

Environmentally Friendly Travelling In Europe - Summary by Marcel Rommerts -

Transport is in the heart of European integration. The main challenge is to meet the demand for mobility while at the same time minimising the impacts on the environment and safeguarding the quality of life. Mobility is also at the centre of the Lisbon strategy and the Sustainable Development Strategy. Current European policy in the field of transport is explained in the White Paper "European transport policy for 2010: time to decide"¹. The White Paper sets ambitious targets and includes a list of some 60 measures. At this moment, the Commission is undertaking a mid term review of the Transport White Paper. Growth in transport volumes has so far been closely linked with economic growth and lead to an increase of negative impacts such as increased congestion, pollution and inefficient consumption of fossil fuels. One of the key EU policy objectives is to achieve a shift from road transport towards rail and waterborne transport. However, these are not considered the most flexible modes Simple answers therefore don't exist. The only viable way forward is a packaged and balanced approach based upon three strategies:

- Reduce demand for mobility and transport
 - Better spatial planning, less car dependent life styles, payment of true costs, tele/virtual 'experiences', ...
- Better manage mobility and transport
 - Modal shift, improve alternative options, improved logistics, peak avoidance, demand management, speed reductions, ...
- Reduce the negative impacts of mobility and transport
 - Cleaner vehicle technologies, safer vehicles, route guidance (Galileo)

Who should do what, and when? A partnership approach and sharing responsibilities is important, but this should not lead to "nobody" taking responsibility. Even within a partnership approach you need leadership. And partners should try to reach consensus. Because full consensus is sometimes difficult to reach the aim of reaching consensus should not prevent partners from taking responsibility, when they think that this is necessary. But European transport policy will not be able to provide all the answers. Member States, regional and local authorities, the private sector and citizens have to be convinced to show commitment, to take responsibility and to actively play their role.



¹ COM (2001) 370

