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# REPORT n. 5.3

## Position papers for the Action Plan

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## **1. Objective of this Report**

This report includes 6 Position Papers that have been collected under Task 5.3.

The 6 Position Papers represent the position of EU relevant Associations in the transport and Tourism sectors and they are fundamental input to the Action Plan (WP6).

The stakeholders (EU Association) who expressed their position on tourism and accessibility at tourism destinations are:

- 1) European Passengers Federation (EPF)
- 2) Bureau International du Tourisme Social (BITS)
- 3) The CAST Network: an EU network of Chambers of Commerce and Industries active on Sustainable Tourism
- 4) HOTREC (Hotels, Restaurants and Cafè in Europe) Associates - Malta Hotels & Restaurants Association
- 5) International Road Transport Union (IRU)
- 6) European Cities and Region networking for Innovative Transport Solution (POLIS)

## **2. Structure of the Position Papers for the Action Plan report**

The report includes the 6 Position Papers positioned in alphabetical order of the Stakeholder name.



# CONCERTOUR Community The Position Paper of: Bureau International du Tourisme Social

## The questionnaire to Key EC Stakeholders

***CONCERTOUR is going to get your opinion by giving voice to EC key stakeholders representing EC Tourism and Transport value chains. Your fundamental opinion will be promoted throughout the joint CONCERTOUR Position Paper to the EC Directorates – through DG RTD - representing key actions and priorities to be included in the EC future strategic Agenda (e.g. Green Papers such as the forthcoming "Towards a new culture for urban mobility").***



### **BITS: favouring the development of Social Tourism in the International framework**

The International Bureau of Social Tourism is an international non-profit association, whose aim is to promote access to tourism for all, and more particularly for low-income population groups.

With its worldwide network of members, the BITS is nowadays considered the true world organization of social tourism.

BITS members include associations, trade unions, cooperatives, private organizations, as well as public authorities in charge of tourism.

**Further information: Charles-Etienne Bélanger - [cebelanger.bits@accg.be](mailto:cebelanger.bits@accg.be)**



## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### **SECTION 1 - Three general questions dealing with your opinion as key Stakeholder on tourism and transport barriers to accessibility and the actual level of interaction among the sectors.**

- 1) Which are in your opinion the transport domains affecting the European tourism market and Tourists' barriers accessing Europe conceived as unique tourist destination affecting the competitiveness of the tourist sector as a whole?

*BITS as a stakeholder in the field of social tourism can identify the following transport domains affecting the European tourism market:*

- *Transport connections: there is a need to improve equipped transport facilities to reach "nonstop" accessibility/mobility, facilitate travel for all, to provide effective and sufficient infrastructure as well as good access to local transport.*
- *Information on accessible transport modes: lack of coherent information; necessity of standardized approach.*
- *Procedure of services: administrative checks, baggage handling, waiting time for check-in; it is necessary to take in consideration the specific needs of travellers.*
- *Ticket system: need of reducing waiting time, unique, integrated ticket (adopted tariffs).*
- *Handling and tracking: major inconvenience and forceful disincentive for elderly, disable people and travellers with children.*

*Tourists' barriers accessing Europe affecting the competitiveness of the tourist sector:*

- *Infrastructure network: inexistence of central independent structure that coordinates long distance intermodality and accessing of Europe.*
- *Information services before the trip and during it (language and communication obstacles).*
- *Booking and payment (system that integrates booking and payment).*
- *Baggage handling services can act as a serious barrier to intermodality for these groups/ lack of cooperation and intermodal regulations.*
- *Security: psychological barriers (need to provide a safe and welcoming environment).*
- *Cost of services.*

- 2) Can you envisage any solution to that specific transport problems/barriers?

- *Creation of a network of long distance modes of transport with local ones (public transport) in order to reduce transfer time and to facilitate connection for people with specific needs. Provision of sufficient travel related information integrating all modes of travel up to destination.*
- *Helpdesks and information points: all requirements for people with special needs + targeted information (e.g. for disabled people).*
- *Research on transport and tourism followed by creation of common EU regulation of transport to improve transport service technologies and reduce the consumption of resources (using of more sustainable modes).*



- *Integrating ticketing (all modes of transport).*
- *Establishing of intermodal regulation of baggage handling and tracking.*

3) This question is related to the actual level of debate and cooperation, at national and European level: could you please identify weakness and strength aspects of actual concertation/cooperation among key stakeholders - and their level of awareness - and which are in your opinion effective coordination actions which are of relevance to make Europe more accessible to tourists?

