



## PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 13 October 2010

### Where there is mobility there is social inclusion

Within the framework of the **2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion**, representatives of public transport operators, local authorities, European institutions and delegates and experts from the public transport business sector met yesterday 12 October to discuss the development of a truly inclusive and efficient European public transport policy.

The kick-off event was a workshop in Brussels organised by the EU-Committee and the Transport and Urban Life Commission of the International Association of Public Transport (UITP).

Well beyond combating poverty and eliminating barriers for disabled people, social inclusion is a wider issue tackling the accessibility to work, community services, health care and economic, social and cultural opportunities and facilities in society.

As such, "mobility – with an efficient public transport system – is not only a step towards social inclusion but a key factor in achieving it", as underlined by the speaker Maria-Pilar Machancoses, Regeneration & Planning Manager at CENTRO, United Kingdom.

To allow public transport to play this important role in social inclusion, **Tony Depledge**, Chairman of the UITP European Union Committee, and **Tom Magrath**, Chairman of the UITP Transport and Urban Life Commission, reiterated the message of the UITP Focus Paper 'Tackling Social Exclusion – the role of public transport' to UITP members and all public transport stakeholders to raise the profile of the sector.

"Positive models of public transport systems must be provided starting from the media, in order to change the image of public transport" said the keynote speaker **Gyula Hegyi**, Member of the Cabinet Andor on Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion of the European Commission. "In addition a monitoring platform for Public transport systems would be useful ensuring the accessibility to jobs first and allowing social inclusion" he added.

**Stéphane Buffetaut**, President of the Sustainable Development Observatory of the European Economic and Social Committee, backed Mr. Hegyi in his closing speech, stating that the European Union must take part in the development of an efficient and inclusive European policy for public transport.

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#### 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 **3,400 members from 92 countries**. UITP is the global advocate for public transport and sustainable mobility, and the promoter of innovations in the sector. Visit [www.uitp.org](http://www.uitp.org).