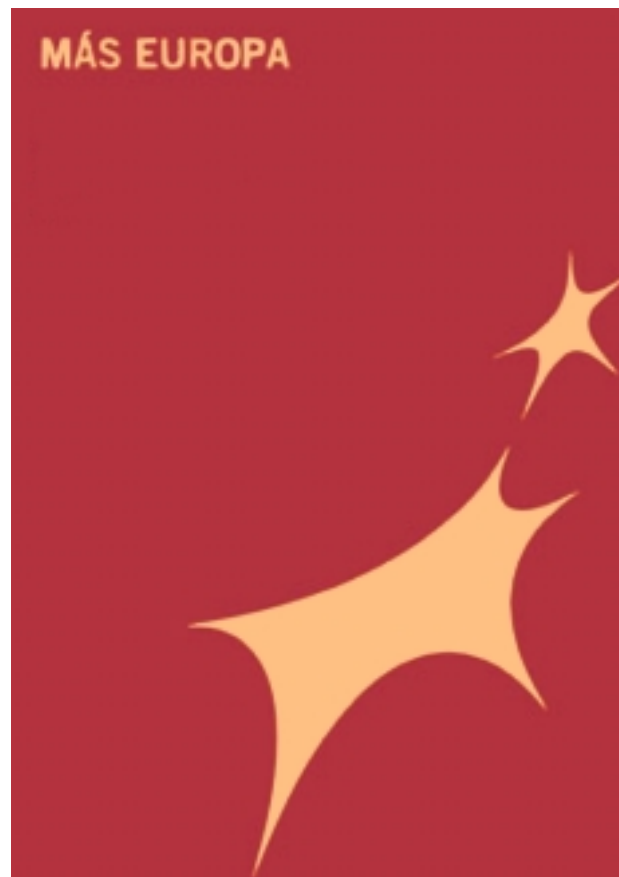


Memorandum to the Spanish Presidency



Prepared by the T&E Secretariat

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T&E Memorandum to the Spanish Presidency

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Contents

0. Recommendations -----	1
1. Introduction – Moving the agenda forward -----	3
2. Key Principles -----	4
2.1 The 2001 consensus on EU transport policy -----	4
2.2 Decoupling transport and economy -----	5
3. Specific Dossiers -----	7
3.1 Main issues during the Spanish Presidency -----	7
3.1.1. The Common Transport Policy -----	7
3.1.2. Aviation -----	7
3.1.3. Trans-European Transport Networks -----	9
3.1.4. Rail package -----	10
3.1.5. Urban transport -----	10
3.1.6. Preparing for Johannesburg -----	11
3.2 Other important ongoing dossiers -----	12
3.2.1. Enlargement -----	12
3.2.2. Transport pricing -----	12
3.2.3. Noise -----	13
3.2.4. Air and fuel quality standards -----	14
3.2.5. Towards sustainable freight -----	14
4. Conclusion -----	15

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **We urge the Spanish presidency of the EU to press for a Common Transport Policy which, in line with the Gothenburg EU summit conclusions, has as its main goal the significant decoupling of transport growth and economic growth. This will require demand management.**
- **The Spanish Presidency should ensure that decoupling transport growth and economic growth remains a main community principle. In particular, decoupling should be a feature of the synthesis report to be adopted at the Barcelona summit**
- **We urge the Spanish EU Presidency to steer the debate on a single European sky in the direction of sustainability**
- **The Spanish Presidency should ensure the directive on noise from airports is expanded in scope to include all of Europe's affected citizens.**
- **Spain should closely examine the results of the Commission's study on a European aviation charge and urge the Commission to use these results to propose an EU directive.**
- **We urge the Spanish Presidency to apply serious consideration to articles 2, 6 and 95(4) of the Amsterdam treaty and to ensure that the TENs mini-revision clearly applies strategic environmental assessment to the extension of the TEN-T network.**
- **The Spanish Presidency should put pressure on the European Investment Bank to apply the EU's Sustainable Development Strategy in the lending requirements.**
- **The Spanish Presidency should ensure that a second rail package is adopted before the end of its presidency, which moves the rail sector towards economic efficiency and competitiveness, and environmental sustainability.**

- **Spain should cooperate with the Commission to ensure the adoption of the Green Paper on sustainable urban transport by the end of its presidency.**
- **The EU needs to take leadership and promote a clear idea of sustainable development in Johannesburg. The Spanish presidency should ensure that this understanding is built into the Union's preparations.**
- **Spain should maintain the EU's global environmental leadership – in particular by ensuring EU countries keep their promise to ratify the Kyoto Protocol by Rio+10.**
- **When applying ISPA, Instrument for Structural Pre-accession Aid, funds to the Transport Infrastructure Needs Assessment processes, the EU should involve all actors who play a role in the region, and ensure that a thorough assessment of the environmental implications is considered.**
- **Spain should ensure that the Council position embraces ambitious targets, and moves more in line with the European Parliament's position in conciliation, on the Directive on Assessment and management of environmental noise.**
- **The Spanish presidency should co-ordinate member states' action to improve the Commission's proposal on biofuels, to ensure that it takes account of the way in which they are produced.**

