

making the smart move

doubling the use of collective passenger transport by bus, coach and taxi



Smart Move vision and recommendations

1 // achieving a shared vision among key public and private stakeholders based on the following principles

Buses, coaches and taxis are the most dynamic part of an inclusive and competitive door-to-door public mobility chain

Together, buses, coaches and taxis form the largest commercial mobility and travel provider, second only to the private car. Collective short and long-distance transport, especially by buses, coaches and taxis, is the backbone - indeed its most dynamic part - of efficient public mobility, and an optimal and sustainable alternative to the private car. It empowers other public transport modes and extends their services by offering a 24-hour/365-day availability, coupled with a unique door-to-door customised service. As such, buses, coaches and taxis are well placed to substantially contribute to achieving ambitious social, public policy and mobility objectives, thanks to their intrinsic characteristics of door-to-door flexibility, environmental-friendliness, wide availability and high standards of customer care and accessibility. As an integral part of the social fabric of communities, affordable door-to-door collective transport is a lifeline to work, education and leisure for all, including for citizens with disabilities and those on a low-income, households, cities, regions and countries.

Doubling the use and the modal share of collective transport, in particular by bus, coach and taxi, to become a formal policy and business objective

It is in the public interest to place buses, coaches and taxis and their role in the door-to-door mobility and travel chain at the heart of policy making at international, national and local levels. Setting a clear policy and business target to increase their use and modal share – indeed, where feasible, to double it within a period of 10-15 years – will facilitate the development of a pro-active public, financial, fiscal, legislative, market and operational framework, which will encourage service provision and thereby produce a shift in commuters'/travellers' behaviour. This will facilitate achieving an inclusive, efficient and sustainable door-to-door mobility for all citizens and visitors, at the lowest cost for society.

Doubling the use of bus and coach services alone is expected to potentially yield a substantial reduction of road fatalities, with a considerable reduction of serious and less serious injuries; a reduction of CO2 emissions and a reduction of other transport-related airborne pollutants; a significant reduction of congestion in cities as a result of the expected 10-12% fall in car traffic; and the creation of millions of new sustainable and green jobs - all at the lowest cost to taxpayers¹.

Method

A public-private partnership to establish local-, country- or region-specific policy "Road Maps", with the objective to progressively enable a legislative, fiscal, market and administrative framework, city and land use planning strategies conducive to door-to-door public transport service provision, and to offer adequate public investment to allow collective road passenger transport, in particular by bus, coach and taxi, to compete successfully with the private car.

¹ As a matter of fact, in the European Union, doubling the use of bus and coach services alone is expected to potentially yield a reduction of road fatalities by up to 1,500 per year; a reduction of CO2 emissions of between 40 and 50 million tonnes per year; the creation of up to 3 million new sustainable and green jobs - all at the lowest cost to taxpayers.

2 // Recommendations

The recommendations below are addressed to policy decision-makers, authorities, businesses, citizens, operators, regulators, researchers and all other public and private stakeholders at international, national and local levels².

Customer first

Place the emphasis on guaranteeing a fair, efficient and cost-effective implementation of existing policies on the rights of users/passengers, whilst fully respecting the industry specificity. Strive to provide the required assistance, information and transport infrastructure (such as terminals and stops), including accessible infrastructure, in close cooperation with public and private stakeholders at all levels. Involve public and private stakeholders to evaluate results, propose solutions and exchange best practices.

Prioritise the use of collective transport over the use of the private car, including through collective, transport-friendly urban mobility planning

Ensure that any new national or local decisions, including in the field of taxation, do not increase the relative fiscal burden on collective land passenger transport. Clearly prioritise door-to-door collective transport, including visiting tourist coaches and taxis, within sustainable urban mobility planning, over the use of the private car, including regarding the provision and use of dedicated lanes and infrastructure. Ensure these plans are fully integrated with and take account of land use and development policies. Make bus/coach stations eligible for public support and funding. Give priority to modern and proven technological and managerial solutions and systems, such as Bus Rapid Transit. Set challenging but achievable incremental targets for collective passenger transport modal shift in urban mobility planning. Invite countries, regions and cities to start progressively integrating the objective of “doubling” the use of collective passenger transport, in particular by buses, coaches and taxis, in their urban mobility plans.

Optimal and fair public service obligations rules

Monitor and regularly evaluate the implementation of regulations applicable to the provision of public transport services, with the objective to support and further encourage public, and, in particular, private initiative and investment. Ensure a level playing field for all service providers, irrespective of their size and ownership, which will encapsulate

² The Smart Move team draws attention to the general lack of comparable and timely statistics on bus, coach and taxi services, which prevents an informed debate and efficient policy and business decision-making. Appropriate statistics are also needed to measure the impact and the progress made in achieving the objective of “doubling”.

professional qualification as one of its key pillars. Start with an in-depth review and evaluation of existing rules, and the identification of “success models” which yield a substantial increase in patronage at the most equitable cost to society.

