



OPINION

of the European Confederation of Independent Trade Unions

on the

Green paper

“Towards a new culture for urban mobility”

COM (2007) 551

Rapporteurs: Klaus Geiser and Raymond Hencks

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The European Confederation of Independent Trade Unions (CESI),

- given** consultations held by the USSP during its meetings on the 6th of March, 2007 and on the 16th of October, 2007,
- given** Article 27.3 of CESI's constitution, which allocates the adoption of all opinions and resolutions drafted by CESI to the Executive Board,
- given** Article 30.2 of CESI's constitution, according to which the President, General Secretary and treasurer may take joint decisions in urgent cases,

adopted the following opinion on the 14th of March, 2008:

- 1) City transport is a matter of services of general interest.** Services of general interest must encompass public transport, since otherwise there would be a risk of vast swathes of the population being cut off from mobility.

Public transport is a significant component of services of general interest in that it provides a basic offer of mobility and helps towards protecting the environment and public health.

Work must continue on developing 'citizens' networks' as proposed by the European Commission in 1998, in order to curb a reduction in an attractive public transport service and prevent wide sections of the population being cut off from mobility.

- 2) The current practice of 'mixed financing' (funding public transport through the proceeds from fares and aid) must be maintained.** Expecting the service providers to assume all of the costs would appear utopian, in the light of the scarcity of funds. On the other hand, covering costs through revenue generated from fares alone is equally inconceivable. The population could not bear such a financial burden on its own.

- 3) Providing public transport must remain the responsibility of the local and/or regional authorities** and it must be possible to operate the service through local co-operation. Local authorities draw up public transport plans with the very aim of covering a need for their own transport system. Such a calculation also makes costs transparent.



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- 4) **In order to promote local cooperation, local public transport should in particular be freed from the restrictions of EU competition law.** At the same time, however, local legislation can lead to difficulties. **Companies should compete independently of their structure.** Public transport companies must record their offers in line with the market's conditions when it comes to invitations to tender. However, this must take place according to the same, fair conditions. If this condition is not set, the jobs of colleagues in public transport are put in danger.

In the final analysis, local authorities must retain the choice between the awarding of a contract via an invitation to tender and through directly awarding the contract, in the spirit of the necessary transparency and improving the quality of services on offer.

For reasons related to the social dimension of the state and environmental sustainability, priority should be given to public transport in all areas. Public transport must not be put at a disadvantage due to unbalanced budget spending in favour of private transport. The same applies to favouring private transport when it comes to taxation law.

- 5) Local public transport must satisfy a range of criteria in order to carry out its public task as a service of general interest. Here attractive fares are essential in order to attract people to use public transport, as well as high quality and safety standards (clean equipment, trained staff), frequent and regular services. **Public transport is a guarantee for continuity, accessibility, affordability and transparency.**
- 6) There are advantages to using public transport from an environment policy perspective. Public transport has the potential to draw on greater capacity and greater efficiency and use less energy and land. It pollutes less with emissions and noise and ought therefore to play a key role in efforts to delay climate change. **Anyone who wants to set environmental policy targets should look no further than public transport.**
- 7) **The EU could promote public transport more effectively by avoiding legal uncertainty,** given that public transport is in vital need of more planning and legal security. Year-long debates over EU regulations are of no help here. The proposal from the Commission for a regulation on public passenger transport by rail and by road (COM(2005)319 final) which has been on the table since 2000, ought finally to be concluded in this branch of industry in the interests of greater legal certainty. Companies, and with them the employees, should know what they will have to con-



tend with in the future. Secure funding, i.e. clarity when it comes to the breakdown of the financial structure through revenue from fares and aid from the public authorities is another significant element.

- 8) Public transport is of great importance to employment policy and thus to society.** Local public transport services are provided by people for other people. Whoever wants an efficient and attractive public transport service must be prepared to pay those working in the sector accordingly.

Brussels, 14 March, 2008

Valerio Salvatore
President

Helmut Müllers
General Secretary