1. Introduction: Moving the agenda forward

The Spanish Presidency has the opportunity in the first half of 2002 to consolidate the advances in European transport and environment policy made during the Swedish and Belgian presidencies in 2001. It also has the chance to take the Union's progressive agenda forward, notably through advancing the Gothenburg agenda in the synthesis report to be adopted at the Barcelona summit.

Developments in 2001 raised transport policy high onto the European political agenda. The adoption of the sustainable development strategy by the European Commission and the discussion at the Gothenburg summit together show a powerful new political will developing across Europe to move transport towards sustainability. The Belgian presidency took the momentum further, by organising a ground-breaking seminar on transport and economy on 12 July, as preparation for an informal transport and environment council on 14/15 September; only the second such meeting since the one organised by the UK presidency in 1997.

Two issues will be of particular importance during the Spanish presidency. **Firstly**, the long-awaited programme outlining the **Common Transport Policy** (CTP hereafter) was adopted in September 2001. Although it is to set the EU's transport agenda for the next ten years, it is so flawed that the informal transport and environment Council, which met a few days after it was adopted, said that transport policies needed measures going beyond the White Paper if Europe is to have sustainable transport. It will be up to the Spanish Presidency to ensure that the White Paper is significantly improved, to take account of both the requirements of the Amsterdam treaty and the Gothenburg conclusions. This is without doubt the most important transport dossier which the Spanish Presidency will deal with.

Secondly, a small revision of the **Trans-European Transport Network (TEN) guidelines** will be conducted under the Spanish Presidency.. This revision prepares the way for a larger review in 2003 and updates the 1996 decision. It also forms an important element of the measures listed in the paper on the Common Transport Policy. As such it is important that the decision taken on this dossier are consistent with the CTP and all Community objectives. It will be particularly important to ensure that full account of the environmental impacts of the TENs are accounted for so that they may effectively contribute to sustainable development.

In addition, the Commission has been preparing its Green Paper on sustainable urban transport since 1999. It is now time for the paper to be adopted, particularly in light of the adoption in 2001 of the Sustainable Development Strategy and the Common Transport Policy White Paper

It is important to note that a strong consensus among experts has developed on the need to alter transport policy to support sustainable development. This paper outlines an approach which will allow consistency with the principles of sustainable development for the numerous individual transport related dossiers. It also outlines how this approach is relevant to the Spanish government's priorities.

Underlying all this work is the consensus that **decoupling transport from economic growth is needed for transport to become sustainable**. As a result, the rest of this paper is split into three sections. The first of these is a résumé of the key principle which should govern the Spanish Presidency's handling of transport policy: the decoupling of transport and economic growth. The section outlines the arguments surrounding the principle and then reviews how it should best be applied. Following this overview, the paper turns to examine specific dossiers. These include dossiers which the Spanish Presidency will "inherit," those which will become current during the Spanish presidency, and those dossiers which the Spanish Presidency can highlight as important issues.

2. Key principles

2.1 The 2001 consensus on EU transport policy

The revision of the treaty of the European Community at Amsterdam gave important additional environmental functions to the community. The article outlining the objectives of the community was reworded to more accurately reflect the consensus that had emerged over the understanding of sustainable development. Instead of only referring to sustainable economic growth the objectives of the Community now include “a high level of protection and improvement of the quality of the environment” as well as “the raising of the standard of living and quality of life” in addition to the continued commitment to a “balanced and sustainable development of economic activities”.

This strengthened commitment to the environmental and social pillars of sustainable development is enhanced by Article 6 of the Treaty, which requires the integration of environmental considerations into all the policies of the community with a view to sustainable development.

In order to comply with these provisions of the treaty a process was initiated by the heads of government and heads of state at the Luxembourg European Council of December 1997. Following a Communication from the Commission, the EU leaders agreed at their summit in Cardiff the following June to initiate a process of sectoral integration that has come to be known as the Cardiff process.

Initially three sectors – including transport, were requested to elaborate a strategy and to report upon it to the leaders at their summits. The Helsinki summit of December 1999 to some extent approved the strategies adopted and requested the sectors to continue their efforts and report once again to their leaders summit in June 2001. Additionally they requested the Commission to develop “a long term strategy dovetailing policies for economically, socially and ecologically sustainable development¹” for them to consider at the same European Council.