*There are a number of programmes and actions that contribute to the growth of the cooperation between tourism and transport sectors. It is in particular at the national level that some good practices were adopted to improve domestic tourism itineraries: The Oslo Pass; The Freedom Ticket – Copenhagen; Belgian Coast 'Soft Mobility Network'; ÖBB: Wedelweiss-InklusivTicket Austria; Deutsche Bahn – Fahrtziel Natur.*

*Another initiative to promote accessible tourism and culture in a sustainable manner was launched by Kéroul (consultant for Tourisme Québec and the Ville de Montréal regarding accessibility) – a new geographic map, the Accessible Road ([www.larouteaccessible.com](http://www.larouteaccessible.com)). It is the first tourist map created specifically with the needs of persons with restricted physical abilities in mind.*

*Yet, the competition that exists between the main stakeholders prevents to establish the common regulation. The level of awareness should be also improved. There is a lack of research in this field of transport and tourism to adopt the best practices in the EU.*

**SECTION 2 - Two specific questions dealing with your sector: this is an opportunity to give voice to your Association/organisation. Your Position will be promoted to the EC as key actions to be undertaken (and prioritised) in the EC future strategy.**

4) Could you please list (rank) and describe briefly the priorities in terms of significant problems/barriers affecting your sector having a direct impact on the accessibility to and around a tourism destination? Is your association/organisation promoting any possible solution to overcome these obstacles?

*In the sector of social tourism, the BITS can give a number of priorities in terms of barriers affecting social tourism sector such as:*

- *Trip costs: making holidays available for all.*
- *Specific needs for people categories: equipped transport facilities, help services and reception.*
- *Impacts on environment: adoption of norms to reduce impacts.*
- *Communication and network: establish the exchange between main actors of the sector.*



The BITS has launched a portal [www.holidays-for-all.com](http://www.holidays-for-all.com), at which the BITS is working in order to make it as a real display of accommodations of social tourism at the international scale.

Yes, the BITS Working Commission on "Tourism and Handicap" works on three main lines of intervention: data collection (laws, regulations, labelling plan with criteria); search for similar networks in order to broaden the working group; exchange of information and reflection leading to studies with the aim of determining minimum criteria. In 2007 it carried out a study for the Network COESIMA (Coopération Européenne des Sites Majeures d'Accueil) on the adaptation of sites for people with specific needs.

- 5) Could you please identify which are in your opinion possible areas in your sector which needs to be still investigated and tested and to be recommended to the European Commission as new framework for research and development: allocation of EC funds to improve accessibility to Europe as tourism destination enhancing its competitiveness.

*In the field of social tourism there is a lack of united knowledge and research on this sector, so the studies can contribute to analyse existing demand and supply.*

*Another important aspect that needs to be improved is a training of people working in the sector of tourism services (e.g. accommodation) to welcome disabled people and/or people with specific needs.*

*Yet, regarding the tourism products, the special guides with prepared trans-European or national accessible tours/itineraries for people with reduced mobility or with specific needs could be developed that will be a mean to improve accessibility to Europe as tourism destination. The Accessible Road by Kéroul is a good example to follow.*





# CONCERTOUR Community

## The Position Paper of:

### The CAST Network

The questionnaire to Key EC Stakeholders

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**CAST: an EU network of CCI active on Sustainable Tourism**

**Eager to act in favour of a sustainable and competitive European tourism, 10 EU partners<sup>1</sup> are launching the CAST project (*Chambers Active for Sustainable Tourism*)** in order to convey to tourism SMEs the key messages of the Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European Tourism.

Coordinated by the Assembly of French Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ACFCI) and co-funded by the European Union, the CAST project aims at creating a **pilot network of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CCI) active on sustainable tourism**. The network's activities will focus on supporting SMEs from the tourism sector in minimising the use of natural resources and waste production.

**Further information: CAST coordinator, Camille Le Borgne - [c.leborgne@acfc.cci.fr](mailto:c.leborgne@acfc.cci.fr)**

<sup>1</sup> ACFCI, Union H ell enique des Chambres de Commerce et d'Industrie (UHCC), Tourism & Travel Research Institute (TTRI), National Institute for Tourism Research (ISNART), CCI Corfu, CCI Estonia, CCI Heves, CCI Languedoc Roussillon, CCI Lombardia, CCI Toledo



## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### SECTION 1 - Three general questions dealing with your opinion as key Stakeholder on tourism and transport barriers to accessibility and the actual level of interaction among the sectors.

