

Trends In European Tourism Transport And Its Impacts - Summary by Paul Peeters -

In 2000 the European Union citizens undertake 875 million tourist trips. This is much more than what is regularly published by the World Tourism Organisation and several other organisations. The difference is that in most databases only *international* tourists are counted. This causes several misperceptions of the structure of tourism. The first is that most trips are domestic trips (61%) and not international. The second one is that intercontinental trips represent still a very small share of all tourism at 6% of all trips – 53 million – by EU citizens. For inbound tourism these numbers are almost the same. In both in bound and outbound tourism not the aircraft, but the car is the most popular mode of transport with 60% of trips. The aircraft reaches only 20%. However, the EU citizens travelled in 2000 a total of 2021 passenger-kilometres, of which 57% by air transport and 32% by car, the remainder by bus/rail/ferry. For intra-EU tourism transport the numbers differ: 1140 billion passenger-kilometres are travelled with a share of 54% for car and 32% for air transport.

The number of trips by EU citizens will increase with 57% to 1371 million. However, the growth is unevenly distributed over markets and transport modes. The long haul international and intercontinental markets grow much faster: The mobility growth with 122% to 4480 billion passenger-kilometers, equal to 8.8% of the forecasted total mobility in the world. For intra-EU tourism the growth of number of trips is 44% with a growth of mobility of 51%. The share of the car in number of trips increases with 35%, rail with 55% and air with 83%. Current developments show the prognosis for air transport might be an underestimation and that of rail transport to overestimated. The forecasts are based on competitive development of the High Speed Rail network, but this development is currently hampered by the successful liberalisation of the air transport marked and consequently success of low cost carriers.

Very large differences for the shares of rail transport in tourism transport exist between countries, neighbouring countries and longer distance relations. Transport within and to and from Switzerland have generally large shares (up to 20% of trips). Large domestic markets with relatively low shares (<10%) are Italy, Spain, France and the UK. Large Neighbouring country markets are France with Germany, Italy Spain and UK, Germany to Austria, and Spain to Portugal. Because of the low market shares and the size of the markets, these markets should be prioritised for development. Infrastructure development does have a focus on new high speed lines, but railway companies have still a long way to go,



before they are as competing on the international market as are current low cost carriers.

Tourism transport causes many undesirable environmental impacts, like climate change, air quality, noise hindrance, and parcelling up of natural reserves and landscapes. Total external costs of intra-EU tourism air transport exceeds already that of car transport. External costs for rail and coach are almost negligible, while these combined contribute the same number of trips as air transport does. All EU citizens tourism transport is responsible for a growing share of 11% (in 2000) to 18% (in 2020) of all greenhouse gas emissions by the EU. With a long term objective of 80% reduction this means strong reductions will be required in air transport (growth).

Greening tourism transport will have to be based on the following pillars;

- Reduce the share of intercontinental trips.
- Increase the average length of stay and thus the average revenues per trip
- Modal shift from air to car and from car to rail and coach.
- Use every technological and operational opportunity to reduce the energy consumption and environmental pressure for all tourism transport modes.

These changes will not easily be reached and require the combined effort of all stakeholders involved. The opportunities of technological progress for transport modes should be fully used, but will not be enough to counteract the impacts of the expected growth of tourism transport. Therefore a discussion on measures controlling the growth of the volume of air and car transport and ways to properly develop the use of rail and coach is necessary to reach the objective of ecological sound transport for tourism.