



## **INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT FORUM STAKEHOLDER INFORMATION AND CONSULTATION**

**Paris - 24 January 2008**

### **Association of European Metropolitan Transport Authorities (EMTA)**

The association of European Metropolitan Transport Authorities (EMTA) was created in 1998 so as to form a venue for exchange of information and best practices between the authorities responsible for the public transport systems of the European metropolitan areas. It now brings together 30 such authorities, which are responsible for organising and funding public transport systems serving more than 80 million European citizens.

The association is involved in various activities. Working groups have been set up to deepen the work on the issues of accessibility of public transport systems to people with reduced mobility, of development of electronic ticketing systems, of measurement of passenger satisfaction, and of the new perspectives of funding public transport systems through capture of land added values generated by the presence of public transport. Workshops are held regularly on issues of common interest (last topics have been: missions and organisation of the authorities responsible for public transport, co-ordination between transport and land use policies, and last February, contractual relationships between public authorities and operating companies).

EMTA releases a quarterly letter of information, EMTA News, and a yearly Barometer containing statistical information on the public transport systems of the European metropolitan areas. All these publications can be downloaded from EMTA's website ([www.emta.com](http://www.emta.com)).

EMTA focuses on serving the mobility needs of European citizens by means of collective transport with a view to support economic growth, achieve social inclusion and engage in sustainability.

EMTA is very grateful to the International Transport Forum for recognizing it as a representative organisation at the European level, and for inviting it to participate in the stakeholder consultation hearing.

75% of the European population now lives in urban areas, and this rate even reaches 80% in Western Europe. Urban areas of more than 250,000 inhabitants account for one fourth of the population of our continent. Surveys of the Division of the population of the United Nations show that the fast urbanisation of Europe (+ 9% between 1980 and 1995) will go on at a pace of + 0.3% per year in average.

This trend can be regarded as a key opportunity. Urban areas are indeed the engines of economic development and of progress in society. At the same time, the growth of urban areas can bring damages which public authorities have to cope with namely damages to the quality of life and public health, extension of distances to the workplace, air pollution and congestion, greater spatial and social inequalities.

Public transport played a key role in the extension of urban areas in relation with the industrial revolution of the 19<sup>th</sup> century thanks to the fast extensions of tramways, metropolitan railways and suburban railways. But the fast growth in the use of the private car since 1950's has amplified this trend towards more spatial extension, and was regarded by some people as a universal solution to mobility problems.

Since the 1970's the necessity to keep high quality public transportation systems became more relevant but the trend is not easy to reverse. Between 1970 and 2000, the modal share of public transport fell by 50% in average in Europe to reach around 16% of the total number of trips, while the share of the private car grew from 73.8 to 78.3 %2.(Source : EU Energy and Transport in figures, Statistical pocketbook 2002).

### **About energy and public transport**

Public transport provides mobility for all and is capable of carrying fast hundreds of thousands of persons even at peak hours. In fact, public transport provides the best ratio of number of passengers carried in relation with the space consumption, therefore it is very well adapted to urban areas. In terms of energy consumption Public transport is also more efficient relatively to the number of passengers carried at the same time.

However, Public transport is also accountable for pollution and green house gas (GHG) emissions, public transport is not green enough.

What could be done?

- Heavy rail modes are the less polluting mass transit modes. However not all the train lines are electrified and notably in the less dense areas of the city regions;
- New technology such as dual- power mode could be encouraged (such as the new Bombardier AGC bi-mode specially designed for Ile de France suburban rail networks). Such technologies need previous research and translate into higher price when purchased.

- Light rail modes are on fashion they accommodate a large number of passengers and are green (electric powered) and silent. Yet they require special infrastructure and often call for a spatial reorganization of the surroundings which are not always affordable in the largest metropolitan areas given the scale of implementation.
- Energy consumption from buses is mostly responsible for the total GHG emissions released by Public transport networks in urban areas. Attempts to use alternative fuels are currently experimented in several European networks: for example natural gas buses in Barcelona, Aquazole buses in Paris RATP network, biofuels are on trial in the Helsinki metropolitan area network. However there is a need to allow time for these experiences and trials to be conducted and then assessed. Besides, the purchase of such vehicles is more costly and there is a risk that additional costs would be translated into higher fares for the users.

As a conclusion, there is a need for further research and development in technology, time scale and industrial risk are out of reach for individual metropolitan public transport networks, therefore involvement of National Governments are necessary and possibly European legal frame for joint procurement to encourage industrials to innovate and help reducing purchase price for networks operators.

