

In times of climate change, rising energy prices and other difficulties we need to get new perspectives on how we live and how we move. Today most of us live in cities and we move around in cars but we have become increasingly aware that if we want to address the issue of global warming we have to change our habits. This brochure deals with what we call urban mobility. Urban mobility covers a range of issues in the fields of transport, environment, social and economic development, city and town planning, employment and housing and focuses on how to set clear goals for reducing urban traffic pollution, congestion, noises and road accidents. The Socialists in Europe are well aware of these problems and are working to solve them. This special leaflet gives a concentrated version of how we can improve our urban environment – our ideas on urban mobility.

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The European Commission published a Green Paper on Urban Transport and an action plan on urban mobility has been awaited since autumn 2008. The Socialist Group in the European Parliament welcomes this initiative. Europe's overall sustainability and its ability to address such issues as climate change, energy efficiency and demographic change will entirely depend on whether its big urban centres are able to address these challenges effectively. A sustainable Europe is only possible with sustainable cities. In this Manifesto, the **Socialist Group** in the European Parliament has outlined its political priorities on urban mobility. In the absence of a Commission Action Plan, the Socialist Group in the Transport committee has moved forward and appointed a rapporteur for an Urban Mobility Action Plan.

The EU should promote an integrated, long-term approach to urban mobility. Urban mobility is a complex matter that touches on many fields. Authorities in the fields of transport, environment, economic and social development, city and town planning, employment, and housing, must therefore work together with social organisations and businesses to develop a comprehensive approach towards urban mobility. All levels of government should be included in this process. Local, regional, national and EU levels of government should cooperate. The EU should be an important partner and facilitator, naturally respecting the principle of "subsidiarity" (where decisions should be made at the most local level possible), and promoting very close cooperation where needed.

Europe should set out clear goals for remedying the main problems related to urban mobility. A clear agenda should be developed to reduce traffic pollution, congestion, noise and road accidents. Private car use should be avoided. Cities should adopt an integrated intermodal and/or co-modal policy that puts walking, cycling and public transport first, ahead of other modes of transport.

To reach the goals set out in this agenda, each city should draw up a long-term **Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan**. These plans would also take into account the mobility needs of the elderly, the disabled and the socially vulnerable. Access to mobility for all should be one of the basic principles to be considered.

This requires, first and foremost, thorough research: every city should examine the specific mobility needs of vulnerable citizens and act on them. The EU's role is to exchange best practice in this field and, if appropriate, take legislative initiatives to make sure that everyone is able to move around regardless of factors such as their age, health or income level.

In addition, a strategy on distribution of goods and services in cities should be included in the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans. Smart planning of urban logistics is one of the key factors that would make such plans work.

Compatible data-collection and benchmarking on urban mobility is essential to allow authorities all over Europe to compare private car use, public transport use, walking, cycling, planning, energy efficiency and other environmental, social and economic parameters that are needed to develop policies. The Socialist Group calls for reasonable networking and exchange of good practices on urban mobility.

To avoid additional red tape and bureaucracy for its cities, the EU should draw as much information as possible from existing sources and structures, such as the European Environmental Agency in Copenhagen and the Statistical Office of the European Communities. The information on urban mobility should be brought together in an efficient way, such as a "European Platform for Urban Mobility" to allow citizens policy-makers easy access to this vital information.



Europe should step up its efforts to introduce **technological solutions** for cleaner and more sustainable urban transport. One of the main objectives should be to create, at last, a real market for clean and quiet vehicles and intelligent transport systems, so that existing innovations are adopted on a broad scale. Existing efforts to stimulate research and development in this field should be continued and reinforced.

The Socialist Group calls for a **creative multi-channel approach to financing urban mobility**. This approach should be based on the optimization of existing EU financial resources and legal instruments to facilitate investment in sustainable urban transport, and draw from funds that have proven to be effective, such as the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Funds. A specific fund could be dedicated to urban mobility, but the EU should avoid creating new financial structures to promote and facilitate cooperation and the sharing of good practices in the field of urban mobility.

To increase efficiency in decision-making, there should be **urban mobility liaison officers** in all parts of the European Commission which deal with legislation affecting urban mobility, for example transport, environment and regional policy.

As it did for rail and air transport, the EU should guarantee **passengers' rights in public transport**, and it may also legislate on **quality standards in public transport and passengers' rights for the disabled**.

The Socialist Group also supports the idea of **company mobility plans**. Companies have to design plans to get their employees to work in the fastest, the most sustainable and the most secure way possible, both for users and companies.

URBAN MOBILITY "GETTING AROUND TOWN"

A SOCIALIST GROUP POSITION PAPER



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