

# SOMMET CLIMATE CHANCE EUROPE

07-08 mars 2022

#SCCE2022



## Mobility: Rethinking medium-distance mobility between European countries?

### Description :

In a social and economic environment that is increasingly concerned about its carbon impact, several trends characterize medium-distance mobility. Air travel is losing some of its appeal; rail, when electrified and offering quality services (24/7 reliability, frequency, punctuality, multimodal coordination...), is gaining popularity; and it is increasingly recognized that road, which will certainly remain essential in the near future for both freight and people, needs to reduce its traffic volumes and strongly improve its energy performance (against the harmful trend of SUVs) and its emission balance.

In 2021, the European "Year of Rail" aimed to place rail at the top of the agenda for medium-distance mobility, and saw a number of announcements, in particular on the revival of night trains and the development of freight. At the same time, European funds are supporting the emergence of medium-distance hydrogen mobility, whether for road freight, as in the Corridor H2 project, or for trains, as shown by Alstom's Coradia iLint, adopted in Germany. So how can these different dynamics be articulated to decarbonize medium-distance mobility as quickly as possible? What is the outcome of the Year of Rail? What role can hydrogen mobility play in achieving the 2030 climate objectives? What other levers can be activated in the short term?

**Chair :** Bernard Soulage, Secretary General of Climate Chance

**Moderator :** Patrick Oliva, Founder of OrbiMob'

### Speakers :

- **Rémi Bastien**, President of the Next Move Competitiveness Cluster and General Delegate of FISITA
- **Yann Briand**, researcher in climate-energy-transport policies, IDDRI
- **François Davenne**, Director General, UIC – International union of railways
- **Valentin Desfontaines**, Sustainable Mobility Manager, Climate Action Network France
- **Samuel Laval**, Research Officer at the Climate Chance Observatory

### Summary of discussions :

- Freight is largely dominated by road transport (88% of tkm), and is far from being optimized (trucks with low average fill-ups, fragmented logistic schemes, etc.). As for the transport of people, largely dependent on the car, many unwanted kilometers are traveled (work, access to dispersed services...). All the speakers and participants agreed that, even when pushed to its highest level, technological innovation could only constitute a limited part of the efforts to be made to reduce emissions by 55% by 2030 compared to 1990, just like the gradual

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conversion of the fleet to electric vehicles. It is therefore necessary to organize, in conjunction with civil society, a modal shift towards less carbon-intensive transport solutions, as well as the reduction of road traffic (short circuits, reorganization of work....). To achieve this, these two objectives must be given a central place in European mobility policies, and must benefit from more funding.

- The regulatory framework on transit in the EU is mainly imposed by the guarantee of free movement of goods (Article 28 EC and 29 EC) and the prohibition of imposing obstacles to intra-Community trade in goods (imports, exports, transit), which can make it difficult to put in place regulations to force modal shift.
- Austria provides an example of what can be done at the national level to force a modal shift in transit. For certain types of goods, a section of a central freeway in the country is forbidden to heavy vehicles over 7.5t, whose engines are neither electric nor hydrogen, and which do not comply with the latest Euro standard: they must therefore turn to piggyback transport. This derogation to the free movement of goods in transit was granted by the EC because of Article 2 of the EC Treaty, which aims at "a high level of protection and improvement of the environment". In the same country, a "climate ticket", allowing to use all public transport for 1000€/year, has been introduced this year.
- Efforts must be made to make it easier to cross a border by train, which is now easier to do by truck, for example, by harmonizing signaling systems, or by setting up a single digital platform for European logistics.
- The introduction of a kilometre-based toll, like the introduction of an "ETS 2" on road fuels, has been discussed. Although their potential for induced modal shift appears significant, the social repercussions of such measures can be disastrous if they are not implemented with a real concern for social justice and minimizing the impacts on road transport-dependent populations.
- There are many ways to reduce medium-distance road traffic: reassigning employees to equivalent positions in their company's sites closer to home, developing shared spaces (work and services), rewarding vehicles with high occupancy rates (e.g. via dedicated lanes), developing the circular economy, making it easier to pool freight, continuing to develop carpooling, piggybacking, rediscovering waterways or very low-motorized air travel (balloons)...
- Regarding air traffic, several measures could reduce it and make it less attractive compared to other modes of transport (in a context that does not kill competition, innovation or freedom of travel): taxation of kerosene, end of free quotas on the ETS market, end of VAT exemption for international flights, a (temporary) halt to airport capacity expansion projects, limitation of domestic flights when there is a train alternative (with a service guarantee) in less than 3 to 5 hours...

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- Finally, all these measures cannot be meaningful without real efforts to educate, raise awareness, consult and involve the population in the decision-making process, in order to make low-emission transport more attractive.

## THEMATIC DRAFT PROPOSALS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

N°	Topic	European policy	Proposal
P1	Funding	European funds	<p>Increase massively funding from the European investment bank at very small rate and lengthy for public transport infrastructure and soft or / and active modes as well as the acquisition or renovation of material.</p> <p>For freight transport, give priority to investments in the railway, in order to allow a very substantial improvement in the interoperability of European networks.</p> <p>Create an opportunity to have specific financing on modal shift.</p>
P2	Freight modal shift	European law	Allow states to specifically target transit to encourage modal shift.
P3	Aviation	ReFuel Aviation	Taxing kerosene, ending free allowances for aviation in the ETS, ending the VAT exemption for international flights.
P4	Consultation	European funds	Target European funding specifically to education, awareness raising, access to information, the involvement of the population in decision-making and incentives for changes of use (dedicated lanes for carpooling, mobility as a service, soft transport infrastructures for daily long-distance mobility, etc.), in order to increase the attractiveness of low-carbon transport modes and encourage changes of use.
P5	Toll	Transversal	Relaunch a debate on the increase (or introduction) of kilometre-based tolls for road freight, with a national and not regional approach to avoid redirecting flows to other routes; guarantee alternatives on the routes concerned. Ensure equal competition between road and rail modes, in particular by harmonizing road infrastructure pricing.