### **About integrated policy measures :**

#### **Key success factors for the provision of high quality public transport systems**

Public transport systems have a strong potential of development over the coming years. To achieve this, they will have to provide an attractive alternative to the use of the private car. The improvement of public transport will mean :

- an **increase in the provision of services and an adaptation to the new mobility needs** : people will only renounce using their car if they have at their disposal public transport services in sufficient quantity. This means a good service of the territory, large amplitudes of service, and a capacity in line with the demand. Demand responsive transport systems can open promising perspectives for the service of less dense territories and for night services.
- a **strong integration of networks**, so as to provide a seamless trip to passengers. This integration must cover the various transport companies of a given territory, as well as all the different public transport modes available. It must also include other transport means (private car, walking, cycling). Integration must be functional (networks are structured in a logical way), physical (no barrier from one mode to the other), and cover also fares and information.
- an **improvement in the quality of service**. Public transportation must provide a quality of service similar to that of private car, which has benefited largely of the technological progress of the past decades. The improvement of real time information, of regularity of services, of commercial speed, of comfort of waiting conditions and on-board, and of the

level of accessibility to people with reduced mobility, are key factors. It is important to measure regularly the level of satisfaction of passengers so as to highlight the priorities for improvement.

- an **attractive fare policy and a dynamic communication**. The social cost of public transport being lower than that of the private car, it should be cheaper for people to use public transport. Fare policy must take into account the financial capacities of people (youngsters, deprived people) and provide solutions to the specific mobility needs (trips with group of people, families). Besides, public transportation shall use communication and marketing tools so as to improve its image among people and thus compete on an equal basis with the private car, which can be seen everywhere in the media.

- a **strong focus on funding issues**. In most European cities, public transportation is not profitable without public subsidies. Fares enabling to attract large numbers of passengers are usually inferior to the break even points of operating companies. It is therefore fundamental that public authorities agree to bring in public money, which can stem from overall public budget, or from dedicated resources. Internalisation of external costs of the private car, charging of road usage by private cars, funding of public transport projects through capture of land value, are promising ways. Public authorities must also see to it that the cost of operation of the networks for which they are responsible are reasonable, and that gains in productivity are chased by operators.

- a **co-ordination with policies of land planning and urban development**, so that the extensions of urban areas are compatible with public transport service. It is important to increase the density of territories well served by public transport systems, and to prevent developments attracting lots of people (business districts, commercial or leisure centres, major airports) from not being served by public transport.

### **The stakes for public transport authorities**

Contrary to commercial sectors in which companies are free to define their strategies to meet the needs of customers, the field of public transport cannot be ruled only by market forces and calls for a strong involvement of public authorities. Public transport is indeed what can be defined as a service of general economic interest, that it to say that it meets requirements of the society as a whole, and that no one should be excluded from having access to it. Besides, the fact that this sector is, in most cases, not viable commercially without public money confirms that public authorities cannot ignore it.

### ***The need for a strong involvement of public authorities***

Public authorities have a key role to play in:

- the definition of the objectives of the policies of mobility. It is their responsibility to define what shall be the place of private cars in cities, what shall be the quantity and quality of the provision of public transport services, the level of accessibility of the services.
- the size of networks and the choice of transport modes to provide.
- the fare policy.
- the co-ordination of the policy in terms of public transport with regard to the other aspects of mobility issues (car traffic, parking, taxis, alternatives modes such as walking or cycling) and of public policies in general (land use planning, housing, etc.).

On these issues, authorities shall work closely with operating companies, which often have a strong technical expertise and can make interesting proposals, but the decision power shall remain in the hands of public authorities. This means that public authorities shall give themselves the human, technical, and financial means to develop their own expertise so as to be independent from companies.

The current trend that can be witnessed in most European countries leads to more devolution of powers from the central governments to local authorities for the organisation of local and regional public transport systems.

It is important that authorities responsible for organising public transport systems cover pertinent territories corresponding to the reality of the everyday trips of people. When several public authorities are concerned by mobility issues on a given pertinent territory, they should come together in a structure of co-ordination, like British PTAs, German Verkehrsverbund, French Syndicat mixtes and Spanish Consorcio de Transportes. This is a pre-requisite for the definition of an integrated policy of promotion of public transport.

### ***The need for transparent and balanced relationships with transport companies***

Contracts can be regarded as an interesting tool to manage relationships between authorities and companies in charge of operations. They enable to define clearly the responsibilities of each side and to determine the amount of public funds that shall be brought by the authority in exchange for the public service obligations imposed on the company. Contracts shall take into account the quality of service provided and contain incentives enabling to reward the company when it provides high quality services.

