

**More and better public transport is part of the solution
towards an eco-efficient economy!**

Meeting with the Swedish Council Presidency

During a meeting on 20 August with Åsa Torstensson the Swedish Minister and EU Council President responsible for Transport, Tony Depledge, Chairman of the UITP EU Committee emphasised the strong support of UITP for the Swedish Presidency's overarching priority towards an eco-efficient economy.

"Eco-efficiency in cities means community-focused growth that is more space and energy efficient" said Tony Depledge. "The current development model of cities is not viable; the severity of climate change and the looming prospect of peak oil mean that we can no longer delay. The European institutions must play a facilitating role to bring about a shift towards more sustainable urban transport patterns. This means enabling a change in personal mobility choices leading to modal shift towards public transport."

Speaking about the proposal on passenger rights, currently under discussion in the Council, Tony Depledge underlined that "UITP Members are committed to customer focus as an essential element in the development of high quality public transport. However, the passenger rights proposal under discussion ignores the specific characteristics of local and regional passenger transport by bus."

For that reason, Tony Depledge proposed to bring the professional knowledge and advice of UITP into the current European decision-making process through the organization of regular meetings with the Council Presidency.

The economic wealth of Europe is mainly created in urban areas which often face high congestion and pollution levels. Approximately 7% of this wealth is wasted on the external costs of accidents, congestion, health and environmental damage linked to transport.

Urban, suburban and regional public transport networks offer attractive mobility solutions as a basis for sound economic development while reducing congestion, accidents, climate change and local pollution.

In addition, those networks represent an essential link in enabling good accessibility for all to the different functions of the city (employment, education, health, leisure, retailing, etc) while securing social inclusion. In the European Union we estimate that public transport operators offer 1.200.000 direct jobs and studies suggest that every direct job in public transport is linked to 2-2.5 jobs in other sectors of the economy.

Note for editors

- UITP is the international network for public transport authorities and operators, policy decision-makers, scientific institutes and the public transport supply and service industry. It is a platform for worldwide co-operation, business development and the sharing of know-how between its 3,100 members from 90 countries. UITP is the global advocate for public transport and sustainable mobility, and the promoter of innovations in the sector.
- The UITP EU Committee was established in 1965. The objective of the EU Committee and its secretariat, EuroTeam, is to represent the common interests of public transport undertakings to the EU institutions. It monitors legislation and provides members with information regarding EU policy developments, prepares EU Committee positions papers, and assists and advises members concerning all aspects of European policies related to the public transport sector.

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