In April 2001 the transport council adopted its review of the integration strategy it had elaborated. For the first time this review acknowledged one of the requests of the EU leaders that had so far gone unanswered – targets for the strategy. The ministers agreed that the time had come to at least explore what potential objectives would be appropriate for the sector. The transport council had been able to draw on the indicators established by the European Environment Agency, the TERM report, and on the output of the Commission Joint Expert Group on Transport and Environment. As a result it was able to adopt the most advanced sectoral strategy. The agreement in principle to objectives drew them even closer to the request by heads of state or government.

Yet at the same time, and in spite of these political commitments and agreements, transport is performing worse than other sectors in several different areas. Emissions of greenhouse gases, for example, continue to increase thus jeopardising the attainment of EU’s Kyoto commitments. Congestion, pollution and accidents are continuing to cause concern – despite some progress. And the problems surrounding transport prices and the price of fuel in particular had projected the performance of the sector to the fore.

As a result the Commission looked rather attentively at transport when developing its strategy for sustainable development. It searched for the overarching objectives that could be established for the sector so that its objective would contribute to a “dovetailing [of] policies for economically, socially and ecologically sustainable development“. The Commission strategy

¹ Gothenburg European Council Conclusions.

thus recognised the need and urgency to decouple economic growth and the strong growth of the sector.

This conclusion was strongly supported by the EU leaders at the Gothenburg Summit. Significantly, decoupling transport and economic growth has thus been established as the **overall objective for transport policy within the context of compliance with the Treaty provisions for sustainable development.**

The informal transport and environment Council, held on 14-16 September 2001 under the Belgian Presidency, reinforced this conclusion. Transport and environment ministers also underlined the Gothenburg summit's call for, "action ... to bring about a significant decoupling of transport growth and GDP growth.²" And they said, just a week after the Commission adopted its review of the common transport policy, that to achieve, "sustainable development targets [for transport], measures beyond the scope of the common transport policy will need to be taken." The Spanish government thus has a strong political incentive to move the Gothenburg agenda forward during its stint in the Presidency.

2.2 Decoupling transport and the economy: A guiding theme to manage transport demand

In some aspects of environmental performance the transport sector has achieved great progress in recent years. The emissions standards for new cars allied to the fuel quality directives are a case in point. New cars are much cleaner than their forebears and as a result are frequently cited by industry as a successful story in environmental regulation. There is even some merit in this argument, although the standards could still be improved – notably by harmonising diesel and petrol emission standards and including particles in the test for GDI³ engines. However, this viewpoint only takes into account the environmental performance of individual cars, not the environmental impact they may cause overall. Air pollution problems associated with heavy traffic are predicted to continue into the medium term despite improvements – even in urban locations with relatively new car fleets. The reason for this disappointing environmental outcome is the rapid and continued growth of the sector that is offsetting some of the gains achieved from cleaner technology.

Moreover, the underlying problem of sectoral growth worsening transport's environmental impact is even more acute in other areas, where there has not been the same technical progress. Emissions of greenhouse gases are a particular problem. Despite the voluntary agreement between the car industry and the Commission, CO₂ from road transport will grow in the first Kyoto commitment period by 25%. The growth in traffic will offset, and thus negate, gradual improvements to new car fuel efficiency. This growth is compounded by the trend for freight transport to increase at a faster rate than economic growth. The problem is worse in those transport sectors which are growing fastest, notably aviation.

A recent political reaction to this underlying trend of environmental damage has been a call to decouple transport growth from economic growth. Such a decoupling has been achieved in other branches of the economy, notably the energy sector – a sector similar to transport in that it too is a derived demand product. The call originated in the Commission's sustainable development strategy which was presented by President Prodi to the European Parliament and then to the Gothenburg European Council. Transport ministers and policy makers now need to translate the political commitment made at Gothenburg into concrete action.

² Presidency Conclusions for the joint informal Council meeting of Transport and Environment Ministers, Leuven 15th September 2001.

³ Gasoline Direct Injection engines have similar lean burn characteristics of diesel engines and like diesel also emit particles. However, as they are petrol engines they have no particle emission standard to pass at present.

Nowhere is this more important than in the review of the common transport policy, which the Spanish presidency will see through. Our recommendations on the revision of the common transport policy are outlined below (See section 3.1.1), and in greater detail in our publication on the issue⁴. But it is worth emphasising two points here. Firstly the degree of the political commitment to decoupling and secondly the nature decoupling must take.