Recognise taxis as part of public transport

Recognise taxis, hire cars with driver services, and legal car sharing as a valuable and necessary element of the collective public transport chain. Consider the role of taxis in any mobility policy proposals, collective transport funding, research, training, and, in particular, urban mobility planning. Ensure a level playing field for all service providers offering remunerated services on the “taxi” market.

Recognise group tourism by coach as part of public transport and encourage coach-friendly local rules and information

Recognise at all levels – international, national, regional and local - private group coach tourism as a necessary complement to and a full part of the multimodal collective/public transport chain, in the same way as is the case for the traditional, narrowly-defined “public transport”, covering mainly urban public transport such as the metro, tram and bus. Enable transparent and efficient cooperation mechanisms and guidelines for cities, planning to introduce access regulations and/or Low Emission Zones (LEZs), taking into account the interests of all actors, including visitors, whilst at the same time promoting the use of collective passenger transport and travel over the use of the private car. Enable (multilingual) single windows with information to customers and businesses. Develop and implement voluntary public-private charters for group tourism by coach for cities and industry, to facilitate cooperation between them and promote group tourism by coach.

Support market forces and provide better access to infrastructure for businesses and information to customers on scheduled intercity bus and coach services

Enable progressive market opening in long distance intercity coach transport. Promote competition-neutral and transparent access of scheduled intercity bus and coach services to terminal infrastructures, including terminals of other transport modes, as well as to local public transport dedicated lanes. Start integrating scheduled intercity bus and coach services in multimodal journey planners. Encourage the creation of online databases of coach stations, their facilities and connections. Develop customer-friendly solutions enabling urban passengers to obtain intercity travel information, and help integrate intercity travel information with existing locally developed and hosted information and ticketing solutions.

Promote service excellence

Support capacity building and development of training programmes, awareness training and re-training for staff. Open a regular channel for consultation between business', employees' and users' representatives, the outcome of which should be reflected in training programmes.

Support innovation, vehicles of the future and fleet renewal

Launch joint public-private initiatives (projects, studies, awards, etc.), with the participation of operators, manufacturers, researchers, user groups, etc., to consolidate existing initiatives, and propose new innovative ideas on safe, green, accessible and customer-friendly bus and coach vehicles of the future. Where needed, develop specific policies and instruments, including government-supported financial instruments and fiscal incentives (such as reduced or zero -rate VAT), to accelerate the renewal and modernisation of existing fleets.

Towards a business-friendly and sector-supporting legislative regime

Address the specific requirements of bus and coach businesses and their customers to avoid inappropriate "one size fits all" rules in the regulatory, social, rights of passengers and technical fields. Establish large public-private stakeholders' platforms to identify legislative bottlenecks and propose solutions.

Introduce fiscal incentives for collective transport

Reach a political commitment to incentivise the use of all collective land passenger transport modes and the door-to-door collective passenger transport chain as a whole, over the use of the private car, through fiscal incentives, including – where applicable – through a zero rate VAT.

Facilitate business and encourage industry-own initiatives

Develop, through public-private partnership, proposals to reduce administrative formalities and documentation. Support and promote the bus and coach industry's own commitments, investment and initiatives to introduce innovative, user-friendly services (to adapt to society's evolution and customer behaviour) and integrated ticketing, better road safety and improved environmental-friendliness of services.

Facilitate and incentivise, through international/multilateral agreements, the use of collective transport by bus and coach

Harmonise and simplify existing bilateral rules, preferably via the conclusion of international multilateral agreements on coach tourism and on scheduled bus and coach lines. Within such agreements, simplify existing administrative and tax provisions and procedures to facilitate international coach transport. Prevent distortion of competition between collective passenger transport modes.

Dedicated and easy-to-access funding

Create dedicated funding instruments (with streamlined access) to stimulate and support targeted research and development, as well as to pilot the implementation of innovative door-to-door collective mobility projects (covering vehicles – renewal of fleets, where necessary –, alternative fuels, advanced technologies, including new operational models and management practices, links between modes, skills, etc.) at national, regional and city levels.

Best practice available to all at a glance

Further support the expansion of existing accessible “online knowledge repositories”, providing public access to national and international best policy and industry practices in innovative collective door-to-door mobility and travel solutions, in particular innovative bus, coach and taxi services’ solutions.

Monitoring

Develop and publish regularly appropriate simple and easy-to-understand statistical indicator(s) to monitor the progress made (on the basis of an agreed base year) in achieving the objective of increasing/doubling the use of collective passenger transport, in particular by bus, coach and taxi.

Permanent public-private discussion platform(s)

Establish permanent discussion platform(s), involving multiple stakeholders from the public and private sectors, to ensure the follow-up of policy recommendations and to propose further actions.

A public-private partnership to establish local-, country- or region-specific policy “Road Maps”, with the objective to progressively enable a legislative, fiscal, market and administrative framework, city and land use planning strategies conducive to door-to-door public transport service provision, and to offer adequate public investment to allow collective road passenger transport, in particular by bus, coach and taxi, to compete successfully with the private car.

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