- 1) Which are in your opinion the transport domains affecting the European tourism market and Tourists' barriers accessing Europe conceived as unique tourist destination affecting the competitiveness of the tourist sector as a whole?
  - *Fragmented information makes it difficult to have an overview of all available transport modes to arrive at destination, to get around at destination and to travel between desired destinations (different websites/leaflets for each modes and for each country)*
  - *Fragmented pricing system does not allow an easy combination between different transport modes*
  - *Lack of adequate transport infrastructures to access some remote areas: links between major hubs and remote areas are not always covered by public/collective transport*
  
- 2) Can you envisage any solution to that specific transport problems/barriers?
  - *One-stop-shop concept to get information on transport solutions at regional, national and EU level*
  - *Greater integration of ticketing systems at EU, national and regional level*
  - *Better promotion towards tourists on how to combine modes in an efficient way (at regional, national and EU level)*
  
- 3) This question is related to the actual level of debate and cooperation, at national and European level: could you please identify weakness and strength aspects of actual concertation/cooperation among key stakeholders - and their level of awareness - and which are in your opinion effective coordination actions which are of relevance to make Europe more accessible to tourists?

#### *Cooperation between tourism and transport stakeholders for the territorial planning:*

*Coordination between tourism actors, land-planners and transport authorities shall be fostered at local level.*

*Ideally, the geographical level of cooperation shall be at the level of a tourism destination. A weakness is that such a tourism destination can comprise a territory that is not linked to a precise administrative unit and thus falls within the competence of different levels of transport authorities and land-planning authorities.*

*Reflection on tourism mobility needs should be more systematic during the drafting of transport plans by local authorities.*

#### *Cooperation between accommodation companies and transport operators*

*Accommodation sites could agree with transport operators (train, coaches, taxi) so as to propose all-in-one formula: "accommodation + transport".*



*Accommodation sites could agree between themselves so as to organise collective transport services.*

**SECTION 2 - Two specific questions dealing with your sector: this is an opportunity to give voice to your Association/organisation. Your Position will be promoted to the EC as key actions to be undertaken (and prioritised) in the EC future strategy.**

- 4) Could you please list (rank) and describe briefly the priorities in terms of significant problems/barriers affecting your sector having a direct impact on the accessibility to and around a tourism destination? Is your association/organisation promoting any possible solution to overcome these obstacles?

*For the CAST Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the main barriers on the accessibility of a tourism destination are:*

- Disconnection between transport planning and tourism activity development*
- Lack of transport infrastructures that allow an easy and fast access to tourism zones*
- Lack of adequate information for tourists on co-modality opportunities and on soft transport modes*

- 5) Could you please identify which are in your opinion possible areas in your sector which needs to be still investigated and tested and to be recommended to the European Commission as new framework for research and development: allocation of EC funds to improve accessibility to Europe as tourism destination enhancing its competitiveness.

*What role for Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CCI)?*

*Chambers of Commerce and Industry are part of the solution to increase the level of cooperation between key stakeholders (see question 3). They often work as an interface between private interests and public authorities. Used to work in partnerships with local authorities from different sectors, they participate in the reflection on territorial development.*

*What role for Tourism companies, members of CCI?*

*CCI have experience in supporting tourism companies on a wide range of issue. On transport issue, they could help on the following:*

- Implement mobility plans at the level of a tourism zone (for example to develop collective transport of tourists from a same accommodation zone to the main tourism areas)*
- Support accommodation sector's role in informing tourists of the soft transport solutions (bicycles path, public transport etc.) and/or in providing such solutions in partnership with other local actors (rent bikes, sell transport tickets, integrated tickets "accommodation + transport")*





# CONCERTOUR Community

## The Position Paper of:

### European Passengers Federation

The questionnaire to Key EC Stakeholders

***CONCERTOUR is going to get your opinion by giving voice to EC key stakeholders representing EC Tourism and Transport value chains. Your fundamental opinion will be promoted throughout the joint CONCERTOUR Position Paper to the EC Directorates – through DG RTD - representing key actions and priorities to be included in the EC future strategic Agenda (e.g. Green Papers such as the forthcoming "Towards a new culture for urban mobility").***



**EPF: The voice of public transport users in Europe**

EPF is an international non-profit association under Belgian law.

The growing impact of EU transport policy, passenger organisations from Belgium, Austria, Great-Britain, Ireland, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, Luxembourg and France decided early 2002 to join forces and establish a federation of passenger organisations which could promote the interests of public transport users on the European level. On October 18, after several preliminary meetings and a successful conference in Brussels, the statutes of EPF were accepted at the first General Meeting in Gent (Belgium) and EPF became an international non-profit association under Belgian law. The Belgian passenger organisation TreinTramBus (formerly known as BTTB) was appointed as registered office and acting secretariat for EPF. Since then, EPF has succeeded in attracting new members (currently 30) and established its position as a voice for public transport users in Europe. In 2007, EPF became a member of the [Global Alliance for EcoMobility](#).