When public authorities own neither infrastructures nor rolling stock, they shall nonetheless ensure that these strategic assets are maintained in an appropriate way and meet the security and accessibility requirements.

If authorities decide to award contracts to companies from the market sector, the procedure shall be open, transparent and non-discriminatory.

### ***The need for new sources of funds and for an optimisation of the money allocated to public transport systems***

The necessary increase of the quantity and quality of public transport supply in urban areas will lead to a need of additional public money available, since it is not realistic to contemplate strong increases in fare levels. The authorities responsible for organising public transport systems have a direct responsibility in the search of new sources of funds and in the monitoring of production costs. They should also help operators reach high levels of efficiency through incentives and new technologies.

Organising authorities must be at the forefront of the thoughts and alert national and supranational

authorities on the necessity to devise shortly new financial mechanisms. Unless this can happen, there is a strong threat that severe financial shortages will hurt lots of networks before the end of the decade.

### ***The need for a pertinent level of subsidiarity***

Although the responsibility for public transport organisation is mostly local, national and supra-national authorities also have a key role to play in the promotion of a sustainable urban mobility. The European Union, which has committed itself to reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases in the Kyoto protocol, cannot ignore the patterns of urban mobility, since this constitutes a potentially strong source of reduction of polluting exhausts. In the same

way, issues such as the competition rules, transport infrastructure charging, safety of trips, to technical characteristics of vehicles (accessibility, energy consumption), and their standardisation, are in part of European interest.

The White Paper on the future European transport policy by 2010, released in 2001 by the European Commission, was a turning point in the understanding of the damages caused by the excessive use of the private car. However, this document doesn't focus enough on mobility problems in urban areas, where it is important to keep in mind that more than 75% of the European population live. The reference to the principle of subsidiarity and the fear to interfere with exclusive competences of more local authorities should not lead to forgetting that subsidiarity also means that it is the responsibility of authorities of higher level to reach the decisions which the lower levels cannot make.

The authorities responsible for public transport therefore expect from the European authorities and the national governments that they define more ambitious policies and commit more funds to the improvement of mobility conditions in the urban areas.

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As a reaction to the debate, EMTA would add:

There is a growing pressure on the organization and management of urban transport services enlarged to a Urban Mobility concept.

On the one hand Public Transport are expected to reduce pollution and upgrade systems and rolling stock/fleets of buses all of which is costly. On the other hand Public Transport is more than ever recognized as instrumental to support economic growth of urban areas and achieve social inclusion for example through a fare policy that cannot reflect the growing costs of delivering public services.

Henceforth there is a need:

- For more funding in research and for experiments and trials of alternative energies and also alternative policies;
- For more knowledge and more time to really assess what measures are efficient after a period of time and the necessity of on-going monitoring, comparing and disseminating;
- For proper tools to measure/assess all aspects in different time scale ( evaluation of longer effects have still to be elaborated),
- For understanding that there can't be one and only solution to tackle energy consumption and related pollution but rather a set of possible measures that each transport authority would adapt to its own circumstances provided they receive support and possibly incentives to explore this difficult path;

EMTA is willing to bring its experience and already collected data to help drawing a more integrated assessment methodology that would help enlightening the decision process.

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**List of public transport authorities belonging to the association of European Metropolitan Transport Authorities (EMTA)**

AMSTERDAM (ROA)

BAHIADE CADIZ (Consortio Metropolitano)

BARCELONA (ATM)

BERLIN (VBB)

BIRMINGHAM-WEST MIDLANDS (Centro)

BILBAO (CTB)

BUDAPEST (BKSZ)

BRUSSELS (Ministère de la Région de Bruxelles)

COPENHAGEN (Movia)

DUBLIN (DTO)

FRANKFURT (RMV)

HELSINKI (YTV)

LISBON (Camara Municipal)

LYON (SYTRAL)

LONDON (GLA)

MADRID (CTM)

MANCHESTER (GMPTE)

MILAN (Comune di Milano)

OSLO (AS Sporveier)

PARIS (STIF)

PRAGUE (ROPID)

SEVILLA (Consortio de Transportes de Sevilla)

STOCKHOLM (AB SL)

TORINO (Agenzia per la Mobilità de Torino)

VALENCIA (ETM)

VIENNA (VOR)

VILNIUS (MECS)

Associate Members :

HAMBOURG (HVV)

STUTTGART (VRS)

Associate Institution

MONTREAL (AMT) Québec Canada