The “integration process” was initiated by EU leaders requesting action from sectoral ministers; only for these ministers to partially comply with their requests. The first three sectors “invited” by EU leaders to elaborate an integration strategy were instructed to include a timetable and indicators within the strategy targets. Yet despite transport being closer than other sectors to complying with this request, all of these elements have yet to be fully incorporated into the transport sector’s integration strategy. It is high time that the sectoral policy-makers began in earnest to comply with the political commitments their own leaders have made. This is particularly true for this new commitment to decouple transport growth from GDP growth.

This in turn leads to what is actually meant by decoupling, and how this commitment should be implemented. The very motivation for this new political commitment is to ensure that transport contributes to sustainable development. That wealth creation should not lead to greater social and environmental impacts, but to a genuine improvement in the quality of life of EU citizens. These are, after all, the Community’s objectives.

Decoupling transport growth from GDP growth is needed precisely because the policy of mitigating transport’s negative impacts – with newer technology or more efficient operations – have failed to prevent the impacts of transport negating much of its benefits. Decoupling transport growth and GDP growth will maximise the benefits of improved transport and allow transport to truly contribute to improving the quality of life and the environment in Europe.

Decoupling should therefore be not simply attempting to decouple the undesirable impacts of transport from its growth but a real decoupling of transport growth and GDP growth. There is a danger that if decoupling is defined too narrowly, focusing on *elements* of the environmental and human impacts of transport rather than fully including them all, the benefits of the approach will be lost.

This is in part due to the inevitable trade offs between decreasing different impacts from transport. By way of example, modal shift from long distance road haulage to combined transport and short sea shipping could reap large emission reduction benefits by reducing greenhouse gases from the freight transport sector; short sea shipping having much lower greenhouse gas emissions per tonne kilometre than road transport. Yet at the same time, such a modal shift would have the opposite effect on emissions of those noxious pollutants which contribute to regional-scale pollution; such as acidification or ozone pollution. Almost no ships have any exhaust treatment systems at all.

This is not the only example of trade-offs in reducing transport’s impacts. Indeed, these trade-offs are the very reason why managing the demand for transport, and thus decoupling transport growth from economic growth, is so important.

If the decoupling commitment is rephrased to target impacts rather than managing the demand growth of the sector itself, an additional process will inevitably be needed: determining exactly which impacts would have priority, the relative weights each type of impact should receive, and what trade offs may be desirable between impacts.

It would therefore be inappropriate to attempt to decouple impacts rather than the sector’s growth itself. Furthermore, doing so could be interpreted as yet another example of strong commitments at the highest political levels being only selectively applied and thereby reduced.

⁴ T&E response to the European Commission’s White Paper on the Common Transport Policy, T&E 01/5

3. Specific dossiers

3.1 Issues current during the Spanish Presidency

3.1.1 The Common Transport Policy

The White Paper outlining the programme defining the Common Transport Policy was adopted under the Belgian Presidency. Unfortunately, the White Paper addresses the sustainability requirements for transport in Europe so poorly that transport and environment ministers, meeting only a few days after its adoption, said that sustainability required measures which went beyond its scope⁵.

T&E believes that the White Paper on the Common Transport Policy (CTP) has to give equal weight to environmental, social and economic criteria. This requires the management of transport demand so as to decouple transport growth from economic growth. It involves placing citizens at the heart of the transport system, rather than transport users, to ensure the system serves all of society.

The debates over decoupling were outlined in the previous section and T&E has produced a publication which provides in-depth critique of the White Paper⁶; so the arguments need not be rehearsed here.

But it is crucial that the Spanish government ensures the Council's response to the White Paper is a strengthening of its environmental component; taking full account of the importance attached to decoupling by the EU leaders in Gothenburg.

We urge the Spanish presidency of the EU to press for a Common Transport Policy which, in line with the Gothenburg summit conclusions, has as its main goal to significantly decouple transport growth and economic growth. This will require demand management.

The Spanish Presidency should ensure that decoupling transport growth and economic growth remains a main community principle. In particular, decoupling should be a feature of the synthesis report to be adopted at the Barcelona summit

3.1.2 Aviation

Aviation is the fastest-growing transport mode, in terms of both its demand and emissions. It has many effects on the environment; locally through noise and air pollution, globally through climate change effects. Aviation and its environmental effects are regulated globally. Yet this typically means much lower environmental standards and almost no regulatory measures are put in place. The environment is in this context being sacrificed for the sake of a faster and more globalised industry. In light of the principles agreed by Europe's leaders and mentioned in the introduction above, it is unacceptable that aviation does not pay its share for the damage it causes; the price of which is currently borne by the whole society.

