

CP/G7867/OKA

N° 880 - 6 June 2007

## Help the market to help the customer!

**The future EU Green Paper on Urban Transport must recognise the fundamental role of collective passenger transport in ensuring safe and sustainable mobility, and reaffirm the policy objective of 2000 to introduce competition in all public transport services by road and rail.**

Brussels - The EU Council of Ministers is expected to soon conclude a seven-year long legislative saga by adopting the revised Commission proposal for a Regulation on public passenger transport services by rail and road. However, the preliminary agreement between the European Parliament and Council indicates that this new legislation will change very little in the European public transport market.

The EU legislature, which has continuously scaled down the already modest revised Commission proposal of 2005, has regrettably kept the ability of local authorities to decide whether or not to use competitive tendering when granting contracts for public passenger transport services by rail and road. In very few aspects only, notably with regards to transparency, the possibility to appeal and the transitional period, did the legislature succeed in slightly improving the situation.

Hubert Linssen, IRU General Delegate to the EU said: "Ensuring a level playing field between private companies and public internal operators, but also between rail and road in general, must remain high on the European institutions' agenda, as part of their social contract with EU citizens. The future EU Green Paper on Urban Transport must forcefully reaffirm the policy objective set in 2000 to [introduce competition in all public transport services](#) by road and rail. Higher involvement of the private sector is needed to achieve sustainable public transport services throughout the EU."

The future EU Green Paper does have the potential to set a framework for debate and initiatives to improve legislation, in particular, by recognising the [fundamental role of collective passenger transport](#) by bus, coach and [taxi](#) as a viable, safe and environmentally-friendly alternative to the private car.

"Experience has shown that public transport carried out by private operators, most of which are small and medium-size companies (SMEs), is efficient and cost-effective, and offers safe and environmentally-friendly public mobility for European citizens at affordable prices. Customers' satisfaction is high, as private operators respond to market needs and are more likely to provide tailor-made services", Hubert Linssen concluded.

\* \* \*

Press contact: [Juliette.Ebele@iru.org](mailto:Juliette.Ebele@iru.org), +41 22 918 27 07

