. We also believe that we must always put service before dogma and people before profit in our work.



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