⁵ Belgian Presidency summary of the joint informal Council of transport and environment ministers, Leuven / Louvain-la-Neuve on 14th/15th September

⁶ T&E response to the European Commission's White Paper on the Common Transport Policy, T&E 01/5

Spain will have two important files to deal with on aviation during its Presidency, and can be pro-active on a third issue. The first is a Presidency priority: the **single European sky**, about which Spain says⁷, the advantages “in terms of shortening flight times and cutting costs, not to mention the environmental benefits, call for this objective to be met with a view to 2004.”

Shorter flight times and more efficient resource use are certainly a worthy goal. However, the Presidency should use its influence to ensure that the single European sky does not become a framework in which increased capacity encourages the aviation industry to expand even faster. The creation of the single European sky must incorporate clear sustainability targets.

The second aviation issue for the Spanish presidency is **airport noise**. The Commission adopted a proposal to fight aircraft noise in 2001⁸. Parliament is due to debate it at the start of 2002 and Spain will therefore preside over the Council’s first consideration of the proposal.

The NGO community welcomes the initiative to tackle noise from airports. Nevertheless, it has serious concerns on the scope of the directive, fearing it will fail to serve a large proportion of those presently affected by noise from airports. We are also mindful of the human rights ruling in October 2001 by the European Court of Human rights on night-time noise⁹, which the European Union should take into account in its decision-making.

It is therefore crucial that the directive on noise from airports is strengthened. For this reason, the Spanish Presidency should treat the directive on noise from airports as a priority, and should tighten its scope to encompass all affected Europeans.

One issue which would allow the Spanish presidency to be pro-active, is an **aviation charge for Europe**. Many member states have already said both formally and informally that they wish to see aviation’s emissions tackled. Increasingly, an emissions charge for aviation looks like an ideal solution: it is legally feasible, economically just and environmentally effective. While efforts in that direction are being made at the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), it is important for the EU to provide an example, failing ICAO will take many decades to act. The Commission will complete a study on the concrete implementation of the charge during the Spanish presidency. Spain thus has an ideal opportunity to seize initiative and urge the Commission to come forward with a directive.

We urge the Spanish EU Presidency to steer the debate on a single European sky in the direction of sustainability.

The Spanish Presidency should ensure the directive on noise from airports is expanded in scope to include all of Europe’s affected citizens.

Spain should closely examine the results of the Commission’s study on a European aviation charge and urge the Commission to use these results to come forward with a directive.

⁷ “More Europe: Programme of the Spanish Presidency, 1-1/30-6-2002”, p11.

⁸ COM/2001/695 “Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of principles for noise management and rules and procedures for the introduction of operating restrictions at Community airports.”

⁹ In a case brought by eight people living near London’s Heathrow airport, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that a good night’s sleep is a basic human right, and that Heathrow had violated the rights of residents nearby by allowing night flights.

3.1.3 Investment in transport infrastructure

The **Trans-European Transport Networks** (TENs) will undergo a revision in 2002, in advance of the major overhaul, which the existing guidelines require by 2003. The present guidelines, adopted in 1996, included environmental concerns in a separate article¹⁰ which required the Commission to develop methodologies to strategically assess the environmental impact of the network and of individual corridors. This has been accomplished and over the same period the Community has elaborated a legal framework for applying strategic environmental assessments to plans and programmes beyond the TENs¹¹.

Yet the proposal amending the TEN guidelines is ambiguous. It does refer to the SEA directive but fails to clarify whether its provisions will apply prior to its entry into force, which will not be until after the next TEN guidelines revision. The relative significance of environmental objectives compared to the construction of the TENs has been highly controversial in the past, leading to legal disputes and decisions by the Court¹².

The Spanish presidency should ensure the Commission proposal is clarified: SEA methods need to be applied to all network extensions; including the current "mini" revision. This clarity will also help the TENs contribute to the CTP objectives, including those relating to modal shift.

The role of improving methodologies to assess infrastructure programmes such as the TENs have been served by the current TEN-T guidelines with respect to SEA. The Spanish presidency should ensure this element is retained in the new guidelines, with a new focus on improving cost benefit methodologies.

In addition, the **European Investment Bank needs to respond to the sustainable development strategy**. The Council, meeting in Gothenburg, called on the European Investment Bank (EIB) to, "promote the Sustainable Development Strategy and to cooperate with the Commission in implementing the EU policy on climate change". Whilst the bank has made the right noises, it has not followed with action: the EIB has not yet developed the clear environmental standards needed from an organisation which promotes sustainable projects. EIB has a poor environmental record in the transport projects it finances; especially in countries outside the European Union, where it often bypasses both EU and national legislation.¹³ The Spanish Presidency should initiate a thorough analysis of EIB's investment practices and re-state its mission to promote the Union's objectives.

We urge the Spanish Presidency to apply serious consideration to articles 2, 6 and 95(4) of the Amsterdam treaty and to ensure that the TENs mini-revision clearly applies strategic environmental assessment to the extension of the TEN-T network.