EPF campaigns for passenger rights throughout Europe by conducting research, publishing reports, holding conferences and working constructively with transport operators and decision-makers.

**Further information: Bram Van den Bulcke - [secretariat@epf.eu](mailto:secretariat@epf.eu)**



## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### **SECTION 1 - Three general questions dealing with your opinion as key Stakeholder on tourism and transport barriers to accessibility and the actual level of interaction among the sectors.**

- 1) Which are in your opinion the transport domains affecting the European tourism market and Tourists' barriers accessing Europe conceived as unique tourist destination affecting the competitiveness of the tourist sector as a whole?

*The EU Commission recognised in its 2001 White Paper on transport policy that the user should be at the heart of transport policy. In designing an effective and efficient transport system one needs to consider the preferences of the user as a starting point in order to identify barriers and define policy measures.*

*Public transport users generally want easy travel: predictable and seamless journeys with guaranteed connections, convenient and simple ticket purchase procedures with affordable tariffs and easily obtainable information. This is especially true for leisure travel, provided that its non-repetitive pattern generates at least an average need for information.*

*General areas of leisure public transport travel where barriers exist are long distance rail and to a lesser degree the last mile especially in non-urban environments. A smaller area with barriers towards tourist travel is that of bike transport when using rail.*

- 2) Can you envisage any solution to that specific transport problems/barriers?

*Although specific solutions involve a specific measure, EPF generally believes that increased co-operation between operators (and authorities where public service contracts are part of the game) is a generic approach to overcome the barriers identified in public transportation. Such co-operation should be encouraged by the authorities including the EU.*

*The envisaged co-operation should contribute to easy travel in many ways, a few examples include:*

- *integrated travel information provision*
- *EU co-ordinated long distance passenger rail system using TEN corridors*
- *common framework to guarantee passenger rights*

*EPF recognises that EU authorities have already taken a number of promising steps leading towards increased co-ordination of public transport supply and more user-friendly transport, including for PRMs.*

- 3) This question is related to the actual level of debate and cooperation, at national and European level: could you please identify weakness and strength aspects of actual concertation/cooperation among key stakeholders - and their level of awareness - and which are in your opinion effective coordination actions which are of relevance to make Europe more accessible to tourists?



*The strengths of actual co-operation among key stake-holders of the public transport sector is the existence of effective international umbrella organisations representing each type of stake-holder at the EU level and the access offered to all stake-holders to take part in the legislative process.*

*The interests of transport users are generally well supported by the EU authorities, although it is unclear how structural this support is.*

*Weaknesses can generally be found at the national level where there is a widely varying degree of co-operation and debate on public transport issues across countries.*

*The actual state of practise of co-operation between public transport and tourism sectors is most obvious where tourist passes are developed that include zonal travel on urban and regional public transport.*

**SECTION 2 - Two specific questions dealing with your sector: this is an opportunity to give voice to your Association/organisation. Your Position will be promoted to the EC as key actions to be undertaken (and prioritised) in the EC future strategy.**

- 4) Could you please list (rank) and describe briefly the priorities in terms of significant problems/barriers affecting your sector having a direct impact on the accessibility to and around a tourism destination? Is your association/organisation promoting any possible solution to overcome these obstacles?

*EPF identifies the following priorities in terms of barriers having an impact on public transport access to tourist destinations:*

- 1. Absence of integrated information provision for all public transport supply.  
EPF supports the design of a public transport operator independent telematics implementation for travel information provision (such as Google Transit).*
- 2. Absence of common and integrated ticketing systems (both in long distance and urban/regional public transport).  
EPF supports the sale of through tickets for long distance rail in any country, from any country.  
EPF supports the design of a common standard for smart card based ticketing in urban/regional public transport in order to ensure that the traveller is interoperable.*
- 3. Complexity and unpredictability of public transport fares (both in long distance and urban/regional public transport)  
EPF supports simple fare structures where actual tariffs do not depend on time of purchase and where crossing borders does not incur a penalty in the form of prohibitive fares compared to domestic travel.  
EPF also supports integrated rail/air ticketing and promotion of zonal tickets for all public transport.*
- 4. Passenger rights in case of delays and missed connections (buses: very few rights; trains: re-routing is still a difficult subject)  
EPF supports a single contract of carriage for long distance journeys by public transport and a level playing field across modes with respect to passenger rights.*



*EPF wants to note that the lower priority it dedicated to passenger rights is to a large degree determined by recent legislative initiatives by EU authorities to tackle the related barriers.*

- 5) Could you please identify which are in your opinion possible areas in your sector which needs to be still investigated and tested and to be recommended to the European Commission as new framework for research and development: allocation of EC funds to improve accessibility to Europe as tourism destination enhancing its competitiveness.

