

THE CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

Resolution 302 (2010)¹

Intra-regional transport: a challenge for sustainable development and territorial cohesion

1. Mobility and transport policies have become a major issue for the quality of life and economic and social development of our societies. An efficient network of transport infrastructures is essential to ensure the integrated socio-economic development of a region. It enables free movement of goods, services and people and ensures the mobility necessary for work, education and recreation.

2. Economic changes and present-day lifestyles have led to major transformations in the spatial distribution of populations and in types of land use and zoning and, consequently, to an exponential increase in mobility flows.

3. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, which has always paid careful attention to spatial development issues, is seriously concerned about the massive expansion of the transport of goods by road, the increasing use of individual cars and the development of major space-consuming road infrastructures.

4. The reduction of fossil energy resources, increasing fuel prices and the need to reduce carbon dioxide emissions are vital issues for mobility management.

5. Regional authorities must therefore resolutely take up the challenge of organising sustainable mobility. In order to do so, they must propose an intermodal, sustainable and integrated intra-regional transport system which promotes alternatives to the use of individual cars.

6. In the knowledge that the first step in organising intermodal transport systems is to co-ordinate the various public transport operators within a given territory, the Congress would stress the essential role of the regions in ensuring balanced and effective development of their territories.

7. Accordingly, regional authorities must increase co-operation among all the players concerned, namely local authorities, operators and users, in order to better understand all the aspects of the problem, including the difficult question of fares and transport financing which would benefit from a long-term commitment.

8. Political choices in this field are currently based on hypotheses which scarcely, if at all, incorporate indirect

social and environmental costs, whereas, for instance, concentrating public funds on road infrastructure projects has the effect of encouraging individual car traffic. Implementing a sustainable and integrated transport policy will force the different parties involved to balance their efforts in such a way as to propose a better modal choice.

9. In this respect, the Congress supports the Opinion of the Committee of the Regions on an Action Plan on Urban Mobility in which it calls upon the European Commission to establish a financial instrument, directly available to regions and urban areas, to encourage them to set up mobility plans.

10. Furthermore, the Congress must also reaffirm the need to guarantee equal access to infrastructures and private and public services. Special attention must therefore be paid to suburban and rural areas in order to prevent any major social, environmental and landscape costs in the medium term.

11. It is necessary to integrate transport, urban planning, environmental and spatial planning policies in order to cut transport volumes, minimise costs of collective transport and infrastructures, take better account of population needs and secure the desired results in terms of reducing greenhouse gases.

12. In view of these various findings, the Congress invites the regional authorities of the Council of Europe member states to:

a. develop a renewed mobility policy based on complementarity among different modes of transport, prioritising low-carbon modes of travel and limiting dependency on fossil fuels;

b. propose a sustainable and integrated transport policy which takes into account primarily the environmental impact, is accompanied by the promotion of public transport, improves public access to essential services and adopts the polluter-pays principle in order to limit the use of individual vehicles;

c. adapt the road to sustainable development challenges and ensure better road sharing between different modes of transport;

d. promote healthier and more sustainable travel habits among citizens and to enhance the image of public transport, cycling and walking;

e. organise intra-regional transport services in order to limit development disparities within the same region, by encouraging increased co-operation among the various operators concerned;

f. ensure access for the most vulnerable groups by promoting innovative transport solutions such as car-sharing, bus-on-demand systems, etc.;

g. exchange best practices with other European regions in order to take advantage of valuable experiences;

h. set an example within the regional administration itself, with a sustainable mobility policy that encourages walking, cycling and the use of low-carbon cars.

13. For its part, the Congress asks its Committee on Sustainable Development to continue to monitor these

questions, particularly in the wake of the adoption of the European Urban Charter II: Manifesto for a New Urbanity.

1. Debated and approved by the Chamber of Regions on 18 March 2010 and adopted by the Congress on 19 March 2010, 3rd Sitting (see Document CPR(18)4, explanatory memorandum), rapporteur: A. Banaszak, Poland (R, NR).