The Spanish Presidency should put pressure on the European Investment Bank to apply the EU's Sustainable Development Strategy in the lending requirements.

¹⁰ Community Decision 1692/96/EC on Community guidelines for the development of trans-European transport networks Article 8 – "Environment".

¹¹ Directive 2001/42/EC .

¹² The treaty has been revised in the meantime, so earlier legal precedent does not clarify the relative importance of these occasionally conflicting Community objectives.

¹³ CEE Bankwatch has published numerous articles and publications on this subject. For example, see "European Investment Bank policies and practises – excerpts from reports of the EIB Operation Evaluation Unit" and CEE Bankwatch's information on the EIB in general, <http://www.bankwatch.org/issues/meib.html>

3.1.4 Rail package

The Commission is presently preparing a new **package of measures for rail**, following the first rail package of January 2001. The new package will include the following:

- Safety regulation
- Amending of directive on interoperability of conventional and high speed rail
- Proposal for a European Rail Agency, coordinating safety and interoperability issues
- Further liberalisation of rail freight (amending the first rail package)

As the Commission promised it would be adopted in early 2002, it is very likely that the Spanish Presidency will consider it. The Presidency should prioritise this dossier, in line with its own published priorities.

The Spanish Presidency should ensure that a second rail package is adopted before the end of its presidency, which moves the rail sector towards economic efficiency and competitiveness, and environmental sustainability.

3.1.5 Urban transport

Most Europeans live and work in cities. Road transport is one of the biggest problems for city-dwellers, with air and noise pollution from traffic, high injury costs and congestion close to the top of the list of citizens' grievances. And other forms of transport are also problematic, particularly for citizens living near airports. The EU is responsible for setting the framework for sustainable transport in cities.

Despite the community's concerns over subsidiarity, it is in fact prepared to meet its responsibilities in some cases; as the **regulation on public service requirements and the award of public service contracts in passenger transport** (COM 2000/7) shows. This will set the framework for the provision of public transport in the EU. It requires authorities to take account of environmental factors – such as air quality, noise standards and greenhouse gas emissions – when awarding public service contracts. There is general satisfaction that the Regulation is on the whole a good piece of legislation, and it should go through its second reading during the Spanish presidency. The Spanish presidency should ensure that this happens.

The Commission is in the process of preparing a Green Paper on **Sustainable Urban Transport**, which it has been planning since 1999.

This Green Paper should outline the actions needed by various tiers of decision makers to clean up Europe's urban transport. This means that the Green Paper will address all relevant actors, from local authorities to European institutions, via national administrations. The Spanish presidency should ensure that all of these relevant actors are involved in the debate, so as to ensure that the green paper produces effective results. It should also ensure that the Commission completes its work on the green paper swiftly.

Spain should cooperate with the Commission to ensure the adoption of the Green Paper on sustainable urban transport by the end of its presidency.

3.1.6 Preparing for Johannesburg

Spain holds the last full presidency before the Rio+10 earth summit in Johannesburg at the end of August. It will therefore have a key role in the European Union's preparation's for this crucial event; something it itself recognises in its presidency programme. Key to this is ratification of the Kyoto Protocol: European leaders have committed to ratifying the Kyoto Protocol by Rio+10 and the Spanish presidency should ensure that they keep their promises.

Europe has shown itself to be a world leader in environmental protection and it is important that this does not change in Rio+10. In concrete terms, this means that the EU needs to promote sustainable development in the international context, as this is now one of its stated political objectives. The understanding of what sustainable development means is not the same in all parts of the world, and is at risk of being undermined by vested interests in economic powers and industry, which is preparing its contribution to the meeting.

The EU needs to take leadership and promote a clear idea of sustainable development in Johannesburg. The Spanish presidency should ensure that this understanding is built into the Union's preparations.

Spain should, through its presidency of the EU, maintain the European Union's tradition of being environmentally progressive in the preparations for Rio+10. In particular, EU countries should keep their promise to ratify the Kyoto Protocol.

3.2 Ongoing dossiers

3.2.1. Enlargement

Enlargement of the EU to the East is undeniably a central and urgent priority for the EU, to ensure both economic prosperity and political stability. The Council, meeting in Gothenburg in June 2001, unambiguously committed itself to EU enlargement with the historic words, “the enlargement process is irreversible.” This process is having, and will continue to have, important repercussions for future transport and environment policy in an enlarged EU.

The Spanish presidency lists the enlargement process as “one of the most important tasks of the Spanish presidency,” and says that it intends its contribution to the process to ensure that negotiations with all prepared candidate countries can be concluded by the end of 2002. It stresses the importance of fulfilling the accession criteria.