*Areas of research improving public transport access to tourist destinations may relate to the following topics:*

- designing common standards for electronic ticketing (e.g. smart card, GSM, ...)*
- designing integrated information applications such as a satnav-like device for public transport users*
- designing an integrated EU wide long distance passenger rail network in order to identify gaps in supply of both infrastructure capacity and rail services*
- assessing the impact of different aspects of fare complexity on the demand for public transport and efficiency of the transport system*





# CONCERTOUR Community

## The Position Paper of:

### HOTREC Associates - Malta Hotels & Restaurants Association

The questionnaire to Key EC Stakeholders

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#### **Hotrec: the voice of the European hospitality industry**

HOTREC is the trade association of hotels, restaurants and cafes in the European Union. We bring together 40 national hospitality associations in 25 countries across Europe - from Greece to Finland and from Poland to Portugal.

Around 1.6 million enterprises, employing some 9 million workers, make up the European hospitality industry. Most of them are very small, both in terms of turnover and workforce. They represent an essential part of our societies cultural and social landscape and form the backbone of European tourism. HOTREC's mission is to promote the interests of these enterprises vis-a-vis the European institutions.

We continually monitor EU policies that have an impact on the hospitality industry and bring the sector's concerns across to EU decision-makers. Our aim is a legal environment which enables hotels, restaurants, and cafes to develop and provide more jobs and growth to the economy.

**Further information: Marguerite Sequaris, CEO - [main@hotrec.org](mailto:main@hotrec.org)**



## List of Questions

### **SECTION 1 - Three general questions dealing with your opinion as key Stakeholder on tourism and transport barriers to accessibility and the actual level of interaction among the sectors.**

- 1) Which are in your opinion the transport domains affecting the European tourism market and Tourists' barriers accessing Europe conceived as unique tourist destination affecting the competitiveness of the tourist sector as a whole?

*The main problem, with existing transport-related barriers for accessing European destinations from a Maltese perspective, is clearly the issue of accessibility to insular destinations from continental Europe and how to have sustainable flight and cruise connections to such destinations, which are very often under-served routes. Moreover, there is the issue of the cost of flights and cruise passages which inhibit customers choosing such destinations for their holidays.*

*Another issue of lesser, but still of important consideration for Malta is the inter-island connectivity particularly in the context of double insularity such as is the case with Gozo (sister island of Malta), which languishes whenever a solid attempt at marketing the sister island as a separate destination is undertaken.*

- 2) Can you envisage any solution to that specific transport problems/barriers?

*In this regard, a solution, which can be based on the issue of co-modality to bring added value could be an initiative of the European Commission to promote co-modality in the cruise-liner sector by allowing member states' governments to deploy public aid in pursuit of the promotion of combined travelling for those tourists intending to spend 'extra' days (either prior and/or after) in the destination from where either a cruise itinerary starts or else terminates.*

- 3) This question is related to the actual level of debate and cooperation, at national and European level: could you please identify weakness and strength aspects of actual concertation/cooperation among key stakeholders - and their level of awareness - and which are in your opinion effective coordination actions which are of relevance to make Europe more accessible to tourists?

*Regrettably, there is limited debate both at national and community-level on co-modality solutions for overcoming structural barriers to accessibility for insular destinations. There is up to our knowledge no forum whereby all the stakeholders are brought together to identify challenges and potential solutions. Therefore we would support the creation of such a forum.*

### **SECTION 2 - Two specific questions dealing with your sector: this is an opportunity to give voice to your Association/organisation. Your Position will be promoted to the EC as key actions to be undertaken (and prioritised) in the EC future strategy.**

- 4) Could you please list (rank) and describe briefly the priorities in terms of significant problems/barriers affecting your sector having a direct impact on the accessibility to and around a tourism destination? Is your



association/organisation promoting any possible solution to overcome these obstacles?

*Being an Island at the southern tip of mainland Europe, visitors have either to fly in or come by sea. Finding enough airlines to operate routes and provide the seat capacity required is problematic. Furthermore any surcharges imposed on airlines will reduce the islands competitiveness with other destinations in the Mediterranean which have other optional transport links.*

- 5) Could you please identify which are in your opinion possible areas in your sector which needs to be still investigated and tested and to be recommended to the European Commission as new framework for research and development: allocation of EC funds to improve accessibility to Europe as tourism destination enhancing its competitiveness.

