Towards a new culture for urban mobility

2008/2041(INI) - 09/07/2008 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 558 votes to 100, with 33 abstentions, a resolution on a new culture of urban mobility, in response to the Commission's Green Paper on the subject.

The own initiative report had been tabled for consideration in plenary by Reinhard **RACK** (EPP-ED, AT) on behalf of the Committee on Transport and Tourism.

Role of the EU: while recognising the principle that local authorities are free to adopt their own mobility policies, the Parliament considers that the EU should define an overall strategy on urban mobility leading to a more rational use of private cars and promote a modal shift towards sustainable modes of transport, to support the EU's commitments on environmental protection and on cutting greenhouse gas emissions. MEPs believe that action must be taken at European level in the following areas and call for:

- the development of an integrated European global approach to urban mobility which will serve as a common frame of reference for European, national, regional and local players (municipalities, citizens, businesses and industry);
- reliable, comparable data on all aspects of urban and suburban mobility to be gathered and effectively disseminated, taking into account demographic changes, economic growth and climate change;
- an evaluation of the implementation and application by Member States of European legislation affecting urban transport, in particular public passenger transport;

- a list of the local initiatives aiming to tackle some of the problems referred to in the Green Paper (e.g. road charging, green zones, safety on public transport, protection of cyclists etc.);
- a "European Platform for Urban Mobility" or any other effective forum that brings together all data, best practices and policy information on urban mobility in a comprehensible way;
- an evaluation of the external costs of the various modes of transport and an assessment of the possibility of internalising these.

Legislation: the Parliament considers it necessary for the EU to take into account the particular needs of urban transport in the policy areas where it has legislative power (e.g. budget policy, environment policy, social and labour market policy, competition policy, industry policy, regional and cohesion policy, transport and road safety policy, and energy policy).

Standardisation and harmonisation: MEPs call for specific European rules and/or guidance to be adopted, particularly concerning the following: (i) the design and functioning of green zones and road pricing; (ii)technical and organisational requirements for the interoperability of the various modes of passenger and freight transport; (iii) the mobility of people with disabilities, the elderly, people with young children and the least affluent; (iv) an improvement of road safety according to European and national legislation; (v) the accessibility and interoperability of Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) technologies for EU-wide applications.

Dissemination and exchange of best practices: the resolution calls for suitable measures to promote the exchange of best practices, particularly concerning: (i) flexible road use concepts; (ii) the adoption of multimodal transport (road, rail, water); (iii) integrated ticketing and billing systems that simplify access to different transport modes; (iv) innovative solutions for efficient goods transport, particularly for local goods distribution in cities; (v) guidelines for an environmentally aware public procurement policy; (vi) improvements in clean public local passenger transport; (vii) the promotion of sustainable mobility chains:

walking-cycling-car-sharing-car-pooling-collective taxis-public mobility; (viii) a better organisation of short-distance transport; (ix) the introduction of parking guidance systems; (x) measures to promote virtual mobility, for example e-learning, e-banking, teleshopping and teleconferencing.

Financing: noting that the EU can make an important contribution to financing urban passenger and freight transport measures, for example by using the Structural and Cohesion Funds, MEPs call on the Commission to honour its responsibility in this respect. The Commission is called to draw up specific market economy-oriented instruments to create a balanced and favourable framework for sustainable mobility in urban centres. In the context of the forthcoming review of the EU budget, MEPs call for the financing of projects from EU funds to be more closely linked to conditions and requirements relating to sustainable transport and environmental protection in future. The Commission is called to work, alone or together with the European Investment Bank, for example, on examining the current and future possibilities for financing urban transport.

Individual responsibility: MEPs believe that it is necessary to encourage citizens to critically assess their behaviour as road users and, if possible, actively participate in local urban mobility forums. They call on European, national, regional and local authorities to organise education and information campaigns, targeting the younger generation in particular, to make citizens more aware of their traffic behaviour. Highlighting the growing success of the "Car-free Day", organised in the context of EU Mobility Week, MEPs call on the Commission and Member Statesto continue to encourage this initiative and work towards its widespread adoption.