All accession countries already show a similar pattern to that which can be seen historically in the EU: giving priority to road construction while the existing public transport systems fall into decline. In spite of the remaining difficulties, the current situation in terms of transport provision in central and eastern Europe still gives the EU an unrivalled opportunity to promote more sustainable development in the future – but not unless current priorities are reviewed and transformed across the board rather than in a piecemeal way, and as a matter of urgency.

When applying Instrument for Structural Pre-accession Aid (ISPA) funds to the Transport Infrastructure Needs Assessment (TINA) processes it is therefore important to involve all actors who play a role in the region and to ensure that a thorough assessment of the environmental implications is considered.

When applying ISPA, Instrument for Structural Pre-accession Aid, funds to the Transport Infrastructure Needs Assessment processes, the EU should involve all actors who play a role in the region and ensure that a thorough assessment of the environmental implications is considered.

3.2.2. Transport pricing

The issue of “fair and efficient pricing” has moved on some distance in the recent past. The heavy goods vehicle fee in Switzerland has demonstrated that it is feasible to apply electronic road pricing. Moreover the moves to apply electronic road pricing to the freight sector in Germany, even if more limited than the Swiss scheme, is causing a rethink on road pricing in many other neighbouring countries. The developments in the Netherlands are the most recent example with the national association of road haulers now supporting a scheme analogous to that proposed for Germany.

Getting the prices right for transport will mean fair prices and a more efficient transport system. The Commission was persuaded of this argument as long ago as 1995 (although experts have been discussing it since the 1970s), some elements of the road freight industry have been convinced¹⁴ and the German and Dutch authorities are shifting towards it, even for passenger

¹⁴ For example, speaking at the Belgian Presidency’s 12 July 2001 seminar on transport and the economy, Johan Trouvé – head of environmental affairs at Schenker AG, which with an annual turnover of around €5.9 billion is one of the largest logistics firms in the world – said that, “We think that transports are actually too cheap.” He believes the Swiss Heavy Goods Vehicle Fee is the best system presently in operation for pricing transport.

vehicles. Spain should use its residency to ensure a focus on the need for **fairness in transport pricing**, both in discussions on the common transport policy and on sector-specific discussions.

The Commission committed to developing a **framework directive on charging for transport infrastructure** in the common transport policy White Paper. T&E welcomes such a development, while urging the Commission to consult widely before deciding on the form of such framework.

Additionally, the Commission is expected to produce in 2002 an amendment of the **Eurovignette directive** (1999/62) for heavy goods vehicles. Each of these has an important part in leading European transport policy towards sustainability.

The Spanish presidency should therefore encourage the Commission to complete its work on these dossiers at an early date.

3.2.3. Noise

Noise is a huge problem in the European Union, with strong effects on human health. Road, rail and air traffic noise are among the main sources of noise pollution, giving the transport sector a large share of the responsibility for noise pollution.

The EU has regulated noise for more than 25 years, yet legislation has focussed on limiting specific sources (products), allowing different noise sources to combine in creating a significant disturbance. This is why complaints about noise are on the increase. Product standards cannot solve the problem. Protecting citizens from the damaging effects of noise requires good ambient noise limits, along the lines of the successful air quality framework directive. Portugal has proven that this is politically possible: its ambient limits for "sensitive areas" like hospitals, schools and homes came into effect in May 2001.

It is up to the Union to set the framework within which regions and cities operate. This is particularly so in the case of aviation noise, where most member states have shown themselves unable to take appropriate steps on reduction of noise from airports.

In 2000, the Commission adopted a proposal for a "**Directive on assessment and management of environmental noise**," (COM/2000/468). This directive will go to conciliation early in the Spanish presidency.

Europe needs an additional initiative, which takes the protection of citizens as its starting point, possibly following the Portuguese model. We therefore urge the presidency to accept the European Parliament's call for follow-up legislation within three years.

Spain should ensure that the Council position embraces ambitious targets, and move more in line with the European Parliament's position in conciliation, on the Directive on Assessment and management of environmental noise.

3.2.4. Air quality and fuel standards

The Spanish government will preside over and discuss the Commission's proposal on biofuels¹⁵. As the proposal stands, there are serious question marks over the environmental efficacy of the directive in terms of climate protection, land-use and air quality.

The Spanish presidency should therefore improve the Commission's proposal to ensure that account is taken of the way in which biofuels are produced, in order to ensure environmental objectives. Without such improvements, biofuels may have a marginal benefit at best, and at worst lead away from sustainability.

The Spanish Presidency should co-ordinate member states' action to improve the Commission's proposal on biofuels, to ensure that it takes account of the way in which they are produced.