*None that come to mind.  
Malta Hotels & Restaurants Association*





# CONCERTOUR Community

## The Position Paper of:

### International Road Transport Union

#### The questionnaire to Key EC Stakeholders

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**IRU: task is to ensure the mobility of people and goods**

The IRU, through its national associations, represents the entire road transport industry world-wide. It speaks for the operators of coaches, taxis and trucks, from large transport fleets to driver-owners. In all international bodies that make decisions affecting road transport, the IRU acts as the industry's advocate. By working for the highest professional standards, the IRU improves the safety record and environmental performance of road transport and ensures the mobility of people and goods.

Among its practical services to the industry, the IRU is international guarantor of the [TIR carnet system](#) under which trucks are sealed by customs upon departure and can cross several borders without further checks until they reach their destinations.

**Further information: Remi Lebeda – [remi.lebeda@iru.org](mailto:remi.lebeda@iru.org)**



## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### SECTION 1 - Three general questions dealing with your opinion as key Stakeholder on tourism and transport barriers to accessibility and the actual level of interaction among the sectors.

- 1) Which are in your opinion the transport domains affecting the European tourism market and Tourists' barriers accessing Europe conceived as unique tourist destination affecting the competitiveness of the tourist sector as a whole?

*Transport is a vital link to tourism. Choice of transport mode is a strong criterion in the choice of destination. However, when taking political decisions, the worlds of tourism and transport are still relatively weakly connected. Relatively low priorities are given to transport for tourism both by the tourist industry and transport policymakers.*

*The travel dimension of mobility and tourism within **a travel and mobility chain** is almost completely ignored by EU policy-makers. As a result, a large number of market and policy failures arise in terms of discrimination, distortion of competition, over-regulation and over-taxation, scarcity or lack of provision of appropriate infrastructures - not to speak about barriers to travelling, such as visa restrictions (even for professional drivers), problems and waiting times at borders, inappropriate or missing legislation - leading to inefficiencies and losses both for businesses, consumers, economies and society as a whole.*

- 2) Can you envisage any solution to that specific transport problems/barriers?

*A **level playing field** should be created between the different modes of passenger transport regarding both VAT and mineral oil taxation.*

*All long distance passenger transport modes should be self-sufficient and profitable without having to rely on direct or indirect government support. Whereas, the air and rail travel sectors are mainly made up of large companies, which, in many cases, still benefit from direct or indirect government support, privately-owned small and medium-sized enterprises make up 85% of the coach industry.*

- 3) This question is related to the actual level of debate and cooperation, at national and European level: could you please identify weakness and strength aspects of actual concertation/cooperation among key stakeholders - and their level of awareness - and which are in your opinion effective coordination actions which are of relevance to make Europe more accessible to tourists?

*Over the years, remarkable progress has been achieved in the European Union in ensuring free movement of people within its territory. The bulk of the EU bus and coach market has been either partially or fully liberalised. Coach tourism is fully liberalised, whilst international regular bus and coach services are still subject to authorisation, but quotas have been abolished within the EU. These were accompanied by a steady facilitation of travel conditions for EU citizens inside the EU.*



*This has led to the creation of a free EU Travel Area and free EU Travel consumers' Market, without, however, the necessary accompanying supporting measures and policies at EU level.*

*This situation is mainly due to inherited traditional approaches and practices. Even at national level, it was and is still difficult to coordinate such diverse activities, which, as a rule, fall within the competency of many different competent national authorities and agencies (transport, tourism, industry, taxation, police, environment, bodies responsible for small and medium-sized companies, etc.).*

**SECTION 2 - Two specific questions dealing with your sector: this is an opportunity to give voice to your Association/organisation. Your Position will be promoted to the EC as key actions to be undertaken (and prioritised) in the EC future strategy.**

- 4) Could you please list (rank) and describe briefly the priorities in terms of significant problems/barriers affecting your sector having a direct impact on the accessibility to and around a tourism destination? Is your association/organisation promoting any possible solution to overcome these obstacles?

