European strategy for low-emission mobility

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The Committee on Transport and Tourism adopted the own-initiative report by Bas EICKHOUT (Greens /EFA, NL) on a European Strategy for Low-Emission Mobility in response to the Commission communication on the subject.

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, exercising its prerogatives as an associated committee under Rule 54 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, also gave its opinion on the report.

The committee welcomed the Commission's communication and stressed the fact that to abide by the Paris Agreement, **GHG emissions from transport will need to be near zero by mid-century,** and that air pollutant emissions from transport will need to be drastically reduced if the WHO public health guidelines, at the very least, are to be met without delay.

Fair and efficient pricing: Members considered that **clearer price signals** across all transport modes which better reflect the **polluter-pays and user-pays principles are essential.** A modal shift in transport requires **investment in multimodality** and public transport.

The report welcomed the Commission's efforts at developing standards for interoperable electronic tolling systems in the EU, as well as the forthcoming revision of the Eurovignette Directive (Directive 1999/62 /EC). They believed that the **extension of distance-based charging** should cover all passenger cars and vans, while allowing for some form of flexibility for remote and sparsely populated areas.

Logistics and digitalisation: the report stressed the role of digitalisation in sustainable mobility. It considered that intelligent transport systems, platooning and autonomous and connected vehicles could constitute an important asset in improving the efficiency of both individual and commercial transport. Members called on the Commission to encourage the use of zero-emissions light-duty commercial vehicles, zero-emissions buses, waste trucks, taxis and freight bicycles in last mile logistics.

Low-emission alternative energy: the report called on the Commission to adopt an ambitious **action plan for the market uptake of electric vehicles** and to issue Member States with **guiding recommendations** to encourage them to implement **fiscal incentives** for zero- and low-emission vehicles. The availability of charging and refuelling **infrastructure**, and the competitiveness of electric vehicles, are essential for increasing consumer acceptance. Members wanted to see a long-term European initiative on **next-generation batteries** as well as for the development of the necessary infrastructure.

They asked the Commission to propose the phasing-out of direct and indirect subsidies for fossil fuels by 2020 at the latest. Whilst taking note of the limits proposed in the recast of the Renewable Energy Directive with a view to phasing down first generation biofuels by 2030, the report called on the Commission, to **distinguish between first-generation biofuels** with high GHG efficiency and a low risk of indirect land use change and those which do not meet those criteria, and to take measures to **phase out the use of feedstocks**, including palm oil, that drive deforestation or the use of peat land, as a component of biofuels.

Transport infrastructure and investment: Members urged the intensification of **EU cofinancing of transport projects** that contribute to climate action and the **minimisation of other external costs**, in the framework of the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) and the TEN-T. They felt that Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) projects are key for the European Strategy for Low-Emission Mobility,

and asked for the **CEF budget to be restored,** with EFSI II financed from other sources. Members urged the Commission to make more funds available for **cities to bid jointly for infrastructure** or technologies that would contribute to reducing air pollution from road vehicles, including public recharging stations for electric vehicles.

Empowering citizens and decision-makers towards behavioural change: the committee asked the Commission and the Member States, taking into account the failure of European standards for light-duty vehicles to reflect real-world emissions, to **examine the benefits of introducing a label or standard for Ultra Low-Emission Vehicles** (ULEVs) that would meet emission limit values in real driving conditions.

It also called on the Commission to:

- prioritise EU cofinancing of urban mobility projects which contribute to achieving GHG reduction targets;
- incentivise the purchase of cleaner, less polluting vehicles by both public authorities and private fleets;
- include the transport needs of citizens in rural and remote areas in its strategies for low-emission mobility;
- invest more in the integration of the EuroVelo Cycling Network with the TEN-T rail networks.

The report analysed **specific sectoral trends** for different transport modes. It looked at cars, heavy-duty vehicles, railways, aviation, maritime transport and inland waterways.