



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Brussels, 16 September 2010

'Travel Smarter, Live Better' UITP calls for a change in travel behaviour

The 2010 edition of European Mobility Week (EMW) starts today in more than 1750 European cities and towns. Supported by the International Association of Public Transport (UITP), the EMW aims to make citizens rethink their travel behaviour. A wide range of initiatives will promote sustainable and active mobility options, such as walking, cycling and public transport, as a means to address physical inactivity, excess weight and obesity, reduce road traffic injuries and contribute to both the physical and mental well-being of citizens.

Comment [SAD1]: Number in evolution. Please ask confirmation for the final number to the organizers.

The International Association of Public Transport (UITP), an established partner of EMW and the global advocate for public transport and sustainable mobility, stresses that public transport contributes to improving the environment and health, enhancing quality of life in cities and helping people to 'live better'. Public transport has a positive impact on:

- **Noise:** Traffic noise alone is harming the health of 1/3 of Europeans, but the problem can be tackled through a combination of technical developments, spatial planning measures and policies to influence modal split and travel behaviour.
- **Clean air:** Air pollution is the cause of many respiratory infections and cardiovascular diseases. Per passenger, public transport pollutes 10-100 times less than cars, depending on the percentage of electric traction.
- **Safety:** Road traffic injuries lead to the death of about 127,000 people and injure at least 2.4 million in the EU every year, costing around 2% of EU GDP. Public transport is 5-10 times safer than cars per passenger/km (WHO).
- **Obesity:** 1/3 of the world's population is affected by obesity and overweight (WHO). Active travel, such as walking, cycling and public transport, is an important solution to the problem of physical inactivity. Scientific studies show that even small increases in physical activity can bring a huge health benefit (C. Bouchard, Physical activity and health, 2001).
- **Climate change:** Cities with a modal share of public transport, cycling and walking above 55% produce on average about 2.4 tons less CO₂ from passenger transport per capita per year than cities where the modal share of private motorised modes is above 75% (UITP 'Mobility in Cities Database', 2006).
- **Lifestyle:** The massive increase in motor vehicles in recent years limits citizens' mobility, increasing congestion and reducing public space. Public transport greatly benefits society by enhancing social interaction and community engagement.

Janez Potočnik, European Commissioner for the Environment, stated: "The main theme of European Mobility Week 2010 – 'Travel Smarter, Live Better' – is a wake up call to local authorities, to consider more the impact of travel policies on the urban environment and quality of life, and to help people make smarter, healthier travel choices."

Notes to editors:

- **UITP** (International Association of Public Transport) 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 cooperation, business development and the sharing of know-how between its 3,200 members from 90 countries. UITP is the global advocate for public transport and sustainable mobility, and the promoter of innovations in the sector. Visit www.uitp.org.
- To learn more about **European Mobility Week**, visit either www.uitp.org/advocacy/Public-awareness.cfm#0 or www.mobilityweek.eu.

UITP Press Contact:

Sarah D'Angelo | Press Junior Manager | +32 (0)2 6636639 | sarah.d'angelo@uitp.org