*Significant problems/barriers:*

*The coach industry has been facing a number of challenges, over the last decade, due to different measures that have been introduced.*

*Liberalisation of air transport, accompanied by fiscal incentives in the field of VAT and excise duties on mineral oils, has allowed **discrimination between transport modes**, particularly against coach tourism and in favour of air transport. It has forced the bus and coach industry sector to largely abandon its traditional long distance markets as such.*

*The mushrooming practice of introducing **discriminatory entry taxes for touring coaches** in many EU tourist cities, historical towns and sites is a case in point. Individual city decisions create, over time, a pattern which torpedoes basic EU freedoms, policies and the functioning of businesses, because the practice is easily followed by other cities keen to raise additional revenue. This is a clear case of individual uncoordinated decisions leading to sub-optimal results for the Community as a whole. City access taxes for touring coaches are counterproductive to any measure aimed at solving congestion problems in inner cities. It makes coach tourism more expensive and encourages the use of the private car. For these reasons, any access tax for touring coaches is unacceptable.*

*Another similar problem is the rather **chaotic introduction of various environmental zones and restrictions** in many EU cities, further segmenting the travel area and the market and complicating citizens'/visitors' travelling and the travel business within the EU.*

*In addition, the lack of any EU and/or public involvement in promoting and assisting the establishment of **bus and coach terminals/stations** throughout Europe (as part of the Trans-European Networks for example) prevents them from becoming genuine mobility interfaces and platforms for both regular and tourist*



travellers. Coach stations with inter-modal exchange capacity allow larger numbers of passengers to be handled and give added value to collective travel by bus and coach. This is exemplified by the difference in market share of collective bus and coach travel in the old and new EU Member States, including candidate countries, where, for the latter, a dense network of such stations still exists, thus encouraging large numbers of potential travellers to choose for sustainable and safe common passenger transport.

Another travel-related problem – this time from the police field - concerns the increasingly intensive **security-related controls of passengers' identity** not only at the external EU borders but also at some internal borders inside the Schengen area. Controls at some internal Schengen borders tend to become regular, in particular, on regular bus and coach services, thus negating an essential freedom, the freedom of movement of persons, not to speak about direct and indirect losses for operators and their citizens-customers. A touring coach with 50 or more passengers also takes time to check, causing significant delays on the time schedule. This again has a particularly negative impact, in particular on international regular services which run according to a fixed timetable.

#### Possible Solution:

Until now, apart from a number of individual actions at local level, no concrete policy framework has been actively put in place to encourage a shift from the private car to bus and coach. Real business incentives should be provided for bus and coach travel. "At source" measures should be given priority as the most efficient and cost-effective measures for improving the environmental performance of road transport.

The European Institutions and Member State governments should recognise the fundamental role of bus and coach and taxi transport for the economy and for the environment and should duly include this mode of transport in future policy decisions. A proactive policy framework for a shift from the private car to bus, coach and taxi should be developed and implemented at EU and national level.

A recommendation should be prepared for the Member States and local authorities on the need for more investment in infrastructure to guarantee an improved traffic flow of coaches in cities and on historical sites. In that sense, any charges levied on touring coaches must be fair and transparent and should be reinvested to improve coach facilities, such as parking, passenger boarding and alighting etc.

- 5) Could you please identify which are in your opinion possible areas in your sector which needs to be still investigated and tested and to be recommended to the European Commission as new framework for research and development: allocation of EC funds to improve accessibility to Europe as tourism destination enhancing its competitiveness.

European and national governmental authorities have never produced a comprehensive survey of market developments in the bus and coach sector or duly considered this mode of transport in policy strategy outlines for the future. The lack of governmental recognition of the environmental and safety records as well as the importance of travel by bus and coach to the economy was further



*demonstrated by the fact that this transport mode was not even considered in the 2001 Commission White Paper “European transport policy for 2010: decision time”.*

Annexes:

- o [Buses and coaches are environmental champions](#)
- o [Buses and coaches are safety champions](#)
- o [Buses and coaches have the lowest external costs](#)





# CONCERTOUR Community

## The Position Paper of:

### POLIS – European Cities and Region networking for Innovative Transport Solution

#### The questionnaire to Key EC Stakeholders

*CONCERTOUR is going to get your opinion by giving voice to EC key stakeholders representing EC Tourism and Transport value chains. Your fundamental opinion will be promoted throughout the joint CONCERTOUR Position Paper to the EC Directorates – through DG RTD - representing key actions and priorities to be included in the EC future strategic Agenda (e.g. Green Papers such as the forthcoming “Towards a new culture for urban mobility”).*



**POLIS: is a network of leading European cities and regions working together to develop innovative technologies and policies for local transport**

Since 1989, European local and regional authorities and transport-related organisations have been working together within Polis to promote sustainable mobility through deployment of innovative transport solutions. Our aim is to improve local transport through integrated strategies that address the economic, social and environmental dimensions of transport. To this end, Polis **supports the exchange of experiences and the transfer of knowledge** between European local and regional authorities and transport-related organisations.

Polis fosters cooperation and partnerships across Europe with the aim of making research and innovation in transport accessible to cities and regions. The network and its secretariat actively **support the participation of Polis members in European projects** and is itself a partner in several of those projects.

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## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### SECTION 1 - Three general questions dealing with your opinion as key Stakeholder on tourism and transport barriers to accessibility and the actual level of interaction among the sectors.

1) Which are in your opinion the transport domains affecting the European tourism market and Tourists' barriers accessing Europe conceived as unique tourist destination affecting the competitiveness of the tourist sector as a whole?

- *The uncertainty and remaining variety of standards regarding the rights of long distance passengers continues to affect negatively tourism travels in Europe, in spite of the recent efforts with a charter for passenger rights for air transport and cross border rail services. This challenge is specific to services for long distance passengers, where delays, cancellations, luggage services, etc. can affect significantly the quality of tourism travel.*
- *The absence of a common information framework:*
  - o *for the provision of travel information to tourists, available prior to departure through for instance a common portal on travel information at arrival;*
  - o *for the provision of travel information to tourists with a minimum common signage reference and a common visual standard (for instance common signs for bus stations, taxis, exit, trams, tickets counter, in interchanges such as stations and airports);*
  - o *for the provision of information to tourists via their own nomadic device at an affordable costs;*
- *the quasi absence of a solutions for the integration of long distance ticketing with local and regional transport;*

2) Can you envisage any solution to that specific transport problems/barriers?

- *creation of a European intermodal web portal providing information on local and regional transport to long distance travellers and redirecting visitors towards the websites of the local and regional transport services providers;*
- *creation of a limited number of common signs understandable by all long distance travellers to access local transport services;*

3) This question is related to the actual level of debate and cooperation, at national and European level: could you please identify weakness and strength aspects of actual concertation/cooperation among key stakeholders - and their level of awareness - and which are in your opinion effective coordination actions which are of relevance to make Europe more accessible to tourists?

*To improve the situation and provide the required solutions, a high level of cooperation between stakeholders is required.*

*This cooperation is required between member states, but also between various group of actors, such as:*



- *airport managers, air carriers, IATA, UIC, railway companies, regional authorities, urban transport authorities, etc.*
- *The coordination can be provided at the European level between European representatives of these main actors.*
- *At the local level, coordination between infrastructure managers (airport managers, stations), transport service providers (public transport, regional and national rail services, taxis, public bikes, etc. ) is fundamental for an efficient and smooth integration of the tourists in the local transport network, providing them with the required sense of security and comfort.*

*This coordination is best organized in the framework of the local mobility plans.*

**SECTION 2 - Two specific questions dealing with your sector: this is an opportunity to give voice to your Association/organisation. Your Position will be promoted to the EC as key actions to be undertaken (and prioritised) in the EC future strategy.**

- 4) Could you please list (rank) and describe briefly the priorities in terms of significant problems/barriers affecting your sector having a direct impact on the accessibility to and around a tourism destination? Is your association/organisation promoting any possible solution to overcome these obstacles?

- *it is necessary to organize specifically mobility of tourism around the main tourists sites. This micro mobility plan must be well integrated in the wider local mobility plan also to ensure a peaceful coexistence of tourists travels and local commuters for instance. Therefore*
- *the mobility around tourists area must be coordinated within the local transport plan, which remains the central element of any sustainable local transport policy.*
- *To ensure the sustainability of tourists' travel behaviour, intermodal solutions must be strengthened, promoted, and well coordinated. They should be promoted via integrated information and ticketing.*
- *international cooperation between main passengers transport hubs can be helpful to provide door to door information to long distance tourists.*

- 5) Could you please identify which are in your opinion possible areas in your sector which needs to be still investigated and tested and to be recommended to the European Commission as new framework for research and development: allocation of EC funds to improve accessibility to Europe as tourism destination enhancing its competitiveness.

- *Creation of a European intermodal travel information portal. Within five years, this portal should be able to provide intermodal solutions with timetables, prices and CO2 emissions for any travel within Europe. Through international cooperation and the cooperation of non European important transport hubs, this could be extended to door to door intermodal travel solutions starting outside Europe.*
- *This portal should obviously be accessible at very low costs for tourists in Europe on their nomadic device. For this purpose, various technologies should*



- be explored and mobile operators should be consulted, though mobile technology is not the only one to be explored and considered.*
- *Research should focus on the new generation of interchanges where intermodal travel for tourists will be made much smoother to ensure that they will use the most sustainable modes of transport through the improvement of all interfaces:*
    - o *Between physical networks (rail/road, public transport/car sharing/ public bikes)*
    - o *Between information systems*
    - o *Between charging systems*