3.2.5. Towards sustainable freight

The European Parliament is already considering a proposal on driving time restrictions for heavy goods vehicles: it is most likely that this dossier will go to the Council during the Spanish presidency. T&E would like to see the proposal being tightened, to ensure fair competition not only within the road transport sector, but also between transport modes. Ideally, the proposal should be changed to align road driving time restrictions with those on rail, when the current leading sector as far as social conditions are concerned. Under no circumstances should this already weak proposal be weakened.

It is possible that the Commission will adopt proposed legislation on tunnel safety during the Spanish presidency. If so, the presidency should treat it seriously, in light of the spate of tunnel accidents at the end of 2001; and should ensure that such a proposal contains strong requirements for equipping tunnels and trucks (built-in safety features) and a limit on the number of trucks passing through a tunnel at any given moment.

¹⁵ COM/2001/547, Proposal for a DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on the promotion of the use of biofuels for transport

4. Conclusion

The Spanish presidency has a good chance to further the good work done by the Swedish presidency, and the excellent progress made under the Belgian presidency, on EU transport and environment policy. The momentum, which started at Cardiff and was reinforced at Gothenburg, to integrate environmental concerns into transport decisions needs to be taken forward. This paper maps out a way in which the Spanish presidency can do this.

Above all, the White paper on the common transport policy desperately needs to be improved. The Spanish government has the necessary tools in the Gothenburg consensus to ensure that this happens. We urge the presidency to treat this important dossier as an absolute priority. Without a transport policy that has economic, social and environmental requirements on equal footing at its core, any sustainable development strategy will fail and the citizens and economies of Europe will have to pay the price.

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- T&E 96/12 The Greening of Freight Transport in Europe - final report
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- T&E 97/6 Response to the European Commission's Acidification Strategy (joint paper with EEB and Swedish NGO Secretariat on Acid Rain)
- T&E 97/7 Traffic, air pollution and health

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- T&E 98/1 Sustainable Aviation - The need for a European environmental aviation charge
- T&E 98/2 Transport and climate change (see T&E 00/1)
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- T&E 99/2 Road Fuel and Vehicles taxation in Light of EU Enlargement
- T&E 99/3 Response to the Commission report on the on the implementation of the Trans-European Transport Network Guidelines and Priorities for the Future

- T&E 99/4 Response to the European Commission White Paper on Fair Payment for Infrastructure Use
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- T&E 00/1 The Drive for Less Fuel: Will the Motor Industry be able to Honour its Commitment to the European Union? (€5)
- T&E 00/2 Memorandum to the French Presidency
- T&E 00/3 Conference Proceedings: T&E conference on transport, enlargement and the environment
- T&E 00/4 Bringing the Eurovignette into the electronic age: The need to change Directive 1999/62/EC to allow kilometre charging for heavy goods vehicles
- T&E 00/5 Memorandum to the Swedish Presidency
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- T&E 00/7 Sustainable Freight Transport – Conference report

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- T&E 01/1 Transport *can* drive climate change reductions – Seminar proceedings
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About this paper

“Sustainable development” needs to be the keyword for European transport policy. This means that European transport policy should aim to be socially just, economically efficient and environmentally sound.

The Spanish presidency has the chance at the start of 2002 to move the EU’s sustainability agenda forward in the wake of the good progress made by the Swedish and Belgian presidencies with respect to transport; to make concrete the consensus achieved in Gothenburg and reinforced by transport and environment ministers in Leuven / Louvain-la-Neuve. In Europe, the Common Transport Policy and ensuring a good “mini” revision of the Trans-European Networks guidelines should be at the heart of its work. Specific transport sectors, notably aviation, also need attention. Internationally, the EU has a crucial role to play in preparing for Rio+10 in Johannesburg.

T&E has tried with this Memorandum to tackle some of the most important current issues in EU transport and environment; and to point out where it thinks that the Spanish Presidency can make a difference. This includes a series of concrete recommendations which together provide a coherent vision for a Sustainable European transport policy.

About T&E

The European Federation for Transport and Environment (T&E) is Europe's primary non-governmental organisation campaigning on a Europe-wide level for an environmentally responsible approach to transport. The Federation was founded in 1989 as a European umbrella for organisations working in this field. At present T&E has some 40 member organisations covering 21 countries. The members are mostly national organisations, including public transport users' groups, environmental organisations and the European environmental transport associations ('Verkehrsclubs'). These organisations in all have several million individual members. Several transnational organisations are associated members.

T&E closely monitors developments in European transport policy and submits responses on all major papers and proposals from the European Commission. T&E frequently publishes reports on important issues in the field of transport and the environment, and also carries out research projects.

The list of T&E publications in the annex provides a picture of recent T&E activities. More information can be found on the T&E web-site: <http://www.t-e.eu>

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