



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Ladies and gentlemen, Good Morning.

My term as Commissioner for transport is coming to an end. Today I want to say goodbye to the road transport community, and to thank you all for 5 years of excellent co-operation. I take this opportunity first for a – quick – look back, and then at what remains to be done.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me start with the recently adopted Directive on the deployment of **alternative fuels infrastructure**.

The final text is less ambitious than what we initially proposed. But it lays the foundations for co-ordinated deployment of the necessary fuelling infrastructure.

I am confident that this legislation will help making electric and gas powered vehicles a more frequent sight on our roads. CNG- and LNG-powered vehicles are selling by the tens of thousands in China and the U.S. Europe needs to catch up.

Last year, we also proposed to revise the Directive on maximum **weights and dimensions**. Under the new rules, trucks will become safer and more aerodynamic, allowing savings of 5 to 7% in fuel consumption.

I am happy to see that the file is progressing in Council and Parliament, and I hope it is adopted still before Christmas.

Last but not least, I am very proud of our new multi-annual infrastructure and research funds. The **Connecting Europe Facility** tripled the budget available for the TEN-T network and for optimising transport operations.

It also foresees the use of new financial instruments to additionally leverage available funds. I think we now have an infrastructure fund which can make a difference, and help complete a core network for efficient trans-European transport.

Horizon 2020 – the new research and innovation fund – has an equally important role to play. Alternatively powered and more efficient mobility will not come without considerable research and innovation efforts.

This is why I'm so pleased that EU's research budget will reach an unprecedented 70 billion euros in the current programming period, and that transport will benefit from a significant part of this money.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am equally conscious of the fact that much still remains to be achieved. Today, I would like to speak of two initiatives in particular, which help making our transport system more efficient.

The first of these initiatives concerns a further opening of access to the **market for road freight transport**. I know this is a controversial topic, including for many people in this room.

But if we are serious about "maintaining and reinforcing a strong and high-performing industrial base" in Europe, we need the most efficient logistics system to support that industrial base. And because road transport carries more goods than any other mode of transport, we need the most efficient road transport market as a key component of that logistics system.

You don't get the most efficient transport system by maintaining restrictions on hauliers' ability to access markets and optimize fleet management.

It is therefore essential to complete the internal market in road freight and to do away with archaic restrictions on market access which have no place in a future single transport area. If this is one side of the medal, the other is enforcement: The completion of the internal market must go hand in hand with a strict enforcement of the rules, to avoid that free-riders distort competition on the market.

The second initiative relates to **road charging**. Nobody likes to pay more taxes or charges – myself included. But we need ear-marked money from tolls in order to prevent our infrastructure from turning from an asset to a liability.

We used to have the best infrastructure in the world. Now we are dangerously close to losing this asset.

I don't believe in a one-size-fits-all solution for the whole of Europe. Conditions differ between Member States and even between regions. But we should make sure that where tolls are deployed, they treat all users fairly, independently of their origin, and that the revenues are re-invested in transport.

This is why we should not be afraid discussing these issues at EU level, putting the accent on efficiency, fairness, non-discrimination and smart use of the revenues. Let me make it clear that this is not about obligatory introduction of EU wide charging. No, this decision is for local, regional or national levels to decide.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me turn to an area which has been somewhat overlooked but where the potential for efficiency improvements is very significant: **collective passenger transport by road**.

I believe that we have a reasonably good body of legislation to regulate the sector: the 2011 passenger rights Regulation; the 2009 Regulation on market access; the 2009 Regulation on public passenger transport services by rail and by road.

Domestic regular coach or taxi services have long been excluded on grounds of subsidiarity. Yet – in my view – this does not take sufficient account of the links between road and other modes of transport.

Regional buses and coaches ensure connections between international terminals and smaller urban and rural destinations; taxis and taxi-like services in many instances offer

the first mile/last mile connections on which the very viability of long distance, often cross-border air, rail and coach services depend.

If we are serious about creating a Single European Transport Area, where passengers seamlessly change from one mode to another – if we are serious about providing a real alternative to the use of the private car – then we simply cannot afford some Member States blocking competition and innovation to protect incumbent operators, as it happens today.

To be a real alternative to the use of the private car, collective transport must improve service and reduce prices. In France, the competition authority criticised the State's policy of discriminating against regular coach service operators on lines where rail connections exist. Spain has been recently asking under which condition new taxi-like services can operate in the Union.

Since its launch, I have supported IRU's campaign to promote the use of collective road transport as an alternative to the private use of the car.

I believe that the European Citizen's Mobility Forum can provide an adequate platform for discussing initiatives to make the shift to collective transport a reality. I invite you to continue the dialogue with my successor, and wish you a lot of luck in future activities of the forum!

Ladies and gentlemen,

I have deliberately left for the end an area which may profoundly change how transport is organised, but where progress so far has been quite disappointing: **Data.**

Data and information are crucial to enhancing mobility in a multimodal transport chain.

Providing travellers with accurate information before and during the journey will not only benefit individuals or freight companies; it will also lead to a better modal integration because the end-users will be able to make informed choices of the available service.

Along these lines, we are about to adopt a new set of rules that will establish the right ecosystem to facilitate the provision of accurate, reliable and high quality real time road traffic information services.

In addition, we continue to work on the framework so that more comprehensive multimodal journey planners can emerge. We are finalising a legislative framework to enable fair and equal access to multimodal travel and traffic data.

Finally, as an additional indication that innovation is an essential dimension of the "single European transport area", we are preparing a deployment strategy for **cooperative systems** in Europe.

Cooperative ITS is an area that holds great promise for our transport system – provided that the solutions deployed take into account interoperability, security of the system and privacy issues.

I am looking forward to the work in the next months together with stakeholders, including IRU on Cooperative ITS.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I wish you a successful event today. I also wish you to establish fruitful collaboration with my successor.

